

CANADIAN NATIONALISM AND THE BRITISH CONNECTION 1899-1919

by

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ABSTRACT

During the period from the beginning of the Boer War in 1899 to the Treaty of Versailles in 1919, the Canadian national consciousness was dramatically transformed from inward-looking parochialism to a broader international outlook. This transformation was the result of English-Canadian demands for an increasingly active role in the defence of the British Empire. However, there are two apparent contradictions in Canada's support of imperial defence which have not been adequately identified or explained in Canadian historiography. First, most English Canadians freely contributed to a centrally-controlled system of imperial defence without strongly pressing for a commensurate share in the determination of imperial foreign policy. Second, whilst English Canadians acquiesced to Britain's control of imperial foreign policy, the majority steadfastly opposed any proposals for imperial political centralization that would weaken Canada's internal self-government.

It is postulated that the apparent contradictions described above are symptomatic of dual loyalties by English Canadians to their own emerging nation-state and the British Empire. Instead of traditional assumptions of a primary and exclusive loyalty to one nation, the following major historical factors are emphasized and delineated for the study period:

- National loyalties to the Canadian state were restricted largely to parochial and materialistic concerns of internal self-government and economic welfare;

- Most English Canadians were members of two overlapping nations based respectively on the Canadian state and the British Empire;
- English-Canadian loyalties to their own state and to the British Empire satisfied different needs, and were complementary as long as there was no substantial contradiction in Canadian and British interests.

The foregoing national factors are tested and confirmed by interpretations of three issues which together trace Canada's increasing commitments to imperial defence: the decision to send a Boer War contingent; Canadian cooperation in coordinated imperial defence between 1906 and 1910; and, the increase of Canada's contributions in the First World War. It is concluded that the original impetus behind Canada's participation in imperial defence was not the advancement of its own nationhood but rather loyalty to the British Empire. Only when the exigencies of the First World War highlighted Canada's own national interests did widespread demands arise for changing the status quo of imperial relations.

DEDICATION

Dedicated to Jill Denise Anderson

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INTRODUCTION

During the twenty-year period from the beginning of the Boer War in 1899 to the Treaty of Versailles in 1919, the Canadian national consciousness was dramatically transformed from inward-looking parochialism to a broader international outlook. This transformation was the result of English-Canadian demands for an active role in the defense of the British Empire, which started with a small South African contingent, and progressed through closer military cooperation with Great Britain, to Canada's substantial sacrifice of men and materials in the First World War. Canada's military contributions eventually brought a degree of influence over imperial war policy, and at Versailles it was granted international recognition as a semi-autonomous state within the British Empire. However, the original impetus behind these changes was not the advancement of Canadian nationhood, but rather, loyalty to the British Empire. It was only when the exigencies of the First World War highlighted Canada's own national interests, that widespread demands arose for changing the status quo of imperial relations.

At the turn of the nineteenth century, Canada was still weakened by the lack of a unifying and distinctive culture - much of English Canada was characterized by its persistent "Britishness," whilst French Canada jealously guarded its minority linguistic and religious rights. Although there was a growing political and economic basis for national loyalties to the Canadian

state, this was still inadequate to overcome Canada's lack of a "natural nation." Canadian political aspirations were limited to internal self-government and, for the most part, did not extend to Canada's external relations. The National Policy was starting to show dividends but concentration on the economic tasks of nation-building often served to exclude other visions for the Canadian state. In view of the parochialism and materialism of Canadian nationalism it was not surprising that many English Canadians enthusiastically supported the emotional appeals for a united Anglo-Saxon nation that swept the British Empire in the 1890's. For many, imperial nationalism provided a cultural identity and vicarious sense of power that could not be satisfied by the Canadian state.

From Confederation onwards, English Canadians had been ambiguous in their loyalties to the Canadian state and the British Empire, and it is useful to review some of the more significant examples in the nineteenth century to provide a better basis for understanding the subsequent period of Canadian involvement in imperial defence. Commencing the review with the creation of the Canadian state itself in 1867, it is particularly noteworthy that there was none of the revolutionary fervour and demands for independence that marked the birth of the United States. By comparison, the British government gave Canadian Confederation its fullest support, and Canadians had no intention of separating from the Empire.

There is much to support F.H. Underhill's contention that "the B.N.A. Act was the work of an Imperial Parliament and a small group of elitist colonial politicians who were in advance of their people."¹ Although British

support for the specific scheme of Confederation followed Canadian initiatives, it fully accorded with the well-established tenets of Little Englandism that sought to free Britain from the colonial "mill stones" around its neck. Indeed, Confederation was enthusiastically supported in Britain, partly because it was seen as a logical step towards "separatism."² The repeal of the Corn Laws in 1846 had already irrevocably destroyed the old imperial system of trade protection, and it was now Britain's most earnest desire to unload its crippling burden of imperial defence, and concentrate efforts on industrial and commercial development. The British Government was particularly concerned that the continuing dependency of their North-American colonies on British military protection would be provocative to the United States. The British Government, therefore, threw its full weight behind Confederation, and "there is little doubt that the chief reason for this was the scheme's obvious military importance."³ The fullest accommodation was given to Canadian leaders in London, and behind the scenes the Colonial Office deliberately promoted Confederation. When the Dominion of Canada came into being the London Times was prompted to declare that "we look to Confederation as the means of relieving this country from much expense and much embarrassment."⁴

Canadians, for their part, had no substantial grievances with Britain, and were more concerned with threats of absorption by their republican neighbour.⁵ Apart from a widely accepted need for joint military and commercial protection, the principal concerns of many of those negotiating

Confederation were negative: that is, to protect French Canadians against submersion by the "British" majority, and to protect the small provinces against Central-Canadian imperialism.⁶ Indeed, one scholar has gone so far as to insist that the "Confederation was largely a reworking of existing constitutional arrangements, and if anything, separatist and provincialist in its advocacy and intent."⁷ During the Confederation debates some nationalist appeals were made, nonetheless. Sir John Macdonald strongly advocated adoption of the symbolic title of "Kingdom of Canada," and foresaw a new evolving era of imperial relations which "will become, year by year, less a case of dependence on our part, and of overruling protection on the part of the Mother Country, and more a case of healthy and cordial alliance." More resoundingly, Thomas D'Arcy McGee envisaged a day "when there will be no other term to our patriotism, but the common name of Canadian, without the prefix of either French or British."⁸ However, for the most part, the new Canadian state was spawned by sectional economic and ethnic interests, and by an indulgent but weary imperial custodian.

Between 1868 and 1876, a small group called "Canada First" unsuccessfully attempted to realize D'Arcy McGee's dream of a "new nationality," by promoting the idea of a unique Canadian character and a more equal "alliance" with Great Britain. Canada First failed in part because of inconsistencies in their own arguments, but even more so, because other Canadians were not ready to consider themselves as a distinct and autonomous nation within the British Empire. It was in vain that Canadian Firsters promoted the idea of

a "natural Canadian nation." They were particularly anxious to seize the opportunities for nation-building opened up by Confederation, especially when it was tied to the promise of Canada's own manifest destiny in the western territories. Canadian nationality, they estimated, could be given form and purpose through territorial integration, western emigration, linguistic and institutional homogenization, and the creation of a national literature and common historical heritage.

According to William A. Foster, one of the intellectual leaders of Canada First, the movement's aim was to create the equivalent of a national consciousness and will, as well as a "collective morality." With unbounded Romantic fervour he embellished the "loyalist" history of Canada's survival against American aggression ("we need not ransack foreign history for valorous deeds") and purposefully emphasized the joint suffering of English and French Canadians alike against the common foe. Foster concluded that the difficulty in creating a new nationality "is not in the multitude of differences, real or fancied, that exists, but rather in finding some common basis of agreement strong enough to counteract disintegrating tendencies."⁹ Robert Grant Haliburton, in particular, attempted to impart a distinctive ethnic character to the new nationality with his vision of the "Northmen of the New World" as descendants of Nordic races and inheritors of a northern climate which would impart physical hardiness and moral fortitude. (French Canadians were included in this categorization by virtue of their Norman ancestry.) According to Haliburton the northern races were trustees

of liberty, and in Canada "the cold north wind that rocked the cradle of our race, blows through our forests, and breathes the spirit of liberty into our hearts."¹⁰

While Canada First advocated a new Canadian nationality it did not entertain separation from the Empire. To a significant degree this stance was a reaction to declining imperial protection in the face of potential American aggression.¹¹ These fears of American expansion had been given considerable credence by the pompous bellicosity of many Americans emboldened by their victory in the Civil War and infuriated by British and Canadian sympathies for the South. At first, there was serious apprehension that the victorious North would turn its armies against Canada to humiliate Britain and enlarge American hegemony. Even when this invasion of regular troops failed to materialize, Canadian suspicions were still given credence by the Americans' failure to control the Fenian raids in 1866. The same year the Americans let the 1854 Reciprocity Treaty lapse, both to protect their own national economy, and with some hopes of provoking annexation. Meanwhile, Yankee "Manifest Destiny" threatened in the British West in the form of outgoing waves of settlers carried on rapidly extending American railroads. Even the ardent nationalists of Canada First conceded that Canada was relatively powerless to withstand annexation on its own. "She must lean somewhere for support," wrote William Foster, "and her inclinations, if not her interests, lead her to prefer a species of dependence upon the mother country, which shall be something more, though perhaps not much more, than a national alliance."¹²

At the same time as there were fears of American annexation, it was painfully obvious that the dominant British laissez-faire doctrine was opposed to intervening on behalf of its former North-American colonies. To overcome British reluctance, Canada Firsters urged that Canada earn Britain's respect as a useful ally rather than be perceived as a burdensome dependency. Foster agreed with Colonel T. Denison in predicting that the British connection would in time be transformed into an "alliance of nations," but that this eventually would assume the pre-existence of a Canadian nation. All Canadian Firsters were very sensitive about their colonial status and its stigma of inferiority, and Denison in particular urged Canadians to have more confidence in themselves and stop looking up to Britain as a superior. Indeed there was considerable resentment against Britain for cheating the embryo Canadian nation of necessary protection and support, until it could realize its full heritage of equal status within the Empire. William Kirby well expressed these ambiguous sentiments when he complained to Lord Tennyson that it is true that "we have but four millions of people in Canada ... but taking us individually we feel that we are the equals in every respect - and perhaps superior in loyal devotion to our Queen and flag to any four millions of our fellow subjects at home - How dare they - and by what right can they suggest our severance from the Empire which is as much ours as theirs."¹³

Canada First's concept of a new nationality in North America clearly held many ambivalences. Although its advocates sometimes attempted to reconcile the ethnic differences between English and French Canadians, they more often demonstrated the common "Britishness" of the new nationality, and made little pretense that Canada was uniquely different from the Motherland. However, the wider loyalty of Canada Firsters derived from traditional affection for the Crown more than Britain itself, and they were hardly content to continue Canada's subordination to Westminster. But, it was symptomatic of the status of Canadian nationalism in the 1870's that there were few other Canadians who supported any change from the colonial status quo in external affairs, and Canada First was strongly criticized for subversive separatism! Canada First expired by 1874 and its political progeny, the Canadian National Association, was destroyed two years later by the Liberal and Conservative parties. Canada's flirtation with romantic nationalism had only infected a very small minority of intellectuals and lasted less than a decade.

Instead of searching for a "natural" nation, or questioning imperial relations, most Canadians were busy with the practical tasks of nation-building. In the last quarter of the nineteenth century Canada emulated Europe and America in trends to closer economic integration by advancing its own "National Policy," based on continental railway construction, western agricultural settlement, central industrialization and tariff protection. Although the economic success of that National Policy was

sometimes questioned, the political advantages proved paramount.¹⁴ On the one hand, the National Policy was a declaration of Canadian determination against economic and political absorption by the United States.¹⁵ On the other hand, however, loyalty to the British connection was reinforced by the massive influx of British immigrants and financial capital, and Britain's tariff concession as "most favoured nation." The dual appeal of the National Policy was clearly demonstrated in the 1891 National Election when the Liberals campaigned on a proposal for unrestricted reciprocity with the United States. John A. Macdonald successfully countered the Liberals by emphasizing the threat of continental annexation and evoking loyalty to the "Old Man, the Old Flag, and the Old Policy." In the minds of many Canadian electors the country had not only been saved for itself, but also for the Empire.

A new Canadian imperial movement provided much of the intellectual opposition to North American continentalism, led by Colonel G.T. Denison (one of the founders of Canada First), the Reverend G.M. Grant, and George Parkin. Most of their invective was directed against the British-born, polemicist Goldwin Smith, a one-time Regius Professor at Oxford, whose pontifications on "Little Englandism" had been the delight of Cobden and Bright.¹⁶ As a contribution to Commercial Union, Goldwin Smith had published his Canada and the Canadian Question (1891), baring the failures of Confederation and the inevitability of absorption into the United States.

In sweeping style, Smith described how Canada was made up of four separate north-south regions, each of which is "closely connected by nature, physically and economically, with that portion of the habitable and cultivatable continent to the south of it which it immediately adjoins, and which are its natural markets." He then rhetorically asked "whether the four blocks of territory constituting the Dominion can forever be kept by political agencies united amongst themselves and separate from their continent, of which geographically, economically and with the exception of Quebec, ethnologically, they are parts, is the Canadian question."¹⁷

Goldwin Smith's answer was a most emphatic "no."

Goldwin Smith's pessimism was promptly countered by G.M. Grant in his review of "Canada and the Canadian Question."¹⁸ Grant recognized Smith's analytical cogency but regarded his arguments as "so brilliant, so inaccurate, so malicious even, that it is enough to make one weep." He claimed that since Smith was not a native Canadian he was "almost incapable of rightly understanding Canadian sentiment," but most of all he attacked the determinist and materialist assumptions of Smith's laissez-faire rationalism. "Surely geography is not the sole or even the primary factor in the formation of nations," he replied, and besides the "perpetual insistence on the material prosperity that union would bring, appeals far too much to the baser side of human nature," and does not recognize the primacy of "moral power." In effect, Grant argued that the objective deficiencies of Canadian nationalism, whether they be political, geographical or cultural, could be overcome by the subjective power of national determination.

George Parkin agreed that Canada would survive because it did not want to become American. Like Grant, he held that a strong national will would overcome all natural obstacles, and would develop Canada's east-west economy to support "political individuality independent of the United States." "It is scarcely possible," he claimed, "to imagine conditions under which communities kindred in race, language and literature, could have had a more decisive and divergent bias given to their history, to national traditions and enthusiasms, to everything that lies at the root of individual political life."¹⁹ Others were more categorical in denouncing everything that was considered to be American, including republicanism, individualism, commercialism, lawlessness and the "negro problem."²⁰ However, anti-Americanism was not the only motivation for Canada's survival, because, as Parkin concluded, its border with the United States divided those opposed and those loyal to the "British nationality."²¹

Although imperialists were determined to defend Canadian independence in North America, they had no intention of separating from Britain. Part of the argument for imperial unity was reminiscent of the conundrum faced by Canada First - separatism would be virtually synonymous with annexation, because Canada was incapable of defending itself single-handedly against American military aggression. In one typical address Grant claimed: "All I can say is that a country that is not independent is not a country for free men, and that Canada separated from Britain could not be independent."²² Similarly, Sir Oliver Mowat, the Premier of Ontario, told an audience in 1892

that there were only two, not three alternatives before Canada - annexation to the United States or connection with Britain. Thus, in the end the choice was reduced to "Imperialism or imperialism."²³ Unlike the times of Canada First, however, Canadian hopes for imperial solidarity were now reinforced by a growing segment of British opinion which was turning away from traditional laissez-faire doctrines. In the late nineteenth century, the international balance of power was dangerously shifting against Britain, and fin-de-siècle imperialists such as Seeley, Froude, Dilke, Chamberlain and Rosebery sought to employ the collective resources of the Empire as a political, military and economic counterweight.

In Canada, George Parkin mirrored British concerns by emphasizing the fact that only one-eighth of Britain's working class were employed in agriculture, and that since two-thirds of their consumption was imported, starvation could result after only six months of embargo.²⁴ Borrowing heavily from the geopolitical theories of Mackinder, Mahan and Seeley he stressed Canada's potential role as a "keystone" of imperial defence, by virtue of its strategically located ports and coaling stations, the connection of the Atlantic and Pacific by railways and telegraphic communications, and the flow of food from Canada's imperial granary. At the same time, Parkin claimed that Canada had maritime and trading interests to protect in common with the rest of the Empire: "All the colonies are parts of the same great body; all would alike suffer from the weakness of the whole. All would gain indefinitely from united strength."²⁵

Opposition to separatism, however, went much deeper than the protection of common interests, deriving as well from a holistic view of Anglo-Saxondom. This not only included the inheritance of common institutions, traditions and a literary culture, but as D.L. Cole has argued: "More important to that age which produced its Karl Pearson, H.S. Chamberlain, and Robert Knox and read its Froude, Seeley and Dilke, was the idea of kinship."²⁶ Thus, Grant often spoke of Canada as a "British nationality" which was tied to Britain and the Empire by race and blood, and Denison appealed "to the traditions of race, and ties of blood and kindred."²⁷ Parkin used such terms as "Anglo-Saxon," the "British nation" and the "Empire" virtually interchangeably, and tied Canada's future to a "higher national problem."²⁸ Equally as important was the attraction of sharing in the prestige, excitement and commitment of the largest Empire in the history of the world. "By the perception of increased power and influence," wrote George Foster, "and the appreciation of future possibilities, there has arisen, first in a dim sort of way but gradually gaining clearness and strength, the sense of power to be exercised within the Empire, of responsibility to imperial duties, of attainment to imperial ideals, and of cooperation in the advancement of imperial destinies...."²⁹

Leading Canadian imperialists such as Grant, Parkin and Denison did not conceive of Canada being necessarily subordinate to Britain, and indeed they aspired to a more influential role for Canada in international affairs. They were thoroughly imbued with the Victorian ethic of "progress,"

particularly in its context of the Anglo-Saxon genius for self-government. These imperialists could have easily agreed with the Canadian constitutionalist John S. Ewart, that Canadian political history was "the relation of our rise from complete subordination to almost complete independence," but disagreed that this would climax in separatism. Instead, national liberty would be achieved through a federation of the Empire with reciprocal rights and responsibilities between Britain and the Dominions. "Imperial federation, from a Canadian point of view," claimed G.M. Grant, "means simply the next act in a process of political and historical development that began in 1763."³⁰ The small minority of imperialists who advocated federation wished to use it as a means for expanding Canadian power by gaining influence over imperial foreign policy. By comparison, at the end of the century, the majority of imperialists supported closer cooperation between Canada and Britain - but without changing the status quo of formal political relations within the Empire.

The foregoing interpretations suggest considerable complexities in Canadian national loyalties which do not accord with traditional assumptions of a primary and exclusive loyalty to one nation. English Canadians were, in fact, members of two overlapping nations respectively based on the Canadian state and the British Empire. It is this duality of national loyalties which explains two apparent contradictions in English Canada's support of imperial defence. First, most English Canadians freely contributed to a centrally-controlled system of imperial defence without strongly pressing for a commensurate share in the determination of imperial

policies that governed why, when, where and whom they would fight. Second, whilst English Canadians acquiesced in Britain's control of military and foreign policies for the entire Empire, the majority steadfastly opposed any proposals for imperial political centralization that threatened Canada's de facto sovereignty over internal affairs.

As D.L. Cole confirms, a major problem in analyzing Canadian nationalism is that "despite all that historians have written on dominion nationalism, there are no definitions, no models, no ideal types appropriate to nationalism in settlement colonies."³¹ Accordingly, the first chapter in this thesis is devoted to describing factors of nationalism in Canada which postulate dual loyalties to the Canadian state and the British Empire. This description provides a basis for analyzing nationalism in Canada through the actions and deliberations of major Canadian policy-makers. In subsequent chapters it is both tested and confirmed by interpretations of three issues which collectively trace Canada's increasing military commitments to imperial defence:

1. Canada's contribution of an official contingent to the Boer War in 1899;
2. Canadian cooperation with Britain in coordinated imperial defence between 1906 and 1912;
3. The increase of Canadian contributions to the First World War culminating in the "Conscription Crisis" of 1917.

CHAPTER ONE

TOWARD AN UNDERSTANDING OF CANADIAN NATIONAL LOYALTIES

The purpose of this chapter is to outline and describe the major historical factors which explain the apparent confusion of Canadian loyalties to their own emerging state and the British Empire. These factors are specifically applicable to the period from the Boer War to the First World War when Canada became increasingly involved in imperial defence. They are a synthesis of current theories of nationalism and the substantive development of Canada in the nineteenth century. In addition to well-known historical writings, a broad range of sources was used from the social sciences including sociology, social psychology, political geography, communications and international relations. The purpose of this multi-disciplinary approach is, in the words of the Social Sciences Research Council, to suggest and test possible historical interpretations "upon the basis of more inclusive and sharply defined criteria of what is significant and what is not."¹

Four factors have emerged as critical and may be summarized as follows:

- (a) Early Canadian state-building was a product of political and economic integration, and was weakened both by a lack of a homogenous culture and a long historical tradition. It

followed that expressions of early Canadian nationalism were restricted largely to parochial and materialistic concerns of internal self-government and economic welfare.

- (b) Whereas nations (as collections of people with the same heritage and culture) are frequently coterminous with states (the political institutions governing a particular territory), the weaknesses of Canadian nationalism were reflected in the existence of two other overlapping national societies. Besides being loyal to the Canadian state, English Canadians were also members of a wider imperial nation centered on London, and French Canadians also had their own minority national culture.
- (c) English Canadians and others were bound together in the larger imperial nation by their own national ideology, including consciousness of an exclusive Anglo-Saxon membership, a belief in ethnic supremacy, a desire for national unity against common enemies, and a national mission of progress and expansion. However, much of the impetus for imperial nationalism came from without Canada, especially from Britain's fin de siècle imperialists who were concerned with the threat to Britain's interests from its European rivals.

- (d) Initially, the emotional appeals of imperial nationalism complemented the national loyalty of English Canadians to their own state. However, French Canadians had difficulty reconciling loyalty to Anglo-Saxon imperialism with their own cultural aspirations. Moreover, imperial policies determined by Britain would in time conflict with Canada's own broadening national interests, and consequently result in a weakening of Canadian loyalties to imperial nationalism.

Canadian Nationalism

"Nationalism," writes Hans Kohn, "is not the same in all countries at all times. It is a historical phenomenon and thus determined by the political ideas and the social structure of the various lands where it takes place."² However, a substantial body of analysts have emphasized cultural definitions of nationalism to the exclusion of any other significant political and economic factors. This trend was started by Lord Acton's famous essay on "Nationality" (1922) in which he vehemently rejected the Kantian synthesis of nation and state.³ Later 'Actonians' include Benjamin Akzin who makes a fundamental distinction between the cultural phenomena of the nation and the political apparatus of the state.⁴ Most influential of all has been Elie Kedourie whose Nationalism is the most widely cited reference in its field.⁵ According to Kedourie, nationalism per se is the preserve of the German romanticist philosophers with their reductio ad absurdum metaphysics,

totalitarian demands for loyalty, and exclusive racist determinism. Indeed, he goes so far as to conclude that it is inappropriate to associate the concept of nationalism with commitment to British or American institutions! Such exclusive definitions of nationalism are too narrow, and the recognition of other political and economic factors is especially important for understanding Canadian nationalism.

The Actonian tradition stresses objective criteria of national membership including common customs, language, religion, and ethnic origin, and a well-established territory. Hans Kohn has countered that, while such objective factors are of "great importance," the most important element of nationalism is "a living and active corporate will."⁶ Carlton J. Hayes has added that the philosophy of nationalism originated as a political re-evaluation of the relationship between the state and its citizens, and, at first, comparatively less attention was given to defining the nation itself.⁷ Subjective definitions of nationalism were made as early as John Stuart Mill, who defined nations as "a portion of mankind ... united amongst themselves by common sympathies," and Ernest Renan, who compared the nation to an "everyday plebiscite." More modern theorists, such as Frederick Hertz, who have endorsed the subjective view, caution that it should not be taken too far, for "the mere will does not yet make a nation."⁸ National consciousness and will, Hertz argues, must be rooted in some group motivations which bind the nation together and gives rise to its national aspirations.⁹ ✓

Using Hertz's terminology, what were the "national motivations" that bound Canada together? Canadian national feeling was weak at the time of Confederation because of the lack of a long history of intensive settlement, a well-established state, and an unchallenged, predominant culture group. Obviously Canadians were sufficiently motivated to withstand American continentalism by reason of economic interests and loyalty to the British Crown, and in the case of French Canada, by concerns for cultural survival. However, the most formative influence on Canadian national sentiment came after Confederation, and was the same state and economic integration that marked all modern capitalist societies in the late nineteenth century. Geographers have long associated the growth of the modern state with economic specialization and intensification of communication networks, and in 1947, R.E. Dickinson conceived of a "social unit" of interrelated activities, kindred interests and common organizations, brought into being by the transportation routes which bind it into the urban centres.¹⁰ More recently, the communications theorist, Karl Deutsch, has explicitly related these integrative forces to the growth of national interests and self-awareness. This pattern of nation-building was pronounced during the Industrial Revolution with its large scale manufacturing, specialization of labour, rapid urbanization, broadening interchange of goods and services, and expansion of railway and waterway transportation - all of which coincided with the rise of nationalism as a dominant political creed.¹¹

In time the interrelatedness, complexity and scale of economic ventures demanded more direct government intervention in regulating the "market place,"

sponsoring large collective endeavours and mediating the social impacts of industrialization and urbanization. These unprecedented state powers demanded wide public support that went far beyond individual interests, so modern states encouraged a "stake in society" for all classes - including the energetic and purposeful propagandization of national culture; Britain and Germany are the most notable examples. In the words of the Royal Institute of International Affairs' study on Nationalism there have been "reciprocal and vital causal connections between nationalism and the economic system."¹² The process of integration was facilitated by a strong pre-existent nationality but it also, in turn, intensified national consciousness and will. This point underlies Boyd Shafer's conclusion that in much of nineteenth and twentieth century Europe, "the nation in a sense created the nation-state, and the latter in turn shaped the nation."¹³ As D.M. Potter has noted, such theories contrast somewhat with the historian's "extremely strong predisposition to equate nationality and culture ... though community of interest is certainly at least one other important factor beside common culture which may bind an aggregate of individuals together."¹⁴

There are certainly many aspects of integration theory which suit the historic Canadian situation. Whereas Confederation did not unify one single homogenous and unique culture group, it did create a relatively stable political framework for the development of a vast transcontinental economy. The most visible beneficiaries were the financiers, railroaders and industrialists of Toronto and Montreal, but many more Canadians shared

common interests in the national economy - whether they were Ontario factory workers, Prairie farmers or British Columbian miners. The huge task of nation-building was beyond the powers of private enterprise, and there was wide and intensive government intervention in securing western territories, financing railway construction, promoting immigration, assisting western settlement, and raising protective tariffs. As much as private enterprise was very dependent upon the state, the state in turn had considerable investments in the national economy, and Canadians naturally associated their share in a community of interests with a stake in the future of the Canadian state.

Canada differed from many integrated European nation-states, however, in that it did not start with a single well-defined national group, and indeed French Canada was largely excluded from much of Canada's economic integration. The Canadian experience can be described as an extreme of "economic nationalism" where national motivations were primarily economic, and national aspirations were almost totally concerned with self-government over economic affairs. ~~*~~In all other aspects, Canadian national sentiment remained weak. ~~*A single language is not a prerequisite of nationalism~~ but in Canada's case the two national languages reflected fundamental differences in what Deutsch has called "communicative empathy."¹⁵ Likewise, as J.C. King has observed, where all the national prerequisites of geography, communications, history, literature, language and religion are "present in a nation to a high degree, the national solidarity of that nation will be high. Where the majority of these elements are present to a small degree, the national solidarity is likely to be weak."¹⁶

To conclude, there was an emergent Canadian national feeling by the end of the nineteenth century, but the success of state and economic integration was still insufficient to overcome the lack of a distinctive and unified Canadian culture. The emphasis on economic considerations also narrowed Canadians' political vision, and it followed that such aspirations as there were for national unity, liberty, individuality and prestige, were parochial and materialistic, rather than visionary and idealistic.

Overlapping National Societies

As described by Florian Znaniecki, a nation "is more than a collection of people psychologically united by common interests and claims. It must be in at least some degree socially organized." Notwithstanding the importance of the state in integrating and implementing Canadian aspirations, nations can be sustained by other forms of social organization. Furthermore, individuals can belong to a number of overlapping national societies within and beyond the state.¹⁷ The weakness of Canadian national feeling was in fact reflected by the existence of a wider national society based on the British Empire, as well as by a minority French-Canadian national society.

Just as Canadian development can be explained in terms of social integration, J.E. Dougherty and R.L. Pfalzgraff have explained that a similar perspective is valid at the international and intra-state levels.¹⁸ Deutsch also has concluded that some clusters of national societies maintain a larger degree of interrelatedness amongst themselves as compared with

other such societies, hence constituting a "great society."¹⁹ In such cases, the "national interest" and indeed "national sovereignty" are very much relative terms.²⁰ Such a relationship was especially true in the case of the British Empire because of the continuing subordination of the Dominions to Great Britain. This relationship was not forced upon the Dominions, however, but was maintained by the persistent loyalty of the Dominions and London's pervasive metropolitan influence.

The importance of metropolitan influence in Canada's national development has been described by J.M.S. Careless. Metropolitan centres extended their influence through a hierarchy of successively smaller centres by communication networks of railways, roads, telegraph lines and shipping lanes, which "transmit people and their ideas and customs as well as material goods."²¹ At the turn of the century, London was the hub of communication lines radiating throughout the Empire by which it developed and sustained centralized political, commercial and cultural power. In Careless's words this continuing metropolitan influence was undoubtedly a major factor "in a portion of North America that did not undergo an evolutionary upheaval, emotional and political to break ties with Europe, and which continued to place a special premium on the word British."²²

London's metropolitan dominance was first transmitted to larger colonial centres and then in turn through smaller settlements to the frontier. In time, colonial outposts in Canada would become metropolitan centres in their own right: by providing much of the financial services and industrial goods required for their own hinterlands; by asserting more political and

cultural leadership; by intensifying their subordinate communication networks; and generally by initiating and sharing in their region's economic and social development. The centres of Toronto and Montreal played an important role in Canada's so-called "National Policy" of transcontinental railways, western agricultural settlement, domestic substitution of industrial imports, and protective tariffs. Not only was Canada's national integration advanced but there was some "closure" against London's outside metropolitan influence. However, Montreal's metropolitan influence was not so successful in integrating French Canadians into the Canadian state, because it was largely controlled by English-speaking interests who were unrepresentative of the surrounding agricultural hinterland. Also, it would take some time before Canadian metropolitan centres became powerful enough to initiate substantial economic, political and cultural influence over their hinterlands, instead of serving to disseminate London's influence more efficiently.

Thus, there were three overlapping national societies at the turn of the century - the Canadian nation-state dominated by the English-Canadian majority, the pan Anglo-Saxon nation of the British Empire, and the French-Canadian minority group. All three national societies were tied together by varying linkages, but were also marked off from each by comparative drops in the level of integration. French Canada was connected to the rest of Canada by political, and to a lesser degree, economic linkages, but was totally separated by its different culture. Conversely, the English-Canadian majority had closer linkages with the Empire than it did with

French Canada, and although the Canadian state was increasingly becoming more independent, it was still relatively highly integrated with the rest of the Empire.

Imperial Nationalism

Although Anglo-Saxons throughout the Empire shared many of the same traditions, interests and ideals, this by itself does not necessarily form the basis for a national society. Nationalism only exists when a significant proportion of group motivations are directly related to the idea of nation, form the "national ideology," and give rise to a "national will." As Hertz writes: "The substance of the national ideology consists in ideas of the character of the nation and that of other nations, on its mission in the world, on the tasks of the state and the duties of the individual towards the nation."²³ As D.L. Cole asserts, imperial nationalists in Canada did subscribe to a wider "Brittanic" nationalism which had all three components of other "pan-nationalism" movements; including a consciousness of common national background, culture and history, a desire for national unity, and a national mission.²⁴ For them, Anglo-Saxons were a national society.

The ideology of Imperial nationalism originated in Britain and was quickly disseminated to all the self-governing Dominions, where it quickly gained favour. Up to the last quarter of the nineteenth century, the predominant British political ideology of Benthamite Liberalism had been

steadfastly opposed to the principle of imperial collectivization. As an extension of laissez-faire individualism at home, it was held that "enlightened" international relations would promote a world commonwealth based on unencumbered, national self-determination. The mechanism for achieving this millenium would be unrestricted free-trading to increase the "wealth of nations" for mutual economic and political benefit. The Liberals' aversion to intervening in the internal affairs of other European states did not prevent them from amassing the largest Empire in history, and indeed their rate of territorial acquisitions far exceeded that of the later British imperialists. Liberal dogma did require, however, that the white settlement colonies be allowed to govern their own affairs, and incidentally reduce the load on the British Exchequer for the crippling burdens of imperial defence.

Laissez-faire liberalism was successful as long as Britain maintained its paramountcy and everybody else played the game by the same rules.²⁵ However, when Adam Smith's "invisible hand" was replaced by Otto von Bismark's "iron fist," collectivist ideologies were far better suited to meeting the growing threat of military and commercial competition from integrated nation-states vying for international supremacy. Unifying and exclusive concepts of organic nationality aided collectivization, that is, the nationalization of the industrialized masses, state direction of national effort, and intensification of national pride and determination. Liberal nationalism was thus challenged on points of national unity versus individualism, class solidarity versus vested interests, citizens' duties versus personal rights, and state intervention versus laissez-faire government. In Britain,

the new political collectivism was most apparent in its fin-de-siècle imperialists who explicitly expanded the British nation to include the whole of Anglo-Saxondom.

The tenets of the imperialist movement were strongly rooted in Burkean conservatism. As much as any of the Continental philosophers reviled by the "Actonians," Burke had contributed to the growth of national chauvinism by pioneering an exclusive definition of nationality.²⁶ According to Burke, nations were the outgrowth of their own unique political, legal and cultural traditions, and thus were qualitatively unequal. In the case of the British nation it was superior because of its historical "genius" embodied in interlocking class responsibilities, traditional constitutional rights, and everyday codes of behaviour. Unlike Bentham, Burke did not postulate a world of equal states, and imperialism was acceptable on humanitarian grounds for uplifting less fortunate races. In the late nineteenth century, Burkean philosophy moved into more extreme forms through further emphasis on domestic collectivism, whilst applying Social Darwinist theories to international relations. The new system was epitomized by the widely-known philosopher, Benjamin Kidd, who argued that the internal competition of laissez-faire Britain would be replaced by external Social Darwinism between states.

The imperialist movement in fact integrated domestic collectivism and international Social Darwinism. Kidd, himself, reflected much contemporary British opinion when he extolled the virtues of the Anglo-Saxon race to survive in the "rivalry of nationalities," and to provide leadership for

other races. In the common language of the day, Anglo-Saxons had greater "social efficiency" because of "their strength and energy of character, humanity, probity and integrity, and single minded devotion to conceptions of duty in such circumstances as may arise."²⁷ As Richard Faber has observed, this deep concern with race was a driving force behind the promotion of Anglo-Saxon unity.²⁸ D.K. Fieldhouse has also emphasized that aspirations for imperial unity went far beyond the needs of British capitalists to secure raw materials and colonial markets, and was aimed at political power, prestige and security.²⁹ Fin-de-siècle imperialists such as J.R. Seeley, James Anthony Froude, and Charles W. Dilke argued that although the peoples of the Anglo-Saxon race had expanded out to the colonies, they were all part of the same nation. Consequently, the Empire should unify against growing international rivalry by pooling its resources for defence, promoting mutual trade, rejuvenating Britain's industrial masses and even creating an imperial state.³⁰

Britain's fin-de-siècle imperialists had their own intellectual following in Canada, notably among imperial federationists such as G.T. Denison, G.M. Grant and G. Parkin. Nothing could be further from the truth than Denison's extravagant claim that "the idea of a great United Empire seems to have originated in the North American Continent."³¹ Every important idea of the Canadian imperial movement derived from British philosophical and political ideas. First, they postulated an Anglo-Saxon nation bound by common traditions, interests and values. Second, they promoted domestic collectivism based on Burkean conservatism and frequently expressed in the

contemporary vernacular of an "organic" society. Third, they believed that international relations were determined by Social Darwinism, and hence greater "social efficiency" was needed to compete with national rivals. Fourth, they advocated the political and spiritual mission of the "white man's burden."

Just as the British were divided in their aspirations for the Empire, there were many Canadians who disagreed on the need for political centralization and trade protection. However, nearly all articulate English Canadians were imperialists. Even the earliest settlers from Britain were still imbued with a consciousness of common values, traditions and kinship, a collective pride in past history, and the satisfaction of applying Anglo-Saxon virtues to conquering natural obstacles, civilizing native races, and instituting self-government. These attitudes were reinforced by a continuous stream of British literature that filled Canada's intellectual voids, and the spiritual regeneration of influential Canadians who not infrequently revisited the Motherland. Moreover, the British character was carried by the recent masses of immigrants who swept westwards with no assimilation but to the land itself.

Patterns of Canadian Loyalty

Harold Guetzkow has defined loyalty as "an attitude predisposing its holder to respond toward an idea, person or group with actions perceived by the holder to be supportive of, and/or feelings which value the continued existence of, the object toward which the attitude is directed."

He goes on to describe national loyalty as directed towards a nation-state "in actual existence or still-to-be-realized."³² Many historians have defined nationalism in terms of loyalty. For instance, Carlton Hayes describes nationalism as "a condition of mind in which loyalty to the ideal or to the fact of one's national state is superior to all other loyalties...."³³ To Hans Kohn, "nationalism is a state of mind in which the supreme loyalty of the individual is felt to be due to the nation."³⁴ However, the existence of overlapping national societies in Canada requires a revision of such absolute definitions of national loyalty to fit the Canadian case.

D.M. Potter has reasoned that nationalism is not generically different from any other form of group loyalty and hence national loyalty is relative, with some nations enjoying more unity than others.³⁵ Indeed, Morton Grodzin's claims that individuals are first loyal to "specific groups, specific goals, [and] specific programs of action," and that national loyalty is only awarded indirectly "because the nation is believed to symbolize and sustain these values."³⁶ Most significantly, Harold Guetzkow employs a large arsenal of social theories to demonstrate that pluralistic loyalties may co-exist if they are furnishing compatible solutions to different needs. However, there are two notable situations in which loyalties to different objects come into serious conflict: where one loyalty becomes all consuming, or where another loyalty demands contradictory feelings and action.³⁷

At the turn of the century English Canadians comfortably subscribed to two national societies. The emerging Canadian nationalism was directed

to its own state but was largely limited to inward-looking and materialistic objectives of self-government over economic and social affairs. This was hardly surprising given the immediate challenge of nation-building and the lack of a distinctive and homogeneous culture. On the other hand, London's continuing influence reminded English Canadians of their Anglo-Saxon heritage and offered persuasive enticements for self-identification with an exclusive group, the vicarious pleasure of sharing in international power and prestige, and personal sacrifice to what Eric Hoffer has described as "some soul-stirring spectacular communal undertaking."³⁸ There was also the enduring loyalty to the Motherland because of emotional sentiments which transcended the individual's concerns with his own psychological and national welfare. Although imperial nationalism undoubtedly reinforced some private economic interests, its primary appeal was the strong sense of communitarianism which could not be satisfied by early Canadian nationalism.

✓ On the other hand, French Canadians could not subscribe to a wider nationalism based on exclusive Anglo-Saxon membership and directed towards moving Canada away from isolationism in North America. Because of their different culture, French Canadians also had less intense loyalty to the Canadian state. Benjamin Akzin's model of minority group loyalty in this situation holds considerable relevance.³⁹ Akzin contends that the intensity of group cohesion (C) varies with political loyalty to the polity (P) and ethnic loyalty to the nation (N). In a mono-ethnic polity the different loyalties are mutually supportive as represented by the formula $C = P + N$, whereas in a polyethnic state the intensity of cohesion for all but the

dominant ethnic groups is represented by C = P - N. However, in evaluating the significance of minority ethnic groups a distinction should be made between nationalities and nations. Nationalities are defined by Azkin as a group that has exceeded local dimensions and wishes its common traditions, interests and ideals to be awarded significant political concessions by the ruling state. > By comparison, far greater divisiveness is implied by nations (French) which are distinguished from nationalities by their wish to have their own state, or at least obtain more autonomous rights. In terms of these distinctions, in the late nineteenth century French Canada was far more a nationality than it was a nation.

* English Canadians were able to maintain their dual loyalties as long as they did not contradict each other. For many, Canadian nationalism and imperial nationalism met distinctly different needs, for the first was concentrated on economic welfare and internal self-government, whilst the latter satisfied less tangible needs for cultural identity and moral purpose. A small proportion of imperial federationists did advocate an imperial "common market" and an imperial state, which reflected their overriding loyalty to the Empire (which is not to say that they admitted subordination to Britain's imperial leadership). However, the mass of imperialists were not federationists, and any serious impairment of Canada's domestic economic and political interests would compromise their loyalty to the Empire. Short of being forced to face a fundamental contradiction between their loyalties, English Canadians were able to make substantial concessions to imperialism. However, a final denouement was inevitable because the scope for compromise

was shrinking as imperial policy continued to represent Britain's central interests, whilst the Dominions broadened their own domestic interests.

To conclude, the Canadian nation-state was one of three overlapping national societies which also included French Canada and the British Empire. Canadians were variously loyal to one or more national society depending upon their ethnic background and the respective importance of their national aspirations. The following chapters describe how these different loyalties were brought into sharp contrast and gradually changed as Canada became increasingly involved in the military defence of the Empire.

CHAPTER TWO

"THE PRECEDENT IS THE ACCOMPLISHED FACT": CANADA AND THE BOER WAR

In 1899, English Canadians expressed their loyalty to imperial nationalism by successfully demanding the dispatch of an official Canadian contingent to support Britain against the Boers. The outbreak of hostilities in South Africa coincided with the peak of "pan Anglo-Saxondom" based on common ethnicity, the brotherhood of self-governing imperial states, and the worldwide mission of colonizing new territories, civilizing inferior races and maintaining the Pax Brittanica. The Boer War was the outlet for an accumulation of imperial enthusiasm that had been built up by Britain's pervasive influence throughout the Empire, whether by the intellectual diffusion of fin de siècle imperialism, popular appeals for racial unity by Chamberlain and the imperial press, dazzling demonstrations of imperial splendour at Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee, or the enduring patriotic sentiments of the massive waves of British immigrants. Imperialism found a sympathetic audience amongst English Canadians who were emboldened by the increasing strength of the Canadian economy, and now sought to demonstrate their equal stature as "Britons overseas."

Canada had no particular national interest in South Africa, although the historian Norman Penlington has claimed its involvement reflected a

"tacit Anglo-Canadian alliance to prevent Canada being swallowed up by the United States."¹ On the other hand, Canada would not have gone to war if South Africa merely remained a local British concern. After all, Britain's northward colonial expansion had brought it into constant conflict with the Boer farmers since the 1830's. After the formation of the South African Chartered Company under Cecil Rhodes in 1889, the growing confrontation of British interests with the Orange Free State and the Transvaal was not even visibly associated with the British government. It is very unlikely that Canadians knew or cared very much about the situation until it was exploited by Britain for a demonstration of imperial unity. Even when Cecil Rhodes' cronies "shot their bolt" in the widely publicized Jameson Raid of January 1896, there was no Canadian demands for action. Although the Jameson Raid coincided with a high point of anti-American feelings in Canada over the Venezuela Boundary Dispute, this coincidence did not even result in expressions of pro-British sentiments.²

The Jameson Raid was a turning point, however, because it brought home to Britain that its "paramountcy" was threatened in South Africa - particularly its position at the Cape and protection of the route to India. The gold mines of Johannesburg enabled the Boers to purchase massive amounts of armaments, which they imported through the recently opened Delgoa railway across Portuguese East Africa. There was also considerable evidence that the Boers would have an ally in Germany which was competing with Britain in the race for partitioning southern Africa. Britain was widely criticized throughout

Europe for its alleged part in the Jameson Raid, but nowhere so bitterly as in Germany. Britain's humiliation was completed by the "Kaiser's Telegram" which ominously congratulated the Boers in repelling the invasion "without help of friendly powers." The Kaiser also used the incident to stir up German public opinion into supporting a vast naval program directly aimed at competing with the Royal Navy, and German diplomacy proceeded to isolate Britain from Europe.

These events convinced Britain of the need to secure South Africa for the protection of its colonial interests, and to promote imperial unity against future European rivalry. The Boer conflict in itself provided little justification for Dominion participation. Despite Germany's posturing it had little capability for direct intervention in South Africa, and Britain's requests for a small number of Dominion troops showed that such assistance was not even considered a crucial factor for defeating the Boers. Chamberlain courted the Dominions only to draw them into commitments for imperial defence, and to serve notice on Britain's rivals that the full resources of the Empire could be employed if necessary. However, most of the initiative for contingents came from the Dominions themselves because of widespread loyalty to the Mother Country and the Empire. Public opinion was readily persuaded by imperial leaders and the press that the Boers threatened the power, prestige and moral purpose of pan Anglo-Saxondom.

In Canada, the English-speaking majority, most of whom were imperialists, supported a South African contingent. They concluded that the Boers not only threatened Britain's interests but those of the entire Empire, of which Canada was as much a part as Britain itself. The Boer War offered Canadian imperialists an enticing opportunity to transcend their colonial inferiority and share in the higher purpose of a vast imperial undertaking. Rather than desiring to elevate Canada's national stature, they aspired more to prove their membership in Mr. Chamberlain's heroic vision of "that proud, persistent, self-asserting and resolute stock."³ Such attitudes do not imply that Canadian imperialists were not simultaneously Canadian nationalists. However, the costs of a contingent were inexpensive in terms of men and money and did not encourage close scrutiny of Canadian national interests, which were simply assumed to be synonymous with imperial unity. In any event, the motivations and aspirations of Canadian nationalism at this time were restricted to domestic concerns. There was, therefore, no conflict in the dual loyalties of imperialists to both Canada and the Empire.

Serious opposition to the Boer War came from anti-imperialists, because it marked a portentous movement away from isolationism towards imperial entanglements. This opposition was almost entirely restricted to the French-Canadian minority, whose loyalty to the British sovereign did not extend to the Empire as a whole. At the most, French-Canadians felt that their duty to imperial defence would be fulfilled by defending Canada against foreign invasion. Canada certainly had no national interest in South Africa, and any war fought there would necessarily be on behalf of Britain's interests and

hence should be its sole responsibility. Nor could a Canadian contingent be justified on the grounds of imperial unity. French-Canadians were naturally revolted by any appeals to a pan Anglo-Saxon nation which implicitly threatened their own minority culture.

The most important division within Canada on the Boer War was, therefore, between English and French Canadians on account of their differing imperial loyalties. Party differences were relatively less important for the Conservatives still had support in Quebec, and although the Liberals were heavily dependent on French-Canadian support they had more English-speaking members. The Liberals had come to power in 1896 by adopting many Conservative policies including the protection of Canada against "continentalism" by protective tariffs and increased militia expenditures. The following year, the Liberals awarded a special trade preference to Britain which reflected the strong economic ties behind more emotional appeals for imperial unity. Canada's transcontinental economy was now paying dividends, and in the last decade of the century Canadian exports to Britain had advanced to the point where British-Canadian trade was double that of British-American trade.⁴

Even the French-Canadian leader of the Liberals, Sir Wilfrid Laurier, displayed an ambivalent attitude to imperialism. Although he could not subscribe to any racial connotation of imperial unity, Laurier did possess what has been called a strong intellectual attachment to British political ideals.⁵ He closely associated himself with the Whig legacy of political liberty and justice as epitomized by Britain's protection of French-Canadian minority rights and the granting of responsible government. But, in perfect

consistency with these principles, Laurier was emphatically opposed to any system of imperial relations which would estrange the two founding races and depreciate Canadian autonomy. Laurier's dual loyalties to imperialism and Canadian nationalism could be quite complementary, but his beliefs were drawn into conflict with the new doctrines of Anglo-Saxon racism and imperial centralism.

The growing conflict in Laurier's thoughts was evidenced at Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee of 1897, which shortly preceded the Boer War and did much to generate imperial enthusiasm. The British trade preference recently passed by Laurier's government was widely seen as a magnanimous contribution to imperial unity. Indeed, the Canadian imperialists, George T. Denison and George M. Grant, were so impressed that they promptly transferred their support to the Liberal party! News of the preference preceded Laurier's mid-summer visit for the Jubilee and he was gratefully received by the British public. According to The Daily Mail, Laurier as "a politician of our New World has been recognized as an equal of the great men of the old country," and as a crowning tribute he was selected out of all the colonial representatives to receive a knighthood. Laurier responded by expressing his strong sentimental support for the Empire, but his sweeping oratory often appeared to favour some form of federation, as when he declared to the National Liberal Club that "it would be the proudest moment of my life if I could see a Canadian of French descent affirming the principles of freedom in the Parliament of Great Britain."⁶

Laurier's opposition to imperial centralization, nevertheless, was clearly expressed at meetings of the First Colonial Conference, which Chamberlain convened concurrently with the Jubilee to turn the outpouring of imperial enthusiasm into practical effect. Chamberlain could be excused for not yet divining the "innate dualism" of Laurier's psychology. When Chamberlain proposed a central imperial council with Dominion representation, Laurier produced a majority resolution "that the present political relations between the United Kingdom and her self-governing colonies are satisfactory under the existing conditions of things."⁷ When Chamberlain proposed the sharing of Britain's military responsibilities on the grounds that every war it had fought during Queen Victoria's reign had, at bottom, a colonial interest, Laurier refused to make any commitments for imperial defence.⁸

Although Laurier would not be enticed into unqualified support of Britain's wars, he could conceive of situations where Canada would participate on its own volition according to the individual merits of the case. In an unguarded public speech at the Jubilee, Laurier promised that if England was in danger, then "let the watch fires be lit on the hills and Canada will be the first to respond."⁹ Unfortunately the fires would be lit very shortly on the South African veld, and it was almost certainly not the case that Laurier had in mind. After the failure of the Bloemfontein Conference with the Boers, Chamberlain requested Canadian support in South Africa. In a letter on July 3rd, 1899 to Lord Minto, the Governor General, he divulged the true nature of the impending war by pointing to the "difficult situation... as the technical nature of (the) quarrel are, in themselves, and taken

separately, of small account, but what is really at stake is the influence of Great Britain and the question of whether the British in South Africa are to be dominated by the Dutch."¹⁰ What better way to reinforce Britain's paramountcy in South Africa and its international power and prestige than a display of imperial solidarity? Chamberlain accordingly asked Minto to solicit a "spontaneous" Canadian offer to participate in "a great demonstration of material might."

Laurier was unimpressed by the need for Canadian support either on the "technical" grounds of the Uitlander problem or the supposed threat to the Empire. It has even been suggested that at this time he was sympathetic to the Boer cause and doubted the justness of Britain's position.¹¹ Laurier temporarily diverted Minto by arguing that the costs of outfitting and dispatching Canadian troops were too high. When Laurier's bluff was called by a War Office contingency plan for Britain to absorb all the costs, he was then forced to plead that available Canadian troops might be needed in Alaska, and he would face a "war" in Parliament if he submitted to imperialist pressures.¹² Laurier's caution shows his fears of aggravating the latent strength of imperial feelings in English Canada. Some influential Canadian imperialists were already promoting support for an Anglo-Saxon Jihad in South Africa, however. As early as May 1899, imperialist editors such as Hugh Graham of the Montreal Star (a Conservative paper) were demanding an imperial resolution of unity in case of war. By July 11th, the Vancouver Province (Liberal) was becoming impatient: "The South African war cloud looms larger than ever.... It will almost be a relief now when the first

rifle cracks." When news was received on July 13th of Queensland's offer of 250 troops, the sabre-clanking Colonel Sam Hughes rose in Parliament to demand a Canadian contingent. For many, the fraternity of Anglo-Saxondom was sufficient justification for a contingent, as demonstrated by the following article, from the Vancouver Province:

For years the Uitlander has suffered under the oppression of a horde of ignorant Dutch farmers. He has been ground under the heel of tyrannical rulers, insulted, humiliated, goaded past endurance.... Until now he has exercised that self-restraint which is part and parcel of his nationality.... By virtue of the English blood in his veins he is a man above all things - he has been treated like the meanest cur that ever crawled the street. 13

By comparison, "thinking" imperialists such as Denison had to be convinced that the Boers dangerously threatened the Empire before they were prepared to advocate active Canadian support to Britain. The South African League Conference of Kimberley had already appealed to Denison in his capacity as President of the British Empire League in Toronto, but he sensibly demurred on the grounds that "we know very little of the state of affairs in South Africa," and consequently referred the correspondence to the League's head office in London. Indeed, Denison's agrarian conservatism was antithetical to the gold-seeking Uitlanders who had flocked to the Transvaal, but he advised his associate G.M. Grant, who at this time was sympathetic to the Boers, to "keep quiet" because "we could not tell how events might shape, and we might have to take a strong stand on the other side." In mid-July Denison received a personal visit from J. Davis Allen, founder of the South

African League, and a close associate of Cecil Rhodes. Allen persuaded Denison to take a very decided stand against the Boers "because the power and integrity of the Empire was at stake," and the issue was whether "Britain was to hold the balance of power in that part of the world or would be driven out of it altogether."¹⁴

Davis-Allen's greatest achievement was to expedite a formal statement from the Canadian Parliament. He explained publicly, and to a private meeting of senators and parliamentary members, that a resolution supporting the Uitlanders would contribute to a peaceful solution. After twice meeting with Laurier he prematurely advised London that Laurier was prepared to introduce a resolution. However, Laurier's hand was forced on July 28th, when the Conservative Party declared their position through the Montreal Star that Canada should offer troops to Britain. To forestall the Tories and satisfy opinion in his own party, Laurier chose the lesser evil of a supporting resolution without any specific commitments to sending troops.¹⁵

Laurier's July 31st Resolution was passed unanimously in its three parts. The first part regretted the "complications" in the Transvaal Republic, and "the refusal to accord to Her Majesty's subjects now settled in that region any adequate participation in the government." The second part regretted that this situation had produced "dangerous excitement amongst several of Her Majesty's subjects in her South African possessions." The third part expressed sympathy with the efforts of the imperial authorities to obtain "justice and political recognition" for their subjects. Thus the resolution

itself was moderate in tone and made no commitments. The true feelings of English Canada, however, were more accurately expressed by Alexander McNeil, one of the two Conservative spokesmen and an ardent imperialist, who commented that if any offer of direct support was absent, "it is because everybody knows that material assistance is here, in Canada; at any moment, if it be required." The same day in the Senate, another Conservative observed that all the Prime Minister had to say was: "Boys, I want a thousand or so of you to go to the Transvaal and assist our fellow subjects there to discuss this matter with the Boers. It is a wild country and if you have a gun in your hand it will do no harm (Cheers)."¹⁶

When Laurier submitted the Resolution to Minto, it was futile for him to caution that the case did not seem to warrant military assistance, and that Britain would not be justified in asking the Colonies to "assume the burdens of military expenditures, except - which God forbids - in the case of pressing danger."¹⁷ Minto regretted that an offer of material assistance had not been made, but typically did not apply any pressure. In a letter to his brother he wrote: "From the point of view of a Canadian statesman, I don't see why they would commit their country to the expenditure of lives and money for a quarrel not threatening imperial safety." He also compared his "chief at home, thirsting for blood," with himself, whilst mindful of imperial responsibilities, "also seeing the iniquity of the war, and that the time for colonial support has not yet arrived."¹⁸

In contrast, the British officer commanding the Canadian Militia, Major-General Hutton, saw with unquestioning clarity his duty to plan a Canadian contingent for the inevitable outbreak of hostilities. In response to Chamberlain's enquiry of July 3rd, Hutton prepared comprehensive plans for the mobilization, transportation and deployment of a Canadian force. His plan was refused by Laurier on September 4th, but Hutton was aware of the real mood of English Canadians, and on the same day he advised Chamberlain that a government offer was "practically certain."¹⁹ Clearly, a demonstration of imperial unity would be best advanced by an official contingent, and Hutton successfully blocked all but one of eleven volunteer proposals. Only a proposal by Sam Hughes was seriously considered, but was eventually turned down. In any event, English-Canadian opinion was demanding nothing less than an official contingent.

On September 18th, the Tory leader, Sir Charles Tupper, told a Halifax audience that the government had correctly read public sentiment when it moved the July 31st Resolution, and it could do even better by organizing an official contingent - a chorus which was taken up by most of the Conservative press. It has been reasonably concluded that Tupper was offering bi-partisan support if Laurier decided to send a contingent, but threatening Conservative opposition if he refused to act.²⁰ On September 30th, Ontario opinion expressed itself at a meeting chaired by Sir Oliver Mowat, the former Liberal Premier, and a Minister in Laurier's cabinet. The meeting was addressed by Denison, who echoing Davis-Allen, warned that "for the last few years there has been a widespread conspiracy among the Dutch-speaking settlers over the whole of South Africa for the purpose of

ousting the British." Dominion support was needed because "reverses might be expected in the beginning; moreover, other great nations envied the power of Britain and would be ready to seize the opportunity if the Empire was in a tight hole." Indeed, he urged that not only should one contingent be offered, but another should be ready in case of emergency. Denison ended with the often repeated appeal by the Conservative press that "we have been children long enough, let us show the Empire that we have grown to manhood."²¹

It was obvious that Laurier's July 31st Resolution had fallen short of English-Canada's perceived need for imperial unity. On October 3rd, Laurier's hand was called by the editorial of the Canadian Military Gazette which featured a detailed Canadian military plan to be implemented if war broke out in the Transvaal; shorter versions of the piece were simultaneously carried by leading newspapers. The wealth of detail presented, and a reference to Hutton, created a lasting suspicion that he had deliberately leaked the story. There has never been any real evidence of Hutton's complicity, and it could have been written as a ploy by some disaffected militia officers to force Laurier into the open. If this was indeed the intent, the Military Gazette revelation was entirely successful. On the following day, October 4th, the Globe published a blundering rebuttal from Laurier. Contrary to his own recent interpretation of the Militia Act that Canadian troops could be legally dispatched overseas by the imperial government, he now claimed that this would only be justified for Canada's defence, concluding that in the case of South Africa there "is no menace to Canada."²² However, Laurier provided fodder for further controversy

by insisting that no offer would be made because only Parliament could vote the necessary costs (Parliament had been prorogued on August 11th). He ended by dismissing the statement in the Military Gazette as "pure invention."

Laurier's opposition to a contingent had now been clearly admitted. The situation was further exacerbated by a report published the same day as Laurier's rebuttal in the Montreal Star that "the British Government is tonight cabling to the Canadian Government that it gladly accepts Canada's loyal offer of troops for South Africa."²³ This was confirmed the next day by the release of an October 3rd cable from Chamberlain which was circulated to each colony with some minor differences. He requested official contingents from each Dominion with a minimum of 500 men which should be equipped and transported to South Africa at their own or the colony's expense, but on arrival would become an imperial responsibility. The press release prevented Laurier from keeping Chamberlain's cable secret, and it was probably a planned "leak" from the colonial office. The wording of the cable may also have been deliberately misleading for it was an edited version of a War Office letter accepting both government and individual offers from various self-governing colonies. However, in a private letter to Minto written the day after his cable, Chamberlain intimated that the real need was for a demonstration of imperial unity. "We do not intend to accept any offer from volunteers," he wrote; "We do not want the men, and the whole point of the offer would be lost unless it was endorsed by the government of the colony."²⁴

If Laurier had not already responded to the Military Gazette editorial, the Chamberlain cable would have obtained the same effect of forcing him publicly to take a position. As it was, public opinion in English Canada was doubly infuriated by the knowledge that Laurier opposed a contingent, even though Britain wanted the support. Incredibly, at the height of one of the biggest political crises of his career, Laurier left Ottawa on October 7th for an international gathering in Chicago to open a new American federal building. According to Willison, who accompanied him on the trip, Laurier still thought that if there was a war at all, it would be a "petty tribal conflict" and would not merit Canadian support. "Over and over again," however, "he declared he would put all the resources of Canada at the service of the Mother Country in any great war for the security and integrity of the Empire."²⁵ As yet Laurier would not admit that Britain's annoying requests for a contingent were more than matched in Canada by the enthusiastic support for practical and symbolic affirmations of Anglo-Saxon unity.

It is true that there were some feelings that Canadian participation in South Africa would serve Canada's own interests as well as support Britain in its hour of need. However, the Montreal Star was unusual in arguing that since Canada was dependent on British prestige to gain its rights in the Behring Sea and Alaska Boundary Disputes, it was in Canada's interest to sustain "imperial unity and imperial strength" in South Africa.²⁶

By far a more common opinion was that Canadians should prove their worth as members of the Empire instead of remaining colonial dependents.²⁷ The Montreal Star, itself, warned against Canada being "ranked as a colony of full dress parade cowards," and urged against any postponement of action, because Britain was fighting "for justice, civilization and extension of British liberty." During Laurier's absence, English-Canadian enthusiasm was further intensified by the "yellow press." The Hamilton Spectator repeated the myth that the Boers had dynamited a refugee train of women and children fleeing the Transvaal. The Ottawa Citizen (Conservative) bellowed: "It is about time that the Transvaal war demonstrated its inevitability."²⁸ The Montreal Star blazoned patriotic headlines such as "OUR COUNTRY MUST BE KEPT BRITISH" and "CANADA STANDS FOR THE FLAG - THE HEATHER IS ON FIRE."²⁹ Clearly, the majority patriotic appeal was to imperial nationalism, and Canadians would prove their worth by responding as Britons.

The racism of the English-Canadian press soon inflamed the open sores of Riel's execution and the Manitoba Schools issue. French-Canadians were bound to be threatened by racist glorifications of Anglo-Saxondom and jingoist calls for imperial wars, and indeed saw a close parallel between their situation and the Boers' struggle for cultural survival. Montreal's La Presse (Liberal) went to the heart of the matter by revealing the duality of English-Canada's national loyalties: "Nous Canadiens francais, nous n'appartions qu'a un pays, le Canada. Mais les Canadiens anglais ont deux pays, cette d'ici et cette d'outre-mer."³⁰ Ottawa's Le Temps

(Liberal) objected against "grabbing the taxpayers' money for a mismanaged exhibition of imperialism," and shrewdly evoked the doctrine of national self-determination:

Why should we go to the Transvaal? Either the Transvaal is an independent Country, or it is a British colony. If the republic is independent, Britain has no reason to impose her orders on the internal government of the country and we have no right to get mixed up in this open wrong. If the Transvaal is a British colony, the sister colonies are committing a desperate act in ganging up with the mother-country so as to crush a small people who wish to keep or win their independence: a natural goal for all colonies capable of going it alone.³¹

A minority French-Canadian viewpoint was advocated by Montreal's La Patrie (Liberal), which as the organ of Israel Tarte, Laurier's Minister of Public Works, promulgated his view on advancing Canadian autonomy within the Empire. Rather than arguing against a contingent, Tarte contended that if Canada was to bear the burdens of imperial defence it should also demand imperial representation - which closely resembled the objectives espoused by imperial federationists in English-Canada! However, while the majority of English Canadians were committed to imperial unity, they were disinterested in reconciling this position with Canada's own political status; besides Tarte's policies were probably wrongly dismissed as an anti-imperialist diversion when unquestioning imperial loyalty was required. Tarte's alleged influence with Laurier was well known, and now it was strongly suspected that the Public Works Minister was in turn being strongly influenced by the well publicized anti-imperialism of his parliamentary colleague,

Henri Bourassa. Tarte's frequent moments of unguarded criticism were reciprocated by the most vituperative racial attacks of the English-Canadian press. Ironically, the Toronto Mail and Empire (Conservative) accused Tarte of using the crisis "as a new opportunity to operate his wicked race cry - the anti-British cry." The Toronto Evening News (Conservative) denounced La Patrie's words as those of an "enemy," and Tarte was later described by the Hamilton Spectator (Conservative) as a "foreigner who controls the weaklings of the Canadian Cabinet."³²

The strength of English-Canadian commitment to imperial nationalism was shown by the fact that they placed imperial unity before unity in their own state. The ugly mood of reactionary imperialism was obvious when on October 12th, the Mail and Empire published a letter from Dr. G. Sterling Ryerson: "It is time, sir, to wake up in this country to the fact that we may have questions to settle which may not be set at rest by the ballot."³³ Willison's Toronto Globe could no longer remain aloof, and it deplored raising of the race issue by both the Mail and Empire and La Presse. As the official Liberal organ and Laurier's strangest supporter, the Globe attempted to take a moderate position, but even it decidedly took the British side against the Boers and advocated a Canadian contingent. Following an ultimatum by the Boers on October 9th, Willison pre-empted Laurier on October 11th, by announcing in an inch-high front-page headline: "WAR INEVITABLE -- THE CANADIAN CONTINGENT PREPARING." The same day the confrontation between English and French Canada was brought to a head when the Boers

simultaneously broke out on all fronts towards Makefing, Kimberley, Ladysmith and the Cape itself.

When Laurier returned from Chicago on October 12th, he found "a divided country and a divided Cabinet," and Laurier himself was similarly divided.³⁴ When passing through Toronto he met briefly with Denison and apparently indicated that he would send a contingent, "no matter whether it broke up his government or not" (Denison's words).³⁵ By the time his train reached Ottawa he had changed his mind, for he informed Minto that no offer would be made.³⁶ Laurier was to change his mind again quite frequently over the next few days, since he was faced with an insuperable dilemma. The strength of English-Canadian opinion had now been clearly demonstrated and could not be ignored. On the other hand, if his government endorsed a contingent it would be condemned by French Canadians as giving into imperialism.

When Laurier met his Cabinet on the same day he found it divided into three groups. William Mullock and David Mills headed a contingent of Ontario ministers, who, together with Frederick Borden, strongly advocated an official Canadian contingent at government expense. Equally strong in their opposition to any contingent were the Quebec ministers led by Richard Scott, an Irish Catholic, and Israel Tarte, who still maintained his position that Canada should not share in imperial wars without a concomitant share in imperial councils. Lastly, there was a group of moderates including Richard Cartwright, W.S. Fielding, and Clifford Sifton,

who felt that some Canadian action was necessary, but not beyond a force of volunteers at limited cost to the Dominion as set out in Chamberlain's October 3rd Circular. It was with this latter group that Laurier usually sided, and by the evening of October 12th, he had decided to send a volunteer contingent, although a regular militia contingent had been seriously considered by Cabinet.³⁷

On the next day, October 13th, Laurier met with a group of prominent French-Canadian Liberals, including Israel Tarte and Henri Bourassa. Laurier announced that he was going to offer volunteers, without consulting Parliament -- contrary to his October 4th promise in the Globe. Only young Bourassa's opposition broke the pregnant silence as he loudly criticized his chief's political morality, and warned that he would resign his seat. Laurier tolerantly replied that his friend lacked the practical spirit. Nevertheless, by the afternoon of October 14th, the Prime Minister had reverted to his original position that no offer should be made at all. However, Laurier was now in receipt of two significant letters which pointed the other way. First, in an uncharacteristic communique, Minto advised Laurier that if there were no offers, "it might be taken to indicate a certain want of cordiality here, which would be all the more unfortunate at a time we are relying a good deal upon Imperial support of the Alaska question, and in view also of Canada always having to rely to a great extent in any foreign complications on the sympathies and support of the British public." However, Laurier probably did not take Minto's "personal view"

very seriously, because no official statement had ever been received from the imperial government regarding the strength of their support for Canada against the United States. Common sense would also suggest that Britain would not risk a confrontation in North America when they were sending forces to South Africa and were wary of potential enemies in Europe. Second, and more significantly, John Cameron, a close confidant of Laurier and editor of the London Advertiser (the next most influential Ontario Liberal paper after the Globe), warned against the prevailing patriotic feelings being "headed by the Tories." He advised: "A strong high note from the Dominion Premier should be able to give them checkmate."³⁸

Although there is no evidence that Laurier changed his own personal opposition to a contingent, he was obviously confronted by a variety of contradictory influences.³⁹ None was so powerful, however, as English-Canadian public opinion which demanded nothing less than an official contingent. The imperial government had purposefully obstructed individual proposals for volunteers, but such individual displays of loyalty were not widely supported by English-Canadians, for their own primary objective was a display of imperial unity. Laurier knew that an imperial contribution would alienate French Canada, but to do nothing would risk a more serious backlash by English Canadians. In the end, Laurier had to condone an official contingent for the same reason that he originally opposed it, to maintain racial harmony.⁴⁰

By the evening of October 14th, Laurier had changed his mind for the last time, and he finally placed Order-in-Council P.C. 1618K on the Governor General's desk for his immediate signature. One thousand troops were offered instead of the five hundred suggested by the War Office, but otherwise Canada met the bare requirements of Chamberlain's October 3rd Circular. Although the government would organize the expedition, all the troops would be volunteers and Canada would only equip and transport them to South Africa, whereupon they would become a British responsibility. This offer was the best compromise that Laurier could manage in the circumstances. On the one hand, the Conservative opposition might be diffused because he had met Britain's own requirements and also offered a larger force. On the other hand, he hoped to pacify French-Canadian opinion by only offering volunteers for overseas service. Since volunteers did not come under the Militia Act, and because of the moderate expenditures, Laurier could justify not summoning Parliament as he had indeed promised on October 4th.

It is easy to see why Laurier wished to avoid calling a special parliamentary session. Emotions had reached a fever pitch in the long period of delay caused by his own indecision, and the situation would be further excaberated by any confrontation in the House. Some Ontario members would doubtless vie with each other for a stronger commitment to please their constituents, and the French Canadians would become more intransigent under increased pressure. The inevitable outcome would be the realization of

Laurier's two greatest fears: the permanent estrangement of Canada's two founding races, and a precedent-setting commitment to British imperial wars. In the last analysis, however, Laurier had not avoided his predicament, for it was impossible to maintain a distinction in the public mind between a volunteer offer and a commitment to imperial defence. In vain did Laurier include in the Order-in-Council the justification that "such an expenditure under such circumstances cannot be regarded as a departure from the well-known principles of constitutional government and colonial practice, nor construed as a precedent for future action."⁴¹

On October 18th, Bourassa fulfilled his threat by submitting an open letter of resignation from the Liberal Party. After rebuking Laurier for betraying his October 4th promise to convene Parliament before making a decision, the young critic continued:

And this unprecedented step was taken not at the request of the Imperial government but in response to a dispatch of the Colonial Secretary accepting the offer of service.... Is the British Empire really in peril and does it call for our arms to save it? Or are we faced with another attempt at the military federation of the Empire, a project dear to Mr. Chamberlain. The ministerial order which decreed the recruiting and the sending of our troop reserves, it seems...forbids this action from being considered a precedent.

The Precedent, Sir, is the accomplished fact.
The principle at stake is that prize axiom of English liberalism; it is even the basis of the parliamentary regime: No Taxation Without Representation. And the tax in blood constitutes the heaviest form of public contributions.⁴²

The first contingent offered on October 14th, was indeed, followed by more Canadian troops. At first the War Office was reticent to use more than token colonial forces, but after the crushing British defeats during "Black Week," the "colonials" were gratefully received. By the end of the war, Canada had contributed a total of 8,372 soldiers, including the privately raised Strathcona's Horse and a battalion raised entirely at Canada's expense to relieve for South African service, the British garrison at Halifax. The Canadians fought well, and by Kitchener's account played a decisive part in defeating the Boers at Paardeberg. Arthur Conan Doyle wrote later that "Smith Dorrien's Nineteenth Brigade, comprising the Shropshires, the Cornwalls, the Gordons and the Canadians, [was] very probably the finest brigade in the whole army."⁴³

There was considerable apprehensiveness that Canada would be shamed by its raw volunteers fighting next to Britain's seasoned veterans, and the news of Canadian successes was greeted with considerable relief and pride. The Montreal Star editorialized: "It might have been expected, to begin with, that 'raw colonials' would not have stood fire. It will never be expected again. Our volunteers have established the reputation of the colonial soldier. There is not a military camp in Europe where we will not be ranked higher for the sacrifice of these men."⁴⁴ Even Laurier was not unmoved by the Canadian success at Paardeberg, and shared his feelings with the House. "Is there a man whose bosom did not swell with pride," he said, "with the pride of the consciousness that day the fact had been revealed to the world that a new power had arisen in the west."⁴⁵

English Canadians had entered the war, not because of their own domestic interests, but because they wanted to be British. Canada's magnanimity in giving to imperial defence instead of taking, and the creditable performance of its troops showed that Canada was ready to take its honourable place in the reunification of "that proud and resolute stock" of Anglo-Saxons. In addition, active involvement in international affairs naturally led to some increase in Canadian national sentiment. Britain's Richard Jebb was wrong to claim that Canada's original demand for a contingent expressed its own emerging national consciousness, and he prematurely declared the demise of imperial nationalism, but he rightly anticipated that imperial alliance would only retain its validity by accommodating the inevitable growth of Dominion nationalism.⁴⁶

In Canada itself, W. Sandford Evans observed the growth in "self-government of a people who hold a land great enough and rich enough to support a nation, and who by years of common life and thought are becoming a distinct people in themselves." Evans believed that imperialism was a vehicle for Canadian nationalism but he was still rare amongst imperialists in recognizing that the Boer War had raised certain important principles. "First, the principle of closer relationship between the different parts of the Empire; second, the principle of sharing in the defence of Imperial interests; third, the principle of militarism in itself...as the inauguration of a policy of greater expenditure and the more frequent occurrence of actual conflict...; fourth, the general principle of taking part in that which Canada had no voice in determining."⁴⁷

English Canadians more commonly viewed their interests as being synonymous with imperial unity. Even after the defeat of the Boers in 1902 when many Britons questioned the legitimacy and moral conduct of the war, nearly all English-Canadians were totally satisfied by the self-evident achievement of imperial solidarity. Their attitude was typified by J. Castell Hopkins who described the Boer War as "a struggle for imperial unity as truly and fully as was the American Civil War." Defeat in South Africa would have damaged British prestige and, in turn, "the power of the great race to continue its mission of colonization, civilization and construction...." After all, the alternatives between Boer and British supremacy were "stagnation as opposed to progress, slavery to freedom, racial hatred to general unity, isolationism and seclusion to free colonization and settlement, the darkness of the African veldt (sic) to the light of European civilization."⁴⁸ There were very few who questioned what Canadian interests had been served by supporting Britain in South Africa: to safeguard the route to India, Britain's proudest colonial possession; to subjugate the Boers and protect Rhodes stock-jobbing interests; or, to maintain British paramountcy in the race for partitioning Africa?

Two imperial federationists, Denison and Grant, were amongst the few prominent English Canadians who carefully scrutinized the merits of a South African contingent before making up their minds. Although ardent supporters of imperial unity, they did not automatically concede imperial leadership to Britain in external affairs or assume that British and imperial interests were necessarily synonymous. Likewise, the only continuing opposition from

English Canada was by Goldwin Smith, an emigrant Englishman and notable Liberal non-conformist who was never reluctant to condemn the declining political moralities of his native land. In 1902, the same year as the publication of John Hobson's Imperialism: A Study, Smith claimed that the Boers like other small nations were victims of "a party of Imperial aggrandizement in alliance with the craving of capital for new markets."⁴⁹ During the Boer War his "Bystander" editorials were a lone voice amongst English Canadian newspapers in supporting the Boers and condemning British imperialism, but so much did he raise the ire of his readers that by the end of the war the circulation of his Weekly Sun had been cut in half.

Nearly all opposition to sending a South African contingent had come from French Canadians, because as their spokesmen Henri Bourassa claimed, they were an exclusively Canadian ethnic group whereas English Canadians were still "Britons overseas." Bourassa rightly concluded that Britain had promoted imperial unity to protect its own best interests, and he urged that future racial conflict would be avoided if both French and English Canadians considered all constitutional and political questions from "a purely Canadian standpoint."⁵⁰ Left to itself, Canada had no cause of conflict with any nation save the United States, against which Britain was impotent. On the other hand, Bourassa pointed to the Boer War as proof that Canada's flirtation with imperialism would increasingly draw it into international militarism.⁵¹

As Bourassa had asked the House in the middle of the Boer War: "What is the consequence? If we send 2,000 men, and spend \$2,000,000 to fight two nations, aggregating a population of 250,000 souls, how many men shall we send, and how many millions should we expend to fight a first-class power or a coalition of powers."⁵² Canada's entry into the international affairs of states would eventually lead to the growth of Canadian national sentiment and a concern with the best interests of its own state. However, Canadians were still more concerned with the need for imperial unity - at a time when Britain was inexorably being entangled in European militarism. The precedent was indeed the accomplished fact.

CHAPTER THREE

"INTO THE VORTEX OF MILITARISM": CANADIAN COMMITMENTS TO IMPERIAL DEFENCE, 1902-1912

The Boer War contingent was the precedent for Canada to assume increasing defence responsibilities outside its own territory in the critical period leading up to the First World War. This trend was more attributable to a wider Anglo-Saxon nationalism than to Canadian aspirations for advancing their own nationhood. It is true that participation in South Africa did raise the national consciousness of English Canadians, but national sentiment for their own state was still largely focussed on domestic self-government and economic welfare. By comparison, their continuing loyalty to the Empire was expressed by unquestioning support of imperial foreign policies determined in Whitehall, and commitment to a centralized system of imperial defence.

The dual loyalties of English Canadians to their own state and the British Empire explains why they, on the one hand, supported centralized imperial foreign policy and military defence, but, on the other hand opposed a centralized imperial council. Centralized legislative and executive power was absolutely rejected because it would have impinged on Dominion self-government, and compromised Canada's economic interests. On the other

hand, English Canadians were so loyal to the Empire that they did not even seek influence in an advisory council outside of limited consultation at imperial conferences. The result was that imperial military centralization was not counter-balanced by Canadian participation in the policy-making that determined how its forces could be employed.¹ Under Britain's unilateral direction, imperial foreign policies were solely concerned with the threat to Britain's interests, notably control of the balance of power in Europe. Thus Canada became drawn into what Laurier called a "vortex of militarism," which it had no part in forming, and which threatened Canadian national security without compensatory military benefits. There was certainly no "tacit Anglo-Canadian alliance" as postulated by Norman Penlington, because Britain provided no reciprocal defence against the United States, and Canada was secured from any other conceivable invader by American custodianship of the Monroe Doctrine.

It was in vain that the Canadian constitutionalist, John S. Ewart, urged independence so that Canada could look after its own best interests in the same way that Britain had always administered the Empire for its own benefit. "The present situation is unfair to us in every way," he claimed; "We are expected to assist in every British war, and we do not have the slightest assurance that any of our quarrels will be thought of sufficient importance to warrant war."² Ewart was completely unimpressed by calls for Anglo-Saxon unity which he criticized as an emotional absurdity based on racial instincts, rather than a rational expression of a community of interest. However, the vast majority of English Canadians still looked to the Empire

for the sense of cultural identity and purpose that was lacking in their own state. Because of this overriding loyalty, military contributions were simply justified as an act of imperial faith.

The concept of an Anglo-Saxon Empire and common military responsibilities was, however, completely antithetical to French-Canada's cultural survival and isolationism. Their anti-imperialism was championed by Henri Bourassa who constantly inveighed against the danger of drawing Canada into European militarism.³ Instead of advocating Canadian independence like Ewart, Bourassa advocated a return to the laissez-faire doctrine of "Selfish Little England and Little Canada," or in other words, England and Canada should each mind their own interests.⁴ Thus, Canada should only contribute to imperial defence by protecting its own territory to the best of its ability, because overseas commitments to imperial defence would only benefit British interests. While Ewart was an oddity in English-Canada up to the middle of the First World War, Bourassa's outspoken anti-imperialism won him overwhelming popular support amongst French Canadians.

As in the Boer War, public opinion on imperial military contributions broke down on ethnic lines. Similarly, Laurier was placed once more into the conundrum of compromising the diametrically opposed objectives of English and French Canada. Laurier dedicated himself to avoiding an irreconcilable conflict between the two founding races, but this time his personal position was also dangerously threatened. His procrastinations

In sending a South African contingent had confirmed many English-Canadians' suspicions of the tepidity of his imperial loyalties, and this made him even more dependent on his Quebec stronghold, where in turn his leadership was being threatened by Bourassa's criticism of his imperialist concessions. Laurier hoped that his strong opposition to permanent military commitments would appease French Canada's anti-imperialism - but this was only a realistic policy as long as English Canadians were satisfied with tacit support of imperial defence.

At first Laurier was able to appease French Canada without antagonizing English Canadians. Up to at least 1905, there was not a widely recognized need for collective imperial defence to support Britain in Europe. Moreover, Chamberlain's attempts to obtain Dominion military contributions were obviously associated with his plans for imperial federation. English-Canadians may have been imperialists but they were also Canadian nationalists when it came to economic self-interest and political self-government. By good design or chance, the National Policy originated by Macdonald and continued by the Liberals was producing obvious dividends. Canadian sovereignty over the west was assured by a massive influx of immigrants; the Prairie wheat economy was booming and was complemented by the rise of Ontario industry; and wheat and manufactures were carried on Canada's commercial railways and rapidly expanding merchant marine (the fourth largest in the world). Centralized political control within the Empire would clearly compromise Canada's successful economic protection because of

Britain's adherence to universal free trade. André Siegfried may be forgiven for concluding in his otherwise penetrating dissection of Canadian society in 1906, that the "imperialist ardour is abating very perceptively," whereas there was only a lack of support for Chamberlain's plans of political reorganization.⁵

When Chamberlain advised the Dominions in 1902 that he was calling an Imperial Conference, Laurier could safely reply that Canada's only interest was reciprocal trade within the Empire. During discussions in the House about Laurier's forthcoming visit, he easily diverted Bourassa's criticisms by producing the official correspondence confirming his refusal to discuss political or military union. On the other side, Laurier felt secure enough to reiterate Bourassa's fears in strongly replying to Robert Borden, the new Conservative leader, that he would not be drawn into the European "vortex of militarism."

If it is intended simply to discuss what part Canada is prepared to take in its own defence...certainly we are always prepared to discuss that subject.... There is a school abroad, there is a school in England and in Canada, and a school which is perhaps represented on the floor of the parliament, a school which wants to bring Canada into the vortex of militarism which is the curse and the blight of Europe. I am not prepared to endorse any such policy.⁶

When Laurier arrived in London in early June he was rightly confident that he could diffuse Britain's requests for imperial contributions, and satisfy French-Canadian anti-imperialism without raising the ire of English Canada. His negativism contrasted harshly with British expectations

for exploiting the sentiments of Anglo-Saxon unity heightened by Dominion participation in the Boer War. Chamberlain opened the Conference by tying together the three basic challenges facing the Empire: closer political relations; commercial union; and, imperial defence. He offered any Dominion that was prepared to shoulder a share in imperial burdens a "corresponding voice in the policy of Empire." For his own part he advocated the idea of a "real Council of the Empire, to which all questions of imperial interest might be referred," but unwisely elaborated that, although the Council may initially be advisory, in the long run it should have executive and even legislative functions for imperial defence and commercial relations.⁷ Instead of an imperial council, the Dominion leaders merely resolved to convene the normal consultative conference at intervals not exceeding four years. Turning to commercial relations, Chamberlain argued that the Empire was potentially self-supporting in its resources, and could minimize its dependency on the goodwill of foreign powers by increasing "inter-imperial trade." However, he lacked Cabinet support to reciprocate Dominion tariff preferences.

Chamberlain introduced the question of defence by pointing to the vastly disproportionate loads carried by the United Kingdom in comparison with the Dominions, and concluded that whereas this may have been excusable in their infancy, it was now "inconsistent with their dignity as nations."⁸ In the case of naval defence, Canada seemed particularly negligent because half its trade was carried in its own vessels, but it had no warships of

its own and expected free protection from the Royal Navy. By comparison, the Australian colonies contributed to the Australasian Auxiliary Squadron of the Royal Navy, and were seriously considering providing their own naval reserve for local defence. Australia's plans conflicted with the Admiralty requirement for complete control over all imperial naval forces ("one ocean, one fleet, one flag"), which was forcefully presented at the Conference by Lord Selbourne, First Lord of the Admiralty. Advancing Mahan's open sea theory and anticipating Admiral Fisher's doctrine of centralization, he argued that coastal defence was inefficient and that naval forces should be concentrated for offensive confrontation of the enemies' main battle fleets.⁹ It followed that the Admiralty must retain full control over the strategic deployment of all imperial naval forces. Australia and New Zealand obligingly agreed to extend their contributions to the Auxiliary Squadron, and substantial contributions to the Royal Navy were also promised by Cape Colony and Natal. Laurier could not risk holding out against such a demonstration of imperial unity, so he insured himself against possible English-Canadian criticism with the surprising pronouncement that Canada was contemplating the establishment of its own local navy.

The War Office was far less successful in procuring colonial cooperation. For one thing, they were unable to advance a coherent plan like the Admiralty, for even elementary matters of policy such as the use of troops in Europe was uncertain.¹⁰ Laurier strongly opposed proposals for Dominion reserves that could be used by Britain for foreign service throughout the Empire,

but did recognize the principle of Canada's responsibility for defending its own territory. A memorandum submitted by the Canadian delegation at the close of the Conference explained that imperial defence contributions were rejected "not so much from the expense involved," but because "it would entail an important departure from the principles of colonial self-government." On the other hand, as Canada advanced in wealth it would make "a more liberal outlay for those necessary preparations of self-defence which every country has to assume and bear," and to relieve the British taxpayers of some of their defence burden.¹¹

Chamberlain was greatly disappointed by what he called "the icy wind from the Canadian snows," and was forced to conclude that Laurier really wanted an "independent" Canada.¹² In fact, Laurier did not look for an independent Canada in the immediate future, and remained loyal to his concept of sentimental imperial unity - which could be turned into practical effect in an hour of need. He was well aware that imperialist elements in Britain might attempt to draw Canada into the European "vortex of militarism," but he could also conceive of the need for Dominion support to fight a just war for the protection of liberty and justice. Laurier opposed permanent military contributions that could be used to fight "imperialistic" wars, and tried to retain Canada's prerogative for providing support only when it was justifiable and necessary. When the Canadian Militia Act was passed in 1904 it was fully consistent with Laurier's position by overturning Britain's de jure rights to call the Militia out in time of war. It also included provisions for replacing the King's Regulations

with regulations drafted in Canada, placed the Militia under the control of a civilian Militia Council, and made provisions for military command by a Canadian officer.

As the Boer War had demonstrated, however, public enthusiasm for the Empire was not always conducive to well-reasoned decisions on Canadian interests. Nor could Laurier protect Canada's interests by merely rejecting the British Government's overtures for permanent military contributions, whilst Britain continued unilaterally to set foreign policies on issues of peace and war for the entire Empire. In 1903 Britain reinforced its prerogative for imperial foreign policy when the new Unionist Prime Minister, Mr. A.J. Balfour, strengthened what was later called the Committee of Imperial Defence (C.I.D.). Although cosmetic concessions were made to Dominion participation, the Committee was accountable only to the British Government. Indeed, since Balfour was the only permanent member, the Committee could not even include Dominion membership by right, and in practice, Dominion interests were frequently discussed in their absence.¹³

It was inevitable that Imperial policies unilaterally set by Britain reflected that country's best interests, and not necessarily those of the Dominions. Canada was expected to assist Britain against its European rivals, but without any reciprocal protection against Canada's most obvious enemy - the United States. The myth of Britain's protective umbrella had been painfully exposed when Canada opposed the United States in the

Alaska Boundary Dispute. Irrespective of the rights of wrongs of the Canadian case (and most Canadians thought they were right), the British conceded to American opinion even when there were overt threats of aggression against Canada. Many Canadians were outraged when the Tribunal announced its decision in 1903, not so much because Canada lost, but because Lord Alverstone apparently defected to the American delegation. John Ewart was prompted to question the utility of the British connection and urged that a forthright declaration of independence was both justifiable and urgent, so that Canada could be cut away, not from her "mother," but from her "owner."¹⁴ Even Laurier was angered enough to query whether Canada would be better to protect her own interests by obtaining treaty making rights, "so that if ever we have to deal with matters of a similar nature again, we should deal with them in our way, in our own fashion, according to the best light we have."¹⁵

It was abundantly clear that Britain was not prepared to provide Canada with diplomatic protection against her most obvious rival, but an even worse and more obvious truth was that Canada had been left militarily defenceless. As Clifford Sifton observed first hand at the Alaska Boundary Tribunal: "The United States would not recede, and England would not take any chance of a quarrel," and "that practically whatever the United States demands from England will be conceded in the long run, and the Canadian people might as well make up their minds to that now."¹⁶

The imperial defence of Canada had always presented a problem because of its long land frontier, and the comparative weakness of the British Army in comparison to the Royal Navy. Any semblance of military deterrance was completely eradicated at the beginning of the century by the Royal Navy's abdication of responsibility for Canadian defence. The turning point was perhaps the Hay Treaty of 1901 whereby Britain renounced any control over the Panama canal, hence laying the way open for an unopposed concentration of American ships in either the Pacific or the Atlantic. Only four years later the Admiralty conceded at a C.I.D. meeting that Canada was not likely to be invaded in any manner which the Navy could oppose, and flatly refused to accept responsibility for the security of Lake Ontario in a war with the United States, or even guarantee the protection of Montreal against enemy vessels coming up the St. Lawrence.¹⁷

Now that it was obvious that Britain would not intercede militarily in North America, Canadians were painfully aware that a belligerent posture towards the United States would be dangerously provocative, or at least, open to ridicule. Commencing in 1906, Canada initiated a major diplomatic role in "cleaning the slate" of conflicts with the United States, including the North Atlantic Fisheries and Bering Sea Seal Agreements, and establishment of the International Joint Commission to resolve internal waterway disputes. In all of this they were actively encouraged by Britain through Lord Grey, Governor General (1904-11), and James Bryce the British Ambassador in Washington, both of whom hoped to reconstruct the

racial bonds between Britain, Canada and the United States. Thus, although Britain was not prepared to protect Canada against the United States, possible aggression was minimized by substantial rapprochement between Ottawa and Washington. On both these accounts, the British connection was obviously redundant as a guarantee of Canadian military security. On the other side of the ledger sheet, Canada's continued association with Britain would at any time draw it into the European "vortex of militarism."

Britain's abdication from Canada's defence was symptomatic of an entire change in its defence policy to meet the growing German threat. The Boer War added force to considerable anti-British feelings throughout Europe, particularly in Germany. The large and well-organized German Army had no equal in Europe, but its impotence to intercede in South Africa convinced the Kaiser's General Staff of the need for a powerful navy. In 1898 the German Government capitalized on anti-British resentment by passing its First Naval Bill. A Second Naval Bill followed closely in 1900 based on Von Tirpitz's "risk theory," which postulated a strong enough German Navy to deter Britain against risking heavy losses and leaving it vulnerable to attack by a third power. Germany's plan to build up its naval strength directly threatened Britain's "two-power standard" for naval defence which assumed a large enough navy to counter simultaneous attacks by the next two largest navies.

Britain quickly saw the growing German navy as the greatest potential threat to its security, for by 1906 it would be the second largest in the world and would not have to be as widely dispersed as the Royal Navy. Moreover, Germany's overwhelming strength on land provided the biggest threat since "Napoleonic hegemony" to Britain's diplomatic manipulation of the "balance of power" in Continental Europe. Britain therefore left its "splendid isolation" as the detached umpire of European peace, and pursued a fourfold strategy of neutralizing potential sources of conflict outside of Europe to reduce its imperial defence commitments, concentrating its naval and military forces in Europe, allying itself with other European powers against Germany, and consolidating support from its self-governing colonies.

The first step was to secure the back door so that attention could be focussed on Europe. This explains why Britain was prepared to maintain peace with the United States at almost any cost. For instance, during British Cabinet discussions on the Hay-Pauncefote Treaty of 1901, the First Lord of the Admiralty urged ratification so that the United States Navy (at the time, the second largest in the world) could be safely excluded from the "two-power standard."¹⁸ The Anglo-Japanese Treaty signed the next year ensured the defence of Britain's interests in the Far East against Russian expansionism. These and other strategic re-adjustments in Britain's foreign policy facilitated unprecedented British naval centralization into one "Big Fleet" in the North Sea and a squadron in the Mediterranean.

During the period of Sir John Fisher's decisive leadership from 1904 to 1909, the Admiralty abolished its Pacific, South Atlantic and Caribbean squadrons, withdrew all battleships from the China, Australian and East Indies squadrons, scrapped 113 older ships, and closed five dockyards, including Halifax and Esquimalt, and used the savings towards financing a massive construction program of new "dreadnought" battleships.¹⁹

Within Europe, Britain systematically isolated Germany from the Triple Alliance, but at the cost of incurring fateful commitments to support her own new allies. France had been long considered Britain's principal enemy before the German threat, and it was a considerable diplomatic feat when Britain negotiated the "Entente Cordiale" in 1903. The circle was completed by signing the Anglo-Russian Convention in 1907, though the new "Triple Entente" was not fully operative until after 1908. Like Britain's abdication from the Western Atlantic and the Far East, these new European policies completely re-directed British military planning. Richard Haldane, who became the Secretary of State for War in 1905, centralized and reorganized the British Army with the same vigour as Lord Fisher. He quickly came to the conclusion that the prime purpose of the Army was not for home defence or reinforcement of the colonies, but rather to fight in Europe to support France in a war against Germany. A new British Expeditionary Force was established for that express purpose.²⁰

Few nations in modern times have so systematically and obviously prepared themselves for probable conflict against a specific enemy as did

Britain before World War I. The unmistakable fact was that Britain was preparing itself for a European war. Britain no longer had any intent, or indeed possessed the capacity to provide military and diplomatic protection to its colonies. Instead, it now actively sought their assistance not only to hold the outlying parts of the Empire, but even more so for reinforcements in Europe. Canada was left defenceless in North America and consequently had to make its own peace with the United States. Nevertheless, Canada was expected to support Britain against its European enemies without even the courtesy of real consultation. Britain's posture towards the Empire always reflected its own central interests, whether it was when the colonies were dismissed as burdensome "millstones" around Britain's neck, or less than a quarter century later, when they became a useful counterweight to the German threat. It would have been timely for Canadians to emulate the Motherland by critically evaluating their own imperial ties.

Imperialists, however, believed that the foreign interests of Britain and the Dominions were synonymous with those of the Empire as a whole. On this assumption it logically followed that the Empire was adequately represented by Britain's custodianship of one common foreign policy. The failure to consider Canada's national interests was compounded by Laurier's aversion to participating in even an advisory imperial council which could have given Canada some measure of influence over imperial policy-making. Nothing could be further from the truth than O.D. Skelton's assertion

that "this work, negative though it may have been, was the work his day demanded, and an essential stage in the development of Canadian nationality."²¹ Avoiding the appearance of Canadian cooperation in imperial defence was a meaningless posture when Britain was setting imperial foreign policies that committed Dominion military support. Nevertheless, Laurier's failure to obtain a voice in imperial policies was not criticized in English Canada, and indeed any such attempts would have probably been denounced as disloyal to the cause of imperial unity.

At the Imperial Conference of 1907, Laurier avoided the opportunity of securing influence over imperial foreign policy, but awarded significant concessions to the British Military. Laurier was not enthusiastic about going to the Conference in the first place, partly because of objections raised by Bourassa and the influential La Presse. In a Parliamentary debate before the Conference, Laurier was obviously cognizant of the European arms race when he deplored the European condition of an "armed peace." Notwithstanding, he could think of no pressing issues outside of preferential trade that should be raised by the Canadian delegation: "We are satisfied with our lot...we go to London to perform the task set us, not by way of making suggestions ourselves, but rather receiving suggestions made to us either by the British or the other Colonial Governments."²²

Laurier's negativism had been anathema to Chamberlain, but the new Liberal Government in Britain was highly appreciative of a counterweight against Australian and New Zealand demands for sharing in imperial decision-making. Although the emergencies of the German threat impressed the British

Liberals with the benefits of collective imperial defense, they conveniently applied the precepts of "Little Englandism" to Britain's independent control of imperial foreign policy. Alfred Deakin, the Premier of Australia, submitted a resolution for an Imperial Council and a permanent Secretariat outside of the Colonial Office to facilitate meaningful and continuing consultation on imperial affairs. He did not propose a centralized imperial executive which could have been the precedent to imperial federation.²³ Deakin's resolution was strongly supported by Premier Joseph Ward of New Zealand, but adamantly opposed by the Colonial Office who resented any dilution of their powers. Laurier obligingly sided with the Colonial Office, claiming that the existing system left nothing to be desired, and was instrumental in defeating the resolution.²⁴

On the fourth day the Conference turned to discussing imperial defence, and Haldane, the British Minister of War, made his intentions quite clear when he described "a certain broad plan of military organization for the Empire." Laurier again sided with Britain in defeating Australia's attempt to obtain guaranteed representation at C.I.D. meetings, but surprisingly, supported a unanimous resolution for an Imperial General Staff (I.G.S.). As G.P. de T. Glazebrook observes: "This means more than the civilian reader might suspect, for it carried the idea of establishing in the Empire, common types of organization, coordinated plans for action, a common way of thinking on military problems, a common doctrine of war."²⁵ It is not clear why Laurier acceded to such a mechanism for centralized military control

which inevitably reinforced attitudes and substantive plans for the imperial use of Canadian troops. Perhaps he was unaware of the close relationship between foreign policy and military planning, and thought that the I.G.S. would only serve to improve the quality of the Canadian Militia.

Very little progress was made at the Conference on naval matters. The Admiralty was now of the opinion that it might be easier to obtain contributions "in kind rather than in cash." Accordingly, it temporarily abandoned its preference for naval contributions and gave a real concession by supporting local navies, as long as they were centrally controlled in wartime. Laurier still had not taken any action on his promise at the 1902 Conference concerning a Canadian navy. At the 1907 Conference he held out on unanimous support for a resolution by Dr. Smartt of Cape Colony that the Dominions should support imperial naval defence either by "a grant of money, the establishment of a local naval defence, or such other services."²⁶ Laurier was on fairly safe ground because as yet naval defence was not an important issue in Canada. Compared with the other Dominions, Canada was closer to the centralized imperial fleet and it did not share Australia's and New Zealand's fears of a naval bombardment against their exposed coastal cities. The relative isolation of the Australasian Dominions on the periphery of the Empire may also explain why they were more anxious to share in the determination of imperial policy-making. As subsequent events were to show, however, Canada would no less enthusiastically support naval contributions when the security of the Empire was at stake.

Overnight, in the "dreadnought" scare of 1909, Britain's smug reliances on its naval paramouncy was overcome by a mixture of reactionary bellicosity and panic epitomized by the jingoist slogan, "we want eight and we won't wait." The Admiralty got two more ships than it needed, and this combined with the German decision not to expand their building program meant that Britain could comfortably maintain its two-power standard of naval supremacy. The naval scare did not maintain its same fever pitch in Britain, but throughout the Empire it was eagerly grasped by imperial nationalists. Although there was no longer any need to buttress the imperial battle fleet there was considerable clamour in English Canada to express their imperial loyalty by doing something. The imperialist, George M. Wrong, urged that Canada contribute to the construction of two dreadnoughts. The Ottawa Citizen and the Montreal Star called for a contribution or some other positive action. A middle route was taken by the Manitoba Free Press which extolled the virtues of imperial unity, but rejected the "One Fleet and One Flag" argument and asked for a Canadian navy. On the other side, the French-Canadian reaction was expectedly hostile, particularly from Bourassa and La Presse, but they were joined by a few Ontario Liberal papers such as the Kingston Standard and the Ottawa Free Press in opposing any Canadian action.²⁷ On Laurier's part, he strongly opposed a direct contribution but was now fearful of expressing his true feelings. In an expressive letter which he never sent to C.D. Barr, Editor of the Montreal Star, he regretted "that my views do not agree with yours; the military organization of Europe is simply madness and I

would hesitate a good deal before launching ourselves into it."²⁸

Laurier's failure to follow up on his promises for a Canadian Navy offered an open field to his opponents. Before the full impact of the naval scare had hit Canada the eminent Conservative and imperialist, George Foster, had already placed on the order paper a resolution that Canada ought "no longer delay in assuming her proper share of the responsibility and financial burden incident to the suitable protection of her exposed coastline and great seaports."²⁹ With news of the naval scare the resolution assumed a new significance. The Conservative Party caucused and unanimously agreed to support the passage of the Foster Resolution on the basis of creating a Canadian naval force, but also leaving the door open to emergency contributions if needed. The Foster Resolution was presented to Parliament on March 29, 1909. Foster himself described both the debt owed "the great-hearted mother who had given birth to the young nations that circle the globe...", and Canada's own need for naval defence "to protect her riches against the temptation of the aggressor, and to remove her dependence on the Monroe Doctrine." Such a dependence, he claimed, would exact a price "of continual demand, continual concession, until at last absorption finished the craven course...." He then eloquently tied together national sentiment to both the Canadian state and the British Empire:

Sir, into this world of trouble, of uncertainty,
amongst this world of nations, Canada has pushed forward

to her place.... Her ship of state is launched on the world's waters, it is open to every storm, it is exposed to every danger. She cannot escape the common burden, she cannot neglect the common duty, she cannot ignore the common responsibility. I do not believe that she wishes to....³⁰

Foster displayed his first loyalty, however, when he then disclosed that his side of the House would prefer to support a direct contribution. For Laurier, a Canadian navy would be a lesser evil and he quickly interjected a resolution that "the payment of any stated contribution to the Imperial treasury for naval and military purposes would not, so far as Canada is concerned, be a satisfactory solution of the question of defence.... The House will cordially approve of any...expenditure designed to provide the organization of a Canadian naval service in cooperation with, and in close relation to the Imperial navy, along the lines suggested by the Admiralty at the last Imperial Conference...."

Laurier's opposition to monetary contributions was quickly eroded by Robert Borden. After paying lip service to Canada's own defence needs he proposed a revision to Laurier's resolution, "that the payment of regular and periodical contributions to the Imperial treasury for naval and military purposes, would so far as Canada is concerned, not to be the most satisfactory solution to the question of defence."³¹

Borden's revision left the door open for emergency contributions, and it was in this form that the resolution was passed. It is probable that Borden intended to reach a compromise between conflicting opinions amongst the Conservative Party. The bulk of the Conservative Press and leadership outside of

Parliament was strongly in favour of immediate and direct contribution to the Royal Navy, and Borden was sharply criticized for supporting Laurier's resolution at all. However, the French-Canadian members led by Frederick Monk and influenced by Henri Bourassa, were opposed to any kind of imperial contribution whether it be "in kind" by a local navy, or direct subsidization of the Royal Navy.

At a subsidiary Imperial Conference called in July 1909, Frederick Borden (Minister of Militia) and L.P. Brodeur (Minister of Marine and Fisheries) sought Britain's approval of Laurier's plans for a Canadian navy. The Admiralty still preferred a single centralized fleet, but for the sake of Dominion acquiescence they were prepared to make substantial "concessions." At the 1907 Conference the concept of local defence navies had been awarded qualified support, but now the Admiralty urged the creation of total fleet units to allow the return of British capital ships to home waters. Australia agreed to provide one fleet unit led by a large battle cruiser. Canada, however, refused to be relegated to a "one ocean navy" and instead obtained Admiralty approval for a number of light cruisers and smaller vessels to be divided between local defence in the Atlantic and the Pacific. The Admiralty also "conceded" that each Dominion could retain peacetime control over its fleet units, but they would come under Admiralty control in war.

In military matters, there was further reinforcement of the I.G.S. concept and homogenization of imperial forces. General Sir W.G. Nicholson, Chief of the General Staff, had already circulated a memorandum showing that imperial defense implied "offensive actions," with the General Staff acting as an "entity throughout the Empire" for the preparation and conduct of war.³² At the Conference itself there was agreement on standardizing field organization, weapons, transport and training. Frederick Borden obligingly concurred that "if we maintain forces which are organized on a common principle and in cooperation with those of Great Britain, then we are ready, if we see fit, to take part in any war in which the Empire is interested." The new Liberal Prime Minister, Herbert Asquith, was able to report back to Parliament that "should the Dominions desire to assist in the defence of the Empire in a real emergency, their forces could be rapidly combined into one homogenous Imperial Army."³³

The Conference was followed the next year by a visit from Sir John French, Inspector-General of Imperial Forces, who initiated changes in Canadian military organization to enable more rapid overseas deployment. The screw was further tightened in August 1910, when Sir Henry Wilson was appointed Director of Military Operations for the Imperial General Staff. Wilson had led the secret military discussions with France and "so far as any single individual was able to do so, he committed Great Britain definitely to the military support of France on the great day of test."³⁴ The following year the Canadian General Staff was turned into a section

of the Imperial General Staff under the leadership of Major-General Colin MacKenzie, a British officer who was "shoehorned" into the position in front of an eminently suitable Canadian officer, W.D. Otter, who was known to favour increased Canadian military autonomy.³⁵

During the 1909 Imperial Conference, the Montreal Star and the Tory press had energetically campaigned for a contribution of dreadnoughts, the Toronto Globe and Liberal papers in Quebec urged a Canadian navy, while the Nationaliste papers demanded that no action be taken at all. When the federal session opened in November 1909, Laurier tabled the Conference Blue Book with its plan for a Canadian navy of five light cruisers and six destroyers. Many Tories were so hostile to what Premier R.T. Roblin of Manitoba labelled the "tin pot navy," that Borden started to waver in his support. Laurier introduced the Naval Services Bill himself on January 12, 1910, and again discussed it extensively at its second reading on February 3rd. He justified the need for a Canadian navy, which had first been proposed in 1902, because since that time the population had grown half again as large, and the national income had doubled. Canada could afford a navy and needed one, "just as Montreal needed a police force."³⁶ Laurier emphasized that the force would be under the control of the Canadian government, but in case of war might be placed under imperial control by Order in Council, subject to the approval of Parliament, which if not in session was to be called in fifteen days. This latter provision was intended to conciliate concerns about the arbitrary way in which Laurier had

dispatched the South African contingents. He unwisely added a constitutional interpretation that "when Britain is at war, Canada is at war, there is no distinction." After a furious reaction from Quebec he elaborated in the second reading that "if England is at war we are at war and liable to attack. I do not say that we shall always be attacked, neither do I say that we would take part in all wars of England. That is a matter that must be determined by circumstances, upon which the Canadian parliament will have to pronounce and will have to decide in its own best judgment."³⁷

It is true that Laurier only conceived of the Canadian navy as a sop to imperialists, and really he would have preferred to do nothing. He first raised the possibility of a Canadian navy at the 1902 Conference to avoid imperial contributions, and probably had no intention of taking any action. When his bluff was called seven years later by Foster's resolution he was forced to support a locally-controlled navy in preference to permanent or direct contributions to the Royal Navy. Nevertheless, the Naval Services Bill was by effect, if not altogether by intent, a nationalistic piece of legislation. Although the Canadian ships would come under imperial control in wartime, there at least remained a theoretical control of the situations under which Canada would commit its naval force. The complement of smaller ships in both oceans would also meet Canada's need for defending its own waters as compared with the Admiralty's desire for an offensive imperial unit that could be deployed elsewhere for Britain's own purposes.

In the debate of the Naval Services Bill, Borden completely withdrew his support for Laurier's naval policy and seized on the flimsy criticisms that Laurier's Bill contradicted the principles of unity laid down by the Admiralty at the 1909 Conference, and did not include adequate training provisions. As already shown, Admiralty policy had turned around to supporting separate navies under Dominion control in peacetime, and on the second point, Laurier's Bill included acquisition of the two old British Cruisers, the Niobe and the Rainbow for the express purpose of training. The real purpose of Borden's criticisms was disclosed when he then called for an immediate offer of two dreadnoughts for Britain to meet the present "emergency." He vaguely hinted that Canadian control could be satisfied through some sort of "Defence Committee, or an Imperial Conference having special jurisdiction over defence matters."³⁸ Borden also pandered to a request for a referendum by F.D. Monk, Federal leader of the Quebec Conservatives. (Borden himself, later rejected a similar plea by Monk during the Conscription Crisis.) Borden closed by declaring that the 1909 Resolution was not "entirely satisfactory" to him, and that he had only awarded his support because it "seemed eminently desirable" that it be passed unanimously.³⁹

Sir Charles Tupper, the previous Tory leader, preferred to maintain the 1909 bi-partisan agreement and had advised Borden that "a great responsibility will rest upon those who disturb that faith."⁴⁰ Why did Borden retract his support? Borden was an imperialist who believed in the fullest cooperation

on matters of common concern, but as his later record confirmed, he was also a strong Canadian nationalist in foreign affairs. Even in November 1909, he had affirmed that "permanent cooperation in defence, in my opinion, can only be accomplished by the use of our own material, the employment of our own people, the development and integration of our own skill and resourcefulness and above all by impressing upon the people a sense of responsibility for their share in international affairs."⁴¹

The best that can be said about Borden's personal motivations is that he distinguished between a "permanent policy", and the "present emergency" - which could only be expediently met by a direct contribution to the Royal Navy.⁴² Borden was also under tremendous pressure from imperialists in his party whose viewpoint was epitomized by Sir Hugh Graham's warning that a separate Canadian navy would "accelerate any tendency now existent towards national independence."⁴³ On the other hand, the French-Canadian wing of the Tory Party mirrored the prevalent view in Quebec that even a Canadian navy was a concession to imperialism. Monk, who was now very much under Bourassa's influence, spoke for most French-Canadians when he denounced Laurier's Bill because it was a surrender of Canadian autonomy, a capitulation to "Chamberlainism," and involved Canada in the consequences of a policy in which it had little interest and no control.⁴⁴ The Tories, of course, were delighted with Laurier's discomfiture in his own Quebec stronghold, and wanted to press home their advantage.

Laurier was, indeed, in deep trouble in Quebec. French Canada had been outraged when its language and religious minority rights were compromised by the Autonomy Bill of 1905 for the new Provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan. Also, Clifford Sifton's successful immigration policies were causing a relative shrinking in the proportion of French-speaking Canadians, and making them more susceptible to assimilation in a Canadian "melting pot." At the Twentieth Eucharistic Congress held in Montreal on September 6, 1910, Bourassa successfully countered a proposal that the future of Catholicism lay exclusively with the English language, and gave such a rousing speech in defence of French Canada's duty to use its own language, that he received more acclamation than the Prime Minister. Bourassa had become the popular leader of French Canada.

Laurier was increasingly accused of appeasing English Canada at the expense of his own race. Bourassa capitalized on his unprecedented popularity and turned these dissatisfactions against Laurier's Naval Bill. Bourassa's newspaper, Le Devoir, commenced publication two days before the parliamentary discussions and continued a massive bombardment against Laurier's naval policy. In an important speech on January 20th, Bourassa charged that Laurier's Bill contributed to British militarism and would involve Canada in a series of South African wars in many parts of the Empire. Thus by Bourassa's account it was Laurier who was leading Canada into the "vortex of militarism" by creating an "offensive" naval force.⁴⁵ On July 17th, Bourassa and his Nationalistes formed an alliance with the Federal

Conservatives in Quebec, and at the Drummond-Arthabaska by-election on November 3rd, they assisted an unknown candidate to inflict a crushing defeat on Laurier's personal candidate on the prime issue of the Naval Bill. This election upset in a Liberal stronghold was widely seen as a personal victory for Bourassa's popularity over Laurier's fading star.⁴⁶

The futility of Laurier's balancing act was now apparent. When the choice came down to Canada's local defence or the defence of the Empire in Europe, most English Canadians did not hesitate to demonstrate their loyalty to the Empire. On the other hand, French Canadians were equally determined to oppose a local navy because they believed it would inevitably be committed to British wars by the imperialist majority. Although Laurier's Naval Bill was passed by Parliament, it was both severely criticized in Quebec for going too far, and in Ontario for not going far enough. With a national election on the not too distant horizon, Laurier desperately needed a new issue to recoup his political fortunes.

When an apparent political gift horse unexpectedly presented itself, Laurier threw caution to the winds and opened his Trojan gates. The Taft government in the United States had taken the unprecedented step of approaching Canada for reciprocal tariff concessions. A western trip convinced Laurier that Canadian farmers were interested in extending their markets to the south, though it was conceded from the start that reciprocal concessions for American manufacturers would have to be very selective so as not to offend Ontario industrialists. Nevertheless, when Fielding introduced the

the proposed reciprocal trade agreement on January 20, 1911, the Conservatives could not see any way of stopping the Liberals. Laurier thought he had a winner.

In May 1911, Laurier, confident of support for reciprocity, left Canada for two months to attend a regular Imperial Conference. He was still wary about his precarious position in Quebec, so he denounced any right to influence imperial policy with even more than his customary vigour. A proposal by Premier Ward of New Zealand for a defensive federation was rightly opposed by all the other Dominion representatives because it would have depreciated their political autonomy. However, Asquith and Laurier again combined to obstruct more realistic alternatives for imperial consultation. Asquith, who chaired the Conference, made it emphatically clear that foreign policy was a responsibility of the British Government and, "that authority could not be shared." When the Australians and New Zealanders complained that the British Government had failed to inform them on the Treaty of London discussions, they were severely scolded by Sir Wilfrid who thought "it is better under such circumstances to leave the negotiation of these regulations...to the one who has to bear the burden in part on some occasions and the whole burden perhaps on other occasions."⁴⁷

In the middle of the Conference a special C.I.D. meeting was convened to discuss military and naval matters. For the first time the colonial representatives were appraised of British foreign policy (but not the secret military talks with France). Reginald McKenna, the First Lord of

the Admiralty, advised that the Triple Entente had allowed Britain to reduce its two-power naval standard to sixty percent superiority over Germany alone (which contradicted the "urgent" need for direct contributions advocated by Canadian imperialists). When McKenna expressed his assumption of automatic Canadian cooperation in time of war, Laurier replied that Canada may be legally at war when Britain was at war, but only the Canadian Parliament would decide whether it would actively participate. Laurier disclosed his imperial loyalty, however, by conceding that "if war were declared with Germany probably our duty would be to go to war at once...."⁴⁸

In view of Laurier's two-faced behaviour between the open Conference and the closed doors of the C.I.D. meeting, it was ironic that he failed to satisfy either of his opposing factions in Canada. On the one hand, he was accused by Bourassa of participating in a "veritable Imperial cabinet," whilst on the other hand, his guarded approach to imperial unity provided an impetus to the Tories new strategy for discrediting reciprocity.

During Laurier's absence in England, Borden followed his western tour and found encouraging support for his counter strategy of condemning reciprocity as disloyal to Canada and the Empire. Still confident of success, Laurier announced the dissolution of Parliament on his return to Canada and set an election for September 21st. During the campaign Borden effectively appealed to Canadian nationality by evoking the dangers of continentalism, which he attacked on two fronts. First, he reminded Canadians of their great achievements and investments in building an east-west economy

which would be sacrificed to the influx of American manufacturers ("we faced geography and distance and fought them to a standstill"). Second, endemic anti-Americanism was exploited by claiming that commercial reciprocity would inevitably lead to the old bogey of political annexation, which was awarded credence by some unfortunate utterances from American politicians.⁴⁹ Appeals were also made to imperial nationalism by relating "our commercial and political freedom" against the United States to Canada's survival "as an autonomous nation within the British Empire."⁵⁰ The Tory campaign in Ontario was alike with the Liberals in carefully avoiding any mention of the naval debate, but English Canadians could not help comparing Borden's calls for imperial loyalty with Laurier's obstruction of direct contributions. Indeed there were many, like the Conservative premiers of British Columbia, Manitoba, Ontario and New Brunswick, who were in varying degrees supportive of reciprocity but chose to revenge themselves on Laurier's obstruction of naval contributions.⁵¹ Borden was also ably assisted by railroaders and bankers such as the "Toronto Eighteen" who, having much to lose from reciprocity, assiduously cultivated anti-Americanism and loyalty to the Empire. In all, Borden's own "loyalty cry" was as politically profitable as Macdonald's election banner of 1891 for "The Old Man, the Old Flag and the Old Policy."

Borden had avoided any reference to the naval question because the Quebec Tories were equally as opposed to his own proposals for direct contributions as they were to Laurier's navy. Indeed Bourassa also favoured

reciprocity to save Canadians from capitalistic exploitation ("whether bitten by dog or bitch, the bite is no less painful") and, more importantly, to obstruct an imperial zollverein as the precedent to federation for joint military defence.⁵² Monk finally persuaded Bourassa to take a public stand against reciprocity, for their first priority was to reverse Laurier's Naval Bill by defeating the Liberal government. They denied that Laurier's navy was necessary for Canadian protection and successfully promoted doubts of Laurier's personal trustworthiness to prevent it from being used in imperial wars. It was in vain that La Presse warned that if Laurier fell to Borden, "then instead of an essentially Canadian navy, over which England had no rights we shall see the triumph of jingo imperialism, with participation in imperial wars and an endless string of dreadnoughts."⁵³ When the election results came through on September 21st, the Liberals had lost their stranglehold on Quebec and were decimated in Ontario, resulting in a Tory national majority of 139 seats compared with 87 seats for the Liberals.

The National Election of 1911 was one of the most complex in Canadian history, but many aspects can be best explained in terms of English-Canada's dual loyalties to the Canadian state and the British empire. On the one hand, there was a reaffirmation of Canadian political and economic independence within North America. On the other hand, much of the election rhetoric suggests that Canada was being saved for the Empire as much as itself, and there was no discussion of Canadian independence within the Empire.

It is true that the victors of the 1911 Election included both imperialists who wanted unqualified contributions to imperial defence, and anti-imperialists who were opposed to any imperial cooperation because they believed it was contrary to Canadian interests. However, anti-imperialism was almost entirely restricted to French Canadians and derived from their isolationist traditions.

In time a third option of Canadian autonomy within the Empire would be championed by the new Tory Prime Minister, who significantly had addressed one election audience that "I am for the Empire against the world but within the Empire I am for Canada first."⁵⁴ After coming to power Borden attempted to obtain a share in determining imperial policy as a concession for providing direct contributions to the Royal Navy. In June of 1912, Borden travelled to London where he was enthusiastically courted by the First Lord of the Admiralty, Winston Churchill, who was glad to assist the cause of imperial unity (and relieve the British taxpayer from paying all the costs for his pet project of a fast squadron based on Gibraltar). It was obvious that Borden, for his part, was overly anxious to prove the need for direct contributions of dreadnoughts in order to legitimize the Tory naval policy, and impress the Quebec wing of his party.⁵⁵

Borden's motivations for ascertaining the "real emergency" were questionable, but he combined an offer of direct contributions with an unprecedented request for Dominion representation on an enlarged C.I.D.⁵⁶ Asquith pointedly replied that the Committee had no mandate to make foreign

policy and that it performed a subordinate advisory role to the British Cabinet on matters of imperial defence. However, he did concede the principle "that side by side with this growing participation in the active burdens of Empire on the part of our Dominions there rests with us undoubtedly the duty of making such a response as we can to their obviously reasonable appeal that they should be entitled to be heard in the determination of the policy and in the direction of imperial affairs." Borden later responded that "the people of Canada are not the type that will permit themselves to become merely silent partners in such a great Empire. If there is to be imperial cooperation, the people of Canada propose to have a reasonable and fair voice in that cooperation."⁵⁷

When Borden returned to Canada it was clear that his efforts to prove a naval emergency did not impress his French-Canadian colleagues, because Monk resigned at the next caucus meeting. The truth was that French Canada was no more enamoured by the idea of contributions for dreadnoughts than it was by a Canadian navy. Bourassa cited evidence from two British publications - an 1896 memorandum of the Colonial Defence Committee and Lord Beresford's The Betrayal - to show both that a Canadian navy was contrary to imperial defence policy and that the importance of dreadnoughts had been over-emphasized. He maintained that any Canadian warships would immediately fall under Admiralty control in wartime, and thus be subject "to a foreign policy conceived, expressed and executed by British diplomacy," and Canada should not even consider contributions to imperial defence as long

as Asquith maintained his position, "that authority could not be shared."⁵⁸

When Borden introduced a new naval bill to the House on December 5, 1912, he was equally unsuccessful in convincing Liberal members that Britain's present naval construction program would not be more than enough for meeting the German dreadnought challenge. He lamely contended that a strong imperial fleet was necessary to protect Canadian independence against the United States, which was a misrepresentation of both American intentions and British dependability. He also denied the feasibility of building an effective naval force in Canada "within a quarter or perhaps half a century" (which was quickly disproved by Australia's achievements).⁵⁹ Turning to the other part of his naval program, Borden asserted: "When Great Britain no longer assumes sole responsibility for defence upon the high seas she can no longer undertake to assume full responsibility for and sole control of foreign policy...."⁶⁰ However, in an effort to compensate for the lack of Canadian control over direct contributions, he misrepresented Asquith's real concessions by claiming that permanent Canadian representation would be welcome on the Committee for Imperial Defence, and that no important decisions would be made without Canadian consultation (and by the way caused a mild sensation in Whitehall). Borden's naval plans caused "the most acrimonious debate the House of Commons has ever witnessed."⁶¹ The end result was a stalemate because Borden could not get his Bill through the Liberal-dominated Senate, and he could not go to the country because Quebec would crucify him in the same way as it had Laurier. The Liberal's Naval Service Act was still on the statute book but no additional contracts were let, and the Niobe and

Rainbow fell into disrepair.

The failure to determine a consistent and effective Canadian naval policy was a fitting denouement for the period between the Boer War and the First World War. In an era of growing international militarism, Canadian territory was left defenceless while Canada remained committed to protecting Britain in Europe. The Canadian Navy was inadequate even for coastguard and fishery protection duties, and when the First World War broke out, Canadian waters had to be defended against German marauders by British, Australian and even Japanese ships. The Canadian militia was expanded and improved, but was organized as an imperial reserve that could be rapidly transported to Europe and integrated with British forces under the leadership of senior British officers. Because the militia was not trained to act independently and lacked heavy artillery support it could not have contained the most minor border infraction - if, for instance, the United States chose to give the Canadians a "little lesson." By this time the idea of a full scale American invasion was highly unlikely, but Canada's lack of an effective deterrent meant that it was totally dependent upon American goodwill.

Even worse than Canada's inability to meet the most rudimentary needs for defending its own territory, was its lack of control over the situations and conditions under which it would participate in an overseas war. Outside of commercial affairs Canada possessed no distinct foreign policy of its own; nor did it share in any decision-making for the Empire as a whole. By a

mixture of acquiescence and negativism, Canada subordinated itself to Great Britain's unilateral determination of imperial foreign policy which naturally reflected Britain's own central defense interests, specifically a commitment to its new European allies against the German threat. Britain put its policy into practical effect by centralizing military control over Dominion forces so that they could be readily mobilized and organized to support an armed intervention in Continental Europe. It is true that Canada retained the de facto responsibility for committing the use of its own troops. However, because Canadian interests were never discussed, English Canadians, at least, assumed the inexorable inevitability and rationality of participating in a British war.

In a dangerous era of international competition and aggression, Canada had made hardly any progress from "colony to nation." As Bourassa correctly concluded, Canada was not an "equal nation" because of the limitations on Canada's external sovereignty. Nor was Canada a "sister nation" in the Empire, because the only sovereign power was Great Britain which decided foreign policy for the whole Empire. "So long as that situation remained unaltered," he warned, "so long as the people of Great Britain remain the sole preservers of the Empire, the sole masters of its foreign policy, the sole masters of its international policy, the sole masters of international relations, they should be in justice and equity solely responsible for the defence of the Empire.... Let us pause a little before we put upon our shoulders the burden of going and 'protecting' Great Britain

against Germany or other powers, whose relations with Great Britain have been formed by British statesmen without any consultations with the people of Canada."⁶²

If Canadians had wished to advance their own nationhood during the period leading up to the First World War they would have placed their own interests first. Depending upon how these interests were interpreted, the outcome could have been either a Canadian policy of isolationism or the active pursuit of Canadian aspirations in Europe. As it happened, Canada stood virtually committed to European intervention, but it was not on the basis of its own self-interests - for these were rarely discussed. Similarly, if with other Anglo-Saxons, Canadians were moved to express their own nationalism by sharing in what George Foster had described as the "sense of power," it was striking that Canadians made very little effort to acquire an influential voice in determining imperial policy. Canadian nationalism was undoubtedly strengthened by the success of the National Policy and reactions to the Alaska Boundary Dispute. However, any hints that loyalties to the Canadian state would conflict with imperial loyalties were quickly dispelled when Canadians merely accelerated their jurisdiction over commercial foreign policy and internal control of the militia. English-Canada's approach to external affairs was still dominated by its loyalty to imperial unity, liberty, distinctiveness and prestige.

CHAPTER FOUR

"THE GREAT WAR WILL LEAVE NOTHING AS IT FOUND IT":
THE CONSCRIPTION CRISIS OF 1917

Up to the First World War, English Canada's dual loyalties to the Canadian state and the British Empire were compatible because they satisfied complementary needs. Loyalty to the Canadian state was associated with aspirations for self-government over domestic affairs, notably development of the new national economy. On the other hand, loyalty to the Empire fulfilled more emotional needs for belonging to an exclusive culture group with an exciting world-wide mission. Canada's participation in the Boer War and the subsequent commitments to imperial defence were significant precedents to Canada's entry into the First World War, but at the time the limited sacrifices involved did not appear to contradict Canada's own national interests. However, the First World War pervaded all aspects of Canadian political, social and economic life to such a degree that it was impossible to compartmentalize foreign and domestic affairs in the minds of those Canadian imperialists who were also Canadian nationalists.

Before the war, there were very few Canadians such as Borden who were concerned with obtaining a more influential role for their own state in imperial decision-making. However, the Canadian national consciousness was greatly heightened by the collective organization and sacrifices of the war effort, together with the growing realization that imperial policies determined by Britain were often inconsistent with Canada's best interests. This growing conflict provided a new impetus for Canada to play a more influential role in what R.M. Dawson has described as the dramatic transformation of Dominion relations from "domestic autonomy" to an "adequate voice" in foreign policy.¹ Most English-Canadian leaders, like Borden, attempted to reconcile their loyalty to Canada and the Empire by advancing Canada's national aspirations through stronger participation in collective imperial organizations. However, some English Canadians like John W. Dafoe, the influential editor of the Manitoba Free Press, were rapidly coming to the viewpoint that a "national alliance" would provide the best balance between Canadian autonomy and imperial sentiment.

By comparison, French Canadians remained steadfast anti-imperialists before and during the First World War. At the beginning of the war, however, French Canada joined English Canada in supporting limited contributions of men and materials, out of traditional loyalty to the British monarchy, and to a lesser degree, sentiment for France. As the war progressed, English Canadians advocated a larger war effort to support Canada's own interests in Europe, but French Canadians disagreed that Canadian interests

were involved, and consequently differed on the necessary level of support. In the same way as there were many English Canadians who placed the Empire before Canadian unity, there were many French Canadians who placed their own minority culture first. However, the viewpoints of Laurier and Bourassa, for example, were no less nationalistic than Borden and Dafoe, but they differed on their perceptions of Canadian interests. Like Borden, Laurier attempted to reconcile his loyalties to the Empire and Canada, but in the end he could not compromise his vision of fair treatment for both "founding races" within the Canadian state. Bourassa, on the other hand, followed Dafoe in concluding that increased Canadian autonomy was necessary for the protection of its own national interests.

The growing conflict between English and French Canada came to a head in the conscription crisis of 1917. Conscription was introduced, in part, as a reaction to the alleged disloyalty of French Canada to the imperial cause, but its introduction also signified a new resolve by some English Canadians to increase the importance of their state in international affairs. As George L. Cook has admirably demonstrated, the conduct of the War created certain exigencies by which Canada was transformed from a "loyal imperial helper" to a "war principal" in its own right.² The early optimism that "the war would be over by Christmas" was quickly shattered with stiffening German opposition and the stalemate of trench warfare. Canada played its part in a greater imperial effort by steadily increasing its contributions of men and materials, and consequently raised its stake in the conduct and outcome

of the war. Greater contributions logically led to Canadian demands for more participation in determining imperial war policy. At the same time, as Britain's own resources were depleted it became more dependent on Dominion support, and consequently more amenable to sharing control of war policy. Conscription can only be fully understood by placing it in this context of Canada's commitment to winning the war and its desire to obtain greater influence and recognition in London.

These developments were an evolving process. When Canada entered the war no consideration was given to its own interests or its lack of control over imperial policy. Borden's later claim that Canada elected to support Britain as an "equal partner" by decree of her own parliament is inconsistent with the facts.³ Although Britain assumed Dominion support it did not bother to consult or even advise them on the worsening European situation, and Borden and his colleagues had to appraise themselves by reading newspapers, which was sufficient enough for the Canadian Cabinet to offer a contingent even before the outbreak of hostilities. When the British government unilaterally declared war on August 4th on behalf of the whole Empire, the Canadian Cabinet promptly passed an order-in-council authorizing an expeditionary force of 25,000 men, again without parliamentary approval.

On August 18th, Borden appealed to the House for parliamentary support of the Government's actions "in taking all such measures as may be necessary for the defence of Canada and for maintaining the honour and integrity of

the empire whose flag floats over us." He also concluded from reading a British 'white paper' on the causes of the war that "no government ever with whole-hearted earnestness sought to keep the peace of the world and the peace of the empire than did His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom."⁴ From the other side of the House, Laurier fully endorsed the actions of Borden's government and called for a moratorium on party strife. He unequivocally endorsed Britain's justification for declaring war and pledged Canada's support: "We raise no question, we take no exceptions, we offer no criticism, and we shall offer no criticisms as long as there is danger at the front...when the call comes our answer goes at once, and it goes in the classical language of the British answer to the call to duty: Ready, aye, ready."⁵ No word of criticism was raised from either side of the House.

Richard Jebb perceived that the necessary impulse for Canada's expeditionary force "seemed to depend upon the driving power of British racial sentiment."⁶ At the beginning, however, English-Canadian enthusiasm was also joined by pledges of support from French-Canadian politicians of all parties and the Catholic Church hierarchy. The Quebec press almost solidly declared their confidence in Britain's cause and Canada's obligation to help in the hour of need. The leading newspapers carried intertwined flags of Britain and France at the head of their columns, and La Patrie melodramatically pronounced that "only one race now exists, united by the closest bonds in the common cause."⁷ Although Le Devoir's attitude

was guarded, Bourassa surprised everybody in his first editorial on September 8th by supporting Canadian participation even though he observed that no Canadian interests were directly involved, and Britain was fighting to protect its own interests without any regard to the colonies:

In law and in fact, Canada, a British colony, has then no direct reason to intervene in the conflict (but) can Canada as an embryonic nation...remain indifferent to the European conflict? To this question...I answer without hesitation: no! Canada, an Anglo-French nation tied to England and France by a thousand ethnic, social, intellectual and economic threads, has a vital interest in the maintenance of prestige, power and world actions of France and England.⁸

Even in this first editorial, however, Bourassa cautioned that Canada should make "an exact count of what it can do or not do." Later in 1914, he still agreed that Britain had no choice but to enter the war, but now ascribed its causes to imperial competition. He urged Canada to imitate Britain's preoccupation with its own interests and "to unite freely the interests of Canada to those of England when their interests were identical, to oppose Canada's interests to those of England when they were contrary, and to separate them when they were divergent."⁹ Bourassa contended that Canada could best contribute to the war effort and advance its own interests through economic support. He concluded that the lack of concern for Canadian interests "indicate a singular absence of a truly national patriotism" and marked "the difference between thoughtful action of Sovereign peoples,

masters of their destinies, conscious of their responsibilities, and the thoughtlessness of a child-nation, deprived of international status."¹⁰

A few English-Canadian papers replied with the endearing slogan of BOURASSA THE DIRTY, with Saturday Night even going as far to say that "every day in Europe, men who have done no more harm are being hung as traitors." He was also condemned by many leading French-Canadian newspapers, including L'Action Sociale the recognized organ of the Catholic hierarchy, which as custodians of Quebec's special religious privileges had the most to fear from English-Canadian retaliation. Mgr. Paul Eugene Roy directly refuted Bourassa's thesis that Canada should choose how to participate in the war as an "embryonic nation." Instead, he claimed: "We have the duty to grant to the mother country, in just and equitable proportions, the cooperation of which she has need from us...we owe her this cooperation as every subject owes it to his sovereign and every citizen to his country when it becomes necessary."¹¹ However, Roy's qualification of "just and equitable proportions" held the same implications for Canada's war effort as Bourassa's appeals to make it commensurate with Canada's limited interests in an European war. On neither account would there be sufficient justification for mass mobilization of troops. As Laurier described during one of his many calls for French-Canadian recruits: "This is a voluntary sacrifice. Great Britain asks nothing of us. She accepts with gratitude what we do for her, but she does not set any obligation upon us. Once more I repeat, Canada is a free country. If some Canadians were frightened by the monster of conscription in the past, they must now recognize that this monster was a myth...."¹²

Eventually the French Canadian view of a limited war effort was to sow the seeds of ethnic confrontation. At the beginning, however, English Canadians still only thought of themselves as "loyal imperial helpers." For the government's part, its objectives were limited to creating a "splendid impression" in London where Canada's political capital had been very low since the dreadnought debacle, and to regain its lost standing in Canada from the economic depression.¹³ In fact, the news of the war was received jubilantly in Canada because of the expected stimulus to the economy, and the opportunities of overseas service as an alternative to unemployment at home. As yet there was no conception of Canada's role as a principal military protagonist. Although the first 31,200 Canadian soldiers who sailed for England on October 3rd was the largest force that had ever crossed the Atlantic as a unit, they were really imperial volunteers who were only paid by Canada and otherwise were under complete War Office control. Many of them were recent British immigrants, and Perley, the Canadian High Commissioner in London, was perfectly correct in saying that the Canadian troops were just like those brought from Ireland or Scotland. Borden only sent a second division when there was a threat of being "one-upped" by the Liberals, and even then he seriously considered requiring that all volunteers be recruited, paid and disposed of entirely by the Imperial Government.¹⁴ With that type of thinking, Borden was undoubtedly sincere when early in the war he denied any possibility of conscription.

Canada's participation as a subordinate in the war effort was reflected in its political relations with Britain. For the first one and a half years there was no formal consultation between Britain and the Dominions on the conduct of the war. At the outbreak of hostilities the British Cabinet immediately absorbed all functions of the Committee of Imperial Defence (C.I.D.), and even its Secretariat. The Secretariat's head, Sir Maurice Hankey, promised to invite Perley to any sub-committee meetings dealing with "broad questions of policy and matters which necessarily affect, and are of interest to the Overseas Dominions," but Perley's active participation was restricted to issues of war trade and enemy vessels in neutral ports.¹⁵ Thus, the concessions Borden claimed he had won in 1912 to participate in the C.I.D., were exposed as completely worthless. The fault was not just on Britain's side, because, although Perley potentially occupied a very important position in London, he retained a very limited conception of his role as High Commissioner, and all his contacts with the British Government were made as usual through the Colonial Office. Similarly, the new Canadian Department of External Affairs never assumed a high profile in the war, and Joseph Pope, the Under-Secretary, was alike with Perley in wishing to maintain the status quo in imperial relations.¹⁶

Borden, himself, in consistency with his pre-war position, continued to advocate Canadian consultation on imperial policy, but took no practical steps to this end. In October 1914, Borden was repeatedly urged to visit

London by Sir Richard McBride, Premier of British Columbia, to discuss war policy and create a "spectacular effect" with the electorate. Borden was unimpressed with McBride's suggestion and left it up to the British Government to decide whether a visit would be desirable. Borden was subsequently advised that a visit at this time would be inopportune because everyone in London was exceedingly busy and there was nothing that required special Dominion attention! In December 1914, the Australian Government petitioned London for an Imperial Conference to discuss their dissatisfactions with the 1909 Australasian Naval Agreement. The British Cabinet used the other Dominions to throw cold water on the proposal, and the Canadian government was especially obliging by replying that they "entirely concur.... It would be very difficult if not impossible for Ministers to leave Ottawa during continuance of war.... Adequate consideration of important subjects would be almost impossible."¹⁷ Only Newton Rowell, the Liberal leader in Ontario, openly championed the idea of an Imperial Conference for early in 1915.¹⁸

Borden's position up to the end of 1914 undoubtedly accords with the description of a "loyal imperial helper." In the second year of the war, however, Borden dramatically changed his position because of concerns with imperial commercial policy, Canadian military control of its own troops, British conduct of the war, and domestic pressures. It was probably the disappointed expectations of wartime economic benefits that triggered Borden's general dissatisfaction with all aspects of imperial policy. Despite

strong representations to London that Canada be awarded special preference for wartime contracts, there were continuing reports of Allied orders being directed to the United States. Borden was so furious that a non-belligerent would receive these favours when Canada was economically depressed, that he wrote to Perley: "Not only the people of Canada as a whole but individuals are making sacrifices undreamed of to support the Empire in this war.... Men are going without bread in Canada whilst those across the line are receiving good wages for work that could be done as efficiently and as cheaply in this country."¹⁹ The situation was worsened by Whitehall's high-handed treatment of other commercial matters such as the commandeering of Canadian shipping without consultation, and the notorious Vickers affair where, again without consultation, an American order for submarines was shifted to a Montreal plant but using imported American labour. Injury was added to insult when in a similar manoeuvre to circumvent American neutrality, the Electric Boat Company got a contract for 500 patrol boats which were assembled in Canada from American parts.

Borden's dissatisfaction with imperial commercial policy quickly spilled over into other areas of concern. Canadian opinion was outraged by the British Military's treatment of Canadian troops at the training camp on Salisbury Plain, and led to demands for increased Canadian control. When this was obstructed by Haig and his colleagues in the British War Office, Canadian feelings were further incensed. Borden was personally led into confrontations over inadequacies of the British General, E.A.H. Alderson,

who commanded the Canadian forces, as well as the War Office's reluctance to appoint Canadian officers and their attempts to split up Canadian forces. Canada and the other Dominions were so adamant about preserving national forces that Lord Derby, Secretary of State for War, was forced to concede that "we must look upon them in the light in which they wished to be looked upon rather than the light in which we should wish to do so. They look upon themselves, not as part and parcel of the English Army but as Allies beside us."²⁰ Borden was also becoming increasingly disenchanted with Britain's conduct of the war. The failures at Gallipoli, the submarine menace exposed by the Lusitania sinking, and the "shells scandal" certainly did not inspire confidence in Britain's leadership. Even worse were the terrible losses from trench warfare on the western front. The Canadians were quickly earning their reputations as "storm troops" but at the appalling cost of 24,029 casualties at the Somme, 1,373 at the St. Eloi Craters, and 8,000 at Mount Sorrel.

Borden changed his mind about visiting London and he left on June 30th to discuss a wide range of matters including discrimination against Canada in the placement of war orders, Canadian military control over its own forces, and Canada's larger part in the management of the war. Borden considered his visit to Great Britain in 1915 a bitter failure. "After weeks of discussion, of going from pillar to post, from one member of the British government to another," he was still no better informed about Britain's war plans. By his own account, Borden told Bonar Law, the Colonial Secretary,

that unless he obtained "this reasonable information which is due to me as Prime Minister of Canada, I shall not advise my countrymen to put further effort into the winning of the war." Law then called in Lloyd George, Minister of Munitions, who candidly admitted to Borden the deficiencies of Britain's existing policies and his opinion that it would not be until the autumn of 1916 that the full strength of the Empire could be applied to the war.²¹ Indeed, at the time of Borden's visit there was a growing rift in Asquith's coalition government, between the Liberal "economists" who favoured a limited naval and economic war effort, and the Tory "compulsionists" joined by Lloyd George and Churchill who wanted an all out war effort to obtain absolute and lasting victory.

Borden returned to Canada disappointed at the lack of a consistent war plan, and personally piqued at his off-handed treatment by the British government. He probably understood that Asquith would not feel the need to consult with Canada when it only had two divisions in the field, and thus "it was fruitless to make political claims unsubstantiated by physical power." Of course it was unlikely that Asquith's "economists" with their limited view of a necessary war effort would be inclined to ask the Dominions for more contributions, and by the same token neither did they have an obligation to share responsibility for war policy (although the War Office had no reluctance in requesting more Canadian troops). There was, however, a striking similarity between Lloyd George's view that "the fight must be to a finish - to a knockout," and Borden's conclusion that "this war must

have so decisive a result that lasting peace can be secured. We are fighting not for a truce but for victory."²²

On his return to Canada, Borden twice doubled the previous commitment of 125,000 troops in the space of three months, to gain greater British recognition and to meet his new appreciation from Lloyd George of an adequate war effort. On October 30, 1915, a Canadian Order-in-Council allowed for a maximum force of 250,000 men. Again on January 12, 1916, the Cabinet issued an Order-in-Council authorizing the Minister of Militia "to raise, equip and send overseas...officers and men not exceeding five hundred thousand, including those who have already been raised and equipped...and including those who have been, or may be hereafter raised for garrison and guard duty in Canada." By comparison at the end of December 31, 1915, a total of 213,000 men were actually under arms organized in two divisions, but a third was under formation, a fourth was added in 1916, and a fifth was completed in 1917 to be held as a reserve in Britain.²³

The contention that Borden saw a direct relationship between the level of Canadian contributions and British recognition is supported by an exchange of correspondence with Bonar Law after returning from his visit. Borden had left Britain on August 25th with a promise from Law that the Canadian government would be kept better informed than in the past. After a few months it was obvious that the situation had not changed so he politely telegraphed Perley:

Please inform Bonar Law that we would appreciate fuller and more exact information from time to time respecting conduct of war and proposed military operations.... We thoroughly realize necessity for central control of Empire's armies but Governments of Overseas Dominion have large responsibilities to their people for conduct of war and we deem ourselves entitled to fuller information and to consultation respecting general policy in war operations.... Perhaps new Council or Committee can arrange for information and consultation suggested.²⁴

Borden had telegraphed Perley on October 30, 1915, the same day that the Canadian commitment was first doubled from 125,000 to 250,000 men, and it can be assumed that he expected some special treatment on that account. However, when Bonar Law replied on November 3rd to Perley, he thanked the Canadian government for the increased commitment but procrastinated on the question of Canadian consultation:

As regards the question of consultation, here again I fully recognize the right of the Canadian government to have some share of the control in a war in which Canada is playing so big a part. I am however, not able to see any way in which this could be practically done... if no scheme is practicable it is undesirable that the question be raised.²⁵

When Borden received Law's reply he privately "exploded," but kept his peace until he wrote his well-known response to Perley on January 4, 1916, which was less than a week after the Cabinet initially agreed to again double the Canadian commitment to 500,000 men:

...Mr. Bonar Law's letter is not especially illuminating and leaves the matter precisely where it was before my letter was sent...plans of a campaign have been made and unmade, measures adopted and apparently abandoned and generally speaking steps of the most important and vital character have been taken, postponed or rejected without the slightest consultation with the authorities of this Dominion.

...It can hardly be expected that we shall put 400,000 or 500,000 men in the field and willingly accept the position of having no more voice and received no more consideration than if we were toy automata. Any person cherishing such an expectation harbours an unfortunate and even dangerous delusion. Is this war being waged by the United Kingdom alone or is it a war waged by the whole Empire?...

Procrastination, indecision, inertia, doubt, hesitation and many other undesirable qualities have made themselves entirely too conspicuous in this war....²⁶

After sending his January 4th diatribe, Borden hastily advised Perley "to take no further action at present," but nevertheless it is an important statement of Borden's revised attitude to the imperial connection.²⁷

First, he had become totally frustrated with the shoddy treatment of Canada's economic interests, the obstructions to Canadian military control, Britain's incompetent handling of the war effort, and the personal rebuff during his summer visit of 1915. Second, he was convinced that a major war effort was necessary for the Empire to win total victory, and that Canada should fully contribute as a partner with commensurate rights for determining war policy.

In addition to Canada's increased contributions of manpower, the full potential of the national economy was also harnessed to assist the war effort. By the War Measures Act passed at the outbreak of war, parliament surrendered wide powers to the government for the control of individual freedom and the press, as well as land, water, and air transportation, commercial trading, exportation, production and manufacturing, and the disposition and use of property. Later in 1914 the government gained so much control of the money supply that it "provided a near equivalent to a centralized banking system." In 1915, import duties were substantially increased, and in 1916, the economy was further nationalized by the introduction of business profit and income taxes and control of the wheat market.²⁸ In November 1915, the Minister of Finance, Thomas White, raised Canada's first domestic loan of \$100 million, half of which was used to finance the newly formed Imperial Munitions Board (including the advancement of credit for all British purchases). By November 1916, no less than the Chancellor of the British Exchequer was forced to admit that Britain was astonished by the power of the Dominions to provide so much in the way of munitions and finance.²⁹

Although Canada was now making a major contribution to the war effort, Borden still had no idea how he could use this new power to practical effect by obtaining a voice in imperial policy. Although he had clearly expressed his dissatisfaction with the existing status of imperial relations in his letter of January 4th, he was unable directly to answer Bonar Law's

challenge, "that if no scheme is practicable then it is very undesirable that the question should be raised." Wartime emergencies demanded a workable solution for matching Canada's war effort with a commensurate influence over imperial policy.

In Britain, the Dominion's massive support for the imperial war effort and their demands for consultation, revived some hopes for imperial federation. In March 1916, Lionel Curtis published his famous The Problem of the Commonwealth which tackled the question set by the Round Table: "How a British citizen in the Dominions can acquire the same control of foreign policy as one domiciled in the British Isles."³⁰ According to Curtis the only alternative to separation was the creation of an imperial parliament.³¹ Sections of the Round Table were created in Canada from 1911 onwards, and included such notables as Sir John Willison, publisher of the Toronto Globe, G.M. Wrong, Professor of History at the University of Toronto, Sir Edmund Walker, President of the Canadian Bank of Commerce, and A.J. Glazebrook, an exchange broker and a close friend of Lord Milner. There were many Canadians such as Laurier and Dafoe who suspected a Round Table conspiracy, which was not an unreasonable assumption in view of the many important public positions occupied by Milner's "Kindergarten," (especially in Lloyd George's government), as well as their obvious control of The Times, the most influential of all British newspapers.

Although the Round Table attempted to influence events in Canada they had little success, because if nothing else public opinion was strongly

opposed to imperial federation. For instance, when The Problem of Commonwealth was published the Canadian Round Table desperately tried to disassociate themselves from it, but they were still exposed to a storm of hostile criticism.³² A compromise solution was proposed by Z.A. Lash, a wealthy corporation lawyer and member of the Toronto Eighteen that had helped defeat the Liberal party. In early 1917 he published his Defence and Foreign Affairs, which followed other similar working papers that he had presented for Borden's advice throughout the previous year.³³ Instead of an imperial parliament which would have been impossible to organize in wartime, Lash proposed an imperial council with executive and legislative functions that could impose majority decisions on individual government representatives. Not surprisingly, Lash never gained any serious following. Far more influential arguments were presented by John Dafoe who agreed with Curtis that "the Great War will leave nothing as it found it," but favoured the evolutionary development of Canada's internal sovereignty into complete nationhood: "Canada, a nation with free sovereign power, to be linked in perpetual alliance with other British nations on terms of equality, under a common crown, with a common white citizenship."³⁴ Dafoe was also coming to the conclusion that Canada's North American interests competed with imperial interests, and that imperial unity was really based on a common heritage of British parliamentary institutions and allegiance to a common sovereign.³⁵

Borden was still undecided as to what means should be employed immediately to gain a voice in the direction of the war. When Lionel Curtis presented him with a copy of The Problem of Commonwealth, Borden returned a very non-committal reply. On the other hand, Borden was so vexed with Law's failure to provide a practical solution that he commissioned Lash's original studies early in 1916 - but quickly lost interest. Instead, Borden placed his confidence in Dafoe's ideas of increased Canadian autonomy, although he still remained a devout imperialist who believed that Canada's future was intrinsically tied to Great Britain.³⁶ Moreover, a major renovation of imperial relations was not required for Borden's limited wartime objectives to match Canada's role as a "war principal" with a measure of influence over imperial policies. From both the long term constitutional view and short-term exigencies of wartime, Borden sought a "middle route" between imperial unity and separation.

Borden was at a loss, however, to suggest how his "middle route" could be implemented in practice. Borden showed no imagination or initiative in submitting a Canadian proposal, but assumed that the onus was on Britain to offer a solution. For the time being, he had to content himself with acquiring greater military control over Canada's expeditionary force. Notably, in October 1916 a Minister for Militia Overseas was appointed in London in addition to a Minister of Militia in Ottawa.³⁷ To support Canada's role as a war principal, orders-in-council were also passed the same month to create a National Service Board to identify

"those who could give better service at home and to identify and induce to service in the field those who could and ought to serve." There were many Canadians, especially in Quebec, who saw the National Service Board as a prelude to conscription, and to a large degree their fears were probably justified. In answering some queries from labour representatives, Borden admitted publicly for the first time that if conscription "should prove the only effective method to preserve the existence of the State and of the institutions and liberties which we enjoy, I should consider it necessary and I should not hesitate to act accordingly." Borden was rapidly coming to the point of view that the stakes were indeed that high, and he noted in his diary for January 27, 1917 that the Cabinet had discussed volunteer recruiting with "conscription to be used later if necessary."³⁸

In Britain the biggest concern was the conduct of the war, and especially raising the necessary manpower. Asquith was prepared to admit the necessity for a change in imperial relations, but after the war. Similarly, Bonar Law looked forward to an imperial parliament, but in the meantime there was a requirement for "great good sense and goodwill on the parts of the Dominions and the authorities at home to enable an arrangement to work by which one set of men should contribute lives and treasure and have the voice as to the way these lives and treasures are expended."³⁹ However, the "compulsionists" in the government led by Milner and Lloyd George were strongly convinced that some more immediate and forthright

concessions were required to unify the resources of the Empire for total victory.

In November 1916, the poor progress of the war led Asquith and the "economists" seriously to consider seeking a status quo ante bellum settlement with Germany. The following month the so-called "Ginger Group" led by Lloyd George and Milner took power. As Prime Minister, Lloyd George promptly took control of the war effort by centralizing power in a five-man War Cabinet, while also moving to decentralize some British responsibilities to the Dominions. Shortly after announcing the formation of the War Cabinet he wrote to Walter Long, the new Colonial Secretary:

The more I think about it, the more I am convinced that we should take the Dominions into our counsel in a much larger measure than we have hitherto done in our prosecution of the war. They have made enormous sacrifices, but we have held no conferences with them as to either the objects of the war and the methods of carrying it out...we want more men from them. We can hardly ask them to make another recruiting effort unless it is accompanied by the invitation to come over to discuss the situation with us.⁴⁰

On Christmas Day of 1916 a formal invitation was sent to the Dominion Prime Ministers "to attend a series of special and continuous meetings of the War Cabinet" which was considerably more than "a session of the ordinary Imperial Conference."⁴¹ It was subsequently arranged that an "Imperial War Conference" would meet on alternate days to discuss matters of lesser importance. Thus, there came into being three different

and distinct bodies: the War Cabinet of the British government with ultimate authority for determining imperial war policy; the Imperial War Cabinet, also under Lloyd George's chairmanship, but comprising both the British War Cabinet and Dominion Premiers or other plenipotentiaries, which could consult on joint policies subject to confirmation by individual parliaments; and, the Imperial War Conference under the Colonial Secretary's chairmanship, with representation from the various Empire governments, to consult on other imperial matters not related to peace and war.

Borden received far better cooperation in 1917 from government departments and the military than during his previous visit, and gained some influence over imperial policy. Borden claimed that during the Imperial War Cabinet meetings, "we have continually under consideration matters of vital importance touching on the prosecution of the war, the cooperation of the allied nations therein, the effort necessary to achieve victory, the terms upon which peace may be made and exceedingly important questions as to reconstruction after the war...."⁴² Lloyd George opened the meetings by apologizing for past failures to consult the Dominions and then quickly got to the point by emphasizing the need for a total victory against Germany. "Now what is it necessary for us to do....," he rhetorically asked; "The first thing is this: we must get more men." Borden replied that he did not know how many men they could send, "but we shall do our utmost."⁴³

Some very obvious differences between Lloyd George and the Milnerites surfaced at the Imperial War Cabinet, in which Borden was to play an important part. The Milnerites argued that since they might "yet fall considerably short of that complete and crushing victory which we still hope to achieve," they should determine "the irreducible minimum." After containing Germany in Europe they proposed to integrate Germany's old colonies into a consolidated British Empire that could safely ignore any future threats from Continental Europe. Borden provided a useful counterweight to the Milnerites by supporting Lloyd George's plea for a "knockout blow," and by criticizing their proposals for imperial aggrandizement. "A proposal to add one million square miles to the British Empire accompanied by a proposal for a peace league would be coldly and cynically received by the world," Borden claimed.⁴⁴

Borden was even more successful in opposing the Milnerites at the meetings of the Imperial War Conference. First, he was instrumental in weakening a resolution for imperial preferences, on the grounds of Canada's needs to maintain access to its American market. Second, on April 16, 1917, Borden moved and Smuts seconded the famous Resolution IX:

The Imperial War Conference are of the opinion that the readjustment of the constitutional relations of the component parts of the Empire is too important and intricate a subject to be dealt with during the War, and that it should form the subject of a special Imperial Conference to be summoned as soon as possible after the cessation of hostilities.

They deem it their duty, however, to place on record their view that any such readjustment...should be based upon a full recognition of the Dominions as autonomous nations of an Imperial Commonwealth....⁴⁵

Borden was rightly pleased with his important role in passing the Resolution, which he rather extravagantly claimed "forms the basis of genesis of the striking constitutional development that has since occurred...."⁴⁶

John Dafoe, who had given his support to Borden for moving the Resolution, concluded that it had confounded "Mr. Curtis's renowned dilemma by repudiating Dominion subordination in external affairs, but at the same time excluding both ideas of federation and separation."⁴⁷

On May 18, 1917 Borden reported the record of the imperial discussions to the Canadian Parliament, and emphasized the concessions which had been awarded to Dominion participation in the Imperial War Cabinet. At the end of his address to the House, Borden dropped a bombshell. The voluntary system of recruiting had failed and Canada would have to adopt conscription to raise another 50,000 to 100,000 men. Although Borden was not altogether specific on the need for additional recruitment, he strongly suggested that his trip to Britain had convinced him of the need for a greater war effort in which Canada should play a principal role.⁴⁸ His description of Canada's new external responsibilities was bound to raise disagreement from French Canada:

All citizens are liable to military service for the defense of their country, and I conceive that the battle for Canadian liberty and autonomy is being fought today on the plains of France and of Belgium. There are other places besides the soil of a country where the battle for its liberties and institutions can be fought; and if this war should end in defeat, Canada, in all the years to come, would be under the shadow of German military domination....⁴⁹

Borden was quick to emphasize in the House that the subject of conscription "was never discussed between myself and any member of the British government," but it can be safely assumed that the need to raise additional troops was a major topic at the Imperial War Cabinet meetings. There is a record that in the middle of the meetings, Borden telegraphed Perley that Germany was staking everything on a summer campaign, "and the demand for men is therefore very urgent." In reply to Borden's query as to the progress of recruiting, Sir Edward Kemp, the Minister of Militia in Ottawa, replied that it was going so badly that conscription was inescapable.⁵⁰ Replacement calculations showed that Canada could not maintain four front line divisions, and indeed in the two months prior to Borden's return there were 20,000 front line casualties, but only 3,000 volunteers for infantry service.⁵¹

Although Borden probably made his decision in London, it should not be concluded that he was manipulated by Lloyd George into supporting the major effort necessary for total victory. Borden had prepared himself

for conscription before his visit to Britain, by first setting a target for 500,000 enlistments and, second, by establishing the National Service Board. It is important that his diary entry about "conscription to be used later if necessary" was made two days after he announced his intention to attend the Imperial War Cabinet meetings.⁵² Most probably, the true significance of Borden's 1917 visit was that it convinced him that the "necessity" had arrived for Canada to do its utmost for the imperial war effort. Borden had gone to London with a predisposition to introduce conscription and perhaps even to be convinced of the severity of the situation in the same way as his dreadnought visit of 1912. He certainly did not need much prodding from Lloyd George, and it was on Borden's own concept of the imperial relationship that the sacrifice was made.

The result of Borden's conscription announcement was to divide the country on ethnic grounds. It can be assumed that many English Canadians were simply pleased because Canada was "doing its duty" for the Empire, and that French Canada would be forced to assume its equal share of responsibility. However, the reactions of some prominent Liberals who finally separated from Laurier over conscription showed that higher national interests were also perceived. Newton Rowell wrote to Laurier that "surely the time has come when we can all recognize that Canada is being defended in Flanders and in France just as truly and more effectively than she could be defended on the banks of the St. Lawrence."⁵³ Clifford Sifton published an open letter claiming that "the decision of this issue will determine once and for all, whether Canada is a nation, dominated and held

together by a national will and a national sense of honour.... Germany is fighting desperately to wear out the fortifications of her opponents. If she succeeds, the peace will be inconclusive.... We are not fighting for sentiment, for England, for imperialism; we are fighting for the rights of ourselves and our children to live as a free country."⁵⁴

Dafoe was also in complete agreement with his publisher that a total victory was required for the protection of Canada's own interests, and supported conscription because "Canada is in the war as a principal, not a colony."⁵⁵ Thus, in part, English Canada's support for conscription marked a significant evolution in national aspirations from internal self-government to an influential role for the Canadian state in international affairs.

Laurier, of course, was opposed to conscription because of the dangers of "racial cleavage" and the threat to his leadership in Quebec. He also claimed that the situation in 1917 was the same as when Canada entered the war, for "we are not fighting to repel an enemy - we never were threatened by invasion - but we fight to assist in a noble cause."⁵⁶ Laurier's stand was no less nationalistic than that taken by Rowell, Sifton and Dafoe but was based on a different view of Canadian interests in Europe and attendant responsibilities for the war effort. O.D. Skelton has succinctly described Laurier's thoughts on conscription: "True Britain and the United States had adopted conscription, but they had entered the war as principals; it would undermine the whole basis of the Empire, destroy the whole basis of free and friendly aid and sympathy if compulsion were resorted to in a

country which had gone in, not for its own sake, but for Britain's."⁵⁷

In Quebec, support for the war effort fell far short of conscription. The major newspapers reacted moderately at first, with La Presse recommending a popular referendum and La Patrie even urging support for the government's position. On May 23rd, however, a rally of 3,000 Montrealers broke the windows of La Patrie with cries of "Down with conscription", and a meeting of 15,000 people the next night ended with the mob breaking windows at both La Patrie and La Presse. On May 25th, Armand Lavergne dramatically announced that "I will go to jail or be hanged or shot before I will accept it," and urged civil disobedience. However, Le Devoir urged moderation, warning against agents provocateurs who might incite French Canadians to violence, and advised that they listen to the voices of their religious leaders. Meanwhile the Church hierarchy decided that conscription exceeded French Canadians' duties to the imperial sovereign, and the lower clergy were now openly critical of the Church's support for the war effort.⁵⁸

French Canada had every reason to be concerned about conscription because their recruitment record spoke for itself. By early 1915 their early enthusiasm for the war had worn off, and it was obvious to all, that French Canada was proportionately providing less volunteers. (The government obligingly published recruitment rates by religion.) It was true that the first contingents were largely either British-born or militia members, that the cities provided more volunteers than rural areas, and that Ontario

provided a significantly bigger share than other English-Canadian provinces. However, there was no avoiding the realities of such comparisons as prepared by General Mason in March 1916. He showed that only about 30 percent of the total recruits were Canadian-born, but of that, French Canada had only provided the equivalent of some 4 to 5 percent, although French-Canadian males constituted 40 percent of "eligible" Canadian-born.

It is undoubtedly true that many stupid recruiting mistakes were made in Quebec, such as the appointment of a Methodist Minister as Director of Recruiting Militia, the dispersion of French Canadians amongst other battalions, and anti-Catholic statements by the Minister of Militia, Sam Hughes. Racial animosities were also antagonized by the denial of minority language rights to French Canadians in Ontario (and later Manitoba). As racial animosities heightened, French Canadians increasingly drew comparisons between discrimination against their minority in Ontario, and the lofty ideals for which they were being asked to fight in Europe. Bourassa wrote in Le Devoir: "In the name of religion, liberty, and faithfulness to the British flag, the French Canadians are enjoined to go fight the Prussians of Europe. Shall we let the Prussians of Ontario impose their domination like masters, in the very heart of the Canadian Confederation, under the shelter of the British flag and British institutions."⁵⁹ On May 9, 1916, Laurier deliberately provoked discussion of the issue in the federal parliament through the Lapointe Resolution. This broke national

unity at a critical time, and loosened western ties to the Liberals.⁶⁰ Dafoe, who broke with Laurier on the Lapointe Resolution drew a direct line between threats in Quebec to strike against further war efforts if their minority rights were not satisfied, and the events of 1917.⁶¹

More than anything, however, low French-Canadian recruitments were a reflection of different conceptions of the nature of the war and Canada's responsibilities. Bourassa probably reflected the majority of French-Canadian sentiment when he attributed the origins of the war to Britain's self-interest in maintaining its power against German competition, and likewise with his contention that British imperialists had manipulated Dominion military commitments for their own interests.⁶² Bourassa also appealed to a sympathetic audience when he claimed that the Fathers of Confederation and the imperial authorities had contracted that Canada would only be responsible for defending its own territory, whereas Britain would assume the full burden of "imperial defense." This "pacte colonial" had been broken first by the South African contingents and then further abrogated up to the present situation where Canada was involved in a European war for the protection of British interests.⁶³ Since Canadian interests were not involved, Bourassa concluded that "it is rigorously correct to say that recruiting had gone in reverse ratio of the development of Canadian patriotism."⁶⁴

One month passed between Borden's announcement of conscription and his introduction of the Military Services Bill on June 11, 1917, that made British subjects between the ages of twenty and forty-five eligible for military service. During that time ethnic divisions hardened even further. The government was supported by the mass of English-speaking Canadians, including many Liberals who defected from Laurier. On the other side, French Canada swallowed its differences and Laurier was joined by many French-speaking Conservatives and the Nationalistes. On August 29, a final vote was made on ethnic lines and the Military Service Act passed with a majority of 102 to 44 votes. That same night, after a crowd of 7,000 persons in Montreal were urged to clean up their old guns and a collection had been taken for the purchase of arms, the police attempted to break up the meetings, and one protestor was shot and four policemen injured.

The unification of English Canadian forces over the Military Service Bill also formed the basis for the creation of a coalition government on October 12th, and the calling of an election in which conscription was undoubtedly the biggest issue (on the same grounds Laurier declined an offer to join the coalition). On his own account, Borden laboured for twelve weeks to create the coalition, but an important role was also played by Sifton and Dafoe in bringing western Liberals into the fold. Both the latter shared the belief that a major war effort was needed for total victory, and that a Liberal government under Laurier would be dominated by the Nationaliste view that Canada had "done enough."⁶⁵ Clifford Sifton even went

so far to declare that if "Sir Wilfrid Laurier wins this election, we go out of the war."⁶⁶

There were, in fact, still substantial differences between Laurier's beliefs that Canada should support Britain in its "just war," and Bourassa's growing intolerance with any arguments for imperial unity. As Bourassa explained it was important to unify French-Canadian opposition because "the present, immediate evil to be fought is the policy of the government, a policy of division and national treason. The attitude of the opposition is far from being satisfactory, but it is the lesser evil."⁶⁷ Nevertheless, Laurier was simplistically associated with the Nationalistes' position. On election day, for instance, the *Mail and Empire* called a vote for Laurier and his followers "a vote for Bourassa, a vote against the men at the front, the British connection, and the empire; and a vote for Germany, the Kaiser, Hindenburg, Von Tirpitz, and the sinking of the *Lusitania*."⁶⁸ There were also many other racist outbursts and threats of violence. Even John Dafoe, who was usually more temperate, accused the French Canadians of "being the only known race of white men to quit."⁶⁹ When the results of the December 17th election came through, the Liberals were reduced to a French Canadian party with 62 of their 82 seats from Quebec; the Unionists dominated most of English Canada with 153 seats, but only gained three seats in Quebec - and all in English-speaking constituencies. The alienation of French Canada was complete. But to Dafoe, Sifton and the Winnipeg Free Press all that mattered was that "Canada was saved yesterday from shame, from national

humility, from treachery to her Allies, from treason to the holiest cause for which men have ever fought and died."⁷⁰

Laurier was understandably convinced that conscription was intended to win over English-Canadian voters by satisfying their demands for revenge against Quebec's failure to do their fair share. Borden, himself, was clearly aware of the intensity of English Canada's racist hatred, although he used this as an argument that the racial conflict would be "even graver" if he did nothing.⁷¹ Borden's motives were certainly questionable when two weeks before the election he exempted farmers' sons from conscription, and incidentally attracted votes away from the Liberals! It is easy to sympathize with O.D. Skelton's accusation that the rural exemptions provided "that final proof that conscription was devised to win the election and not to win the war...."⁷² However, the political attractiveness of the Unionist platform did not mean that it was devoid of moral purpose. Evidence of Borden's real commitment to the war effort was displayed by his subsequent cancellation of exemptions for farmers' sons. On March 21, 1918, the same day as the start of the Allied offensive in the east, the Germans made a devastating counter attack on the western front against the weakened British armies. This terrible setback coincided with anti-conscription riots in Quebec City, to produce the most "nerve-racking" period in Borden's career. When he was advised by the British Government on April 1st that "the last man may count," Borden did not hesitate to cancel immediately all exceptions.⁷³

Borden also complemented Canada's responsibilities as a "war principal" with increased Canadian influence over imperial policy. The disastrous initiative of Passchandaele which precipitated the German's successful counter-attack was undertaken without Dominion consent, and had cost Canada 16,000 casualties. Passchandaele did vindicate Lloyd George's criticism of the policy of attrition on the western front, and he again used Dominion opposition led by the Canadians as a counterweight against the High Command. But, this time Lloyd George had to give the Dominions a greater voice in determining war policy through a Committee of Prime Ministers, which although nominally only a sub-committee of the Imperial War Cabinet was potentially very influential. The Committee prepared a comprehensive plan for the conduct of the war, including the husbanding of forces for a major offensive in 1919. The Committee was overcome by events, however, when Haig unexpectedly broke through at Amiens on August 8th with an advance force that was mainly made up of Canadian and Anzac troops. Nevertheless, G.L. Cook has concluded that the British success was completely unexpected and thus "it seems fair to say that, in the Committee of Prime Ministers, there was, for a brief moment, real partnership."⁷⁴

It is true that Britain's concession of power to the Dominions was limited, manipulative and self-interested, but this does not detract from the achievement of Dominion participation in imperial policy-making. Throughout, Lloyd George had been motivated by his desire to raise additional Dominion troops and to obtain a counterweight against the High Command.

Lloyd George's views, however, fully accorded with Canada's policy for a greater war effort to achieve a "knockout blow," which for the first time was based on an informed understanding of the European situation. Nor was Dominion participation in imperial policy a gratuitous gift, for London was forced into making concessions, and the limited influence which Canada exercised over the conduct of the war was not inconsistent with the relationship between a major and minor power. Lastly, the consultative role of the Imperial War Cabinet was far more appropriate than an executive imperial cabinet, because the individual Dominion parliaments could not have endorsed a uniform imperial policy.

The peace discussions, especially, brought home to Borden that Canada had unique interests which conflicted with Britain's. In Borden's view, Britain should extricate itself from Europe through a moderate peace settlement that would not impose any continuing British responsibilities. He strongly felt that the Allied demands for a "Carthaginian" peace, together with extravagant territorial requirements for maintaining imperial security, held the seeds of a future European war. Contrary to the imperial federationists in Britain, Borden had no confidence that the Empire alone could maintain world peace, and instead strongly advocated an Anglo-Saxon alliance with the United States. He accordingly sided with President Wilson's proposals for a League of Nations founded on the mutual protection of autonomous national rights. At a meeting of the Imperial War Cabinet Borden warned:

...if the future policy of the British Empire means working in cooperation with some European nations against the United States, that policy could not reckon on the approval or support of Canada. Canada's view was that, as an Empire, we should keep clear as far as possible of European complications and alliances. This feeling had been immensely strengthened by the experience of the war, into which they had been drawn by old-standing pledges and more recent understandings of which the Dominions had not been made aware.⁷⁵

When Borden realized his powerlessness to reorientate imperial policy, he concentrated his energies on winning international recognition of Canada's autonomous status, and was instrumental in obtaining individual participation of the Dominions at the Peace Conference. His demands for international political recognition were awarded considerable legitimacy because of Canada's participation in the war as a principal. Since Canada had suffered as many casualties as the United States, Borden argued that it would be unfair to seat five American delegates at the Conference and none from Canada. By even more glaring comparisons with smaller nations, he substantiated the Dominions' right to sit as separate members of the League Assembly, and their eligibility to sit on the League's Council. Borden was also influential in establishing the Dominion's right to sign the League Covenant both as members of the British Empire and as separate states.

"When Canada entered World War I she was a colony," concludes H.A. Wilson, but "when she emerged she was close to being an independent state." As Borden was to assert much later, this achievement was not a result of abstract constitutional theorizing, but rather international recognition

of "the valour, the endurance and the achievement of the Canadian Army in France and Belgium."⁷⁶ Thus, in principle, conscription was a logical step in Canada's evolution towards international responsibilities and status. This does not deny that it was a popular Tory election ploy that appealed to English Canada's demands for retributive justice, and more extremely, downright racial persecution. It is also true that, in retrospect, conscription was somewhat ineffective in getting large numbers of troops to the front line.⁷⁷ However, responsible leaders such as Borden, Rowell and Sifton honestly perceived and forthrightly propounded the view that the dire war situation needed a greater contribution to meet Canada's responsibility as a "war principal." In this sense conscription was intended to provide tangible results, as well as being a nationalistic symbol of Canada's commitment to the war effort and its claim for recognition in the Empire. Conscription was not only a sop to imperialism; it was as much an expression of Canadian nationalism as was the anti-imperialist stand of Bourassa and other French Canadians with its roots in North American isolationism.

Canada's greater responsibilities for foreign policy reflected an evolution amongst some leading English Canadians from unquestioning imperial loyalty to the more discriminating pursuit of Canadian national objectives. At the beginning of the war, Canada's contributions were relatively small, and no demands were made for Canadian control. Canadians were understandably unaware of the huge war effort that ultimately would be required, and only considered themselves as a "loyal imperial helper" to Britain in its war with Germany.

As the war progressed, Canada's contribution increased and with it the Canadian stake in the execution, outcome and settlement of the war. Concerns with the welfare of increasing numbers of Canadian troops in Europe led to greater Canadian military control over its own corps in the Expeditionary Force. Later, when Canada received a commensurately larger share in imperial policy-making, it advocated a "knockout blow" that would ensure lasting victory and justify Canada's considerable losses in men and materials. Lastly, Canadian sacrifices earned it a small voice in the Peace Conference where Borden advocated a system of collective security that would minimize Canada's risk of entanglement in another world war.

As Canada increased its stake in the war it also found that its interests increasingly conflicted with Great Britain's leadership of the Empire. Behind Canada's demands for increased military control was a growing distrust in the attrition policies of the British High Command and the resultant wastage of Canadian troops on the western front. Likewise, Borden's support of Lloyd George's conservation of Allied resources for a decisive knockout directly opposed both the policies of the High Command and the "Milnerites" in the British government. Also, Borden's persistent urgings to employ the power of the United States for collective security conflicted sharply with the Milnerites' plans for a self-contained Empire. Lastly, the futile hope for a common imperial policy was contradicted by Borden's profound disagreement with British demands for a Cathaginian peace and territorial aggrandizement.

Up to the First World War the majority of English Canadians had comfortably subscribed to Canadian nationalism at home, and imperial nationalism abroad. There was no conflict as long as Canadians could separate the motivations and aspirations associated with these two objects of loyalty. But after the terrible images of mud, barbed wire and blood, the death of sons, fathers and friends from every neighbourhood and village, and the drastic upheavals of social, economic and political life to support the war effort, the harsh realities of imperialism entered the everyday existence of Canadians at home. At the same time, Canadian national consciousness and pride was raised by its collective suffering and triumphs. Faced with competition between two national loyalties a growing number of Canadians followed Borden to choose Canada over the Empire. Bourassa was right when he claimed that the precedent was indeed the fact, and the fact had taught a terrible lesson.

CONCLUSION

During the twenty-year period from 1899 to 1919, the Canadian national consciousness was dramatically transformed from inward-looking parochialism to a broader international outlook. This transformation was the result of English-Canadian demands for an active role in the defense of the British Empire, which started with a small South African contingent, and progressed through closer military cooperation with Great Britain, to Canada's substantial sacrifice of men and materials in the First World War. However, as had been the case in Canada's earliest history there were still considerable ambiguities in English-Canadian loyalties to the Canadian state and the British Empire. The original impetus behind Canada's assumption of imperial defence responsibilities was the appeal of pan Anglo-Saxon nationalism which caught the imagination of "Britons" throughout the Empire at the turn of the century. By comparison, loyalty to the Canadian state only became an important factor in external affairs when participation in the First World War highlighted Canada's own national interests.

Imperial loyalty was first strongly evidenced by the dispatch of a Boer War contingent. Although an important precedent was created for accepting defence responsibilities outside of Canadian territory, it is notable that Canada had no national interests of its own at stake in South Africa. There was little thought of building up credit for reciprocal British protection

of Canadian interests in Alaska, and nor did Britain make any promises for rewarding Canadian cooperation. On the other hand, Britain could not demand a contingent from a self-governing Dominion, and its powers of persuasion were only successful because Britain's desire for a contingent was more than matched by the demands of English Canadians for a display of imperial solidarity. The dispatch of a Boer War contingent was not an expression of evolving Canadian nationhood but rather of aspirations for imperial unity, prestige and power. ✓

There was continuing evidence of imperial loyalties during the period of European military rivalry that led to the First World War. The precedent established by the Boer War contingent was reinforced by Canadian commitments to a centrally-controlled system of imperial defence. With Canadian acquiescence, their own military forces were integrated into one homogeneous imperial army, overall military control was centralized in an Imperial General Staff, and sole responsibility for imperial foreign policy was retained by the British Cabinet and its Committee for Imperial Defence. With the exception of Borden's abortive attempt in 1911 to gain membership in the C.I.D., Canada did not challenge Britain's exclusive prerogative for determining imperial policies over all important issues of peace and war.

Canada's support of a centralized system of imperial defence was even more striking because it was not tied to the reciprocal protection of Canadian interests. Under Britain's unilateral direction, foreign and military policies for the Empire were totally concerned with British interests,

notably control of the balance of power in Europe. Thus Canada became drawn into what Laurier called a "vortex of militarism," in which it had no part in forming, and which was irrelevant to Canada's own needs for military security in North America. The myth of Britain's protective umbrella against the United States was clearly exposed as worthless during the Alaska Boundary Dispute, and Canada had to secure its own peace through direct negotiations with Washington. Thus Canadian support for Britain in Europe was not predicated on reciprocal military or diplomatic support in North America. Yet the depth of Canadian imperial loyalties was clearly demonstrated in the Naval Debate of 1910, when many English Canadians strongly supported a contribution to the Royal Navy instead of the creation of a Canadian navy for local defense.

Imperial loyalties continued undiminished during the First World War until wartime exigencies forced Canadians to consider their own national interests, and to seek an influential role in imperial policy-making. Canada entered the war without any scrutiny of the issues and as a totally subordinate cog in the imperial war machine. However, the large wartime sacrifices prompted Canadians to question Britain's leadership on a number of accounts, including the inefficient and inequitable organization of material production, the poor treatment of Canadian troops under British officers, and most of all, Britain's disastrous mismanagement of military strategy and its terrible cost in Canadian casualties. At the same time as Britain's leadership was coming under question, Canada was evolving its own position

on military and foreign policy. As the war progressed, Canada's role changed from a "loyal imperial helper" to a "war principal" with a substantial stake in the conduct and outcome of the war, and the subsequent peace. Canada's perception of its own national interests led to increasing conflict with British policy-makers, notably disagreement with the War Office's wasteful strategy of attrition on the Western Front, the Milnerite's reduced objectives for a limited victory, and the British government's demands for a Carthaginian peace and imperial aggrandizement.

The foregoing interpretation of events during a critical period in Canada's national development contradicts two predominant themes in Canadian historiography. The first theme measures Canada's national development as a progressive movement towards political autonomy against centralizing attempts by British imperialists with the support of a like-minded clique in Canada.¹ The following major criticisms can be made of the "autonomist" interpretation:

1. Canadian imperialists were not a small clique, and Britain's influence should not be over-emphasized. Practically all English Canadians were imperialists to some degree, and their demands for imperial unity more than matched Britain's encouragement and diplomatic manipulation.
2. Most English Canadians were ambivalent in their opposition to imperial centralization. Whereas they nearly always opposed a centralized

imperial council with executive or legislative powers, they acquiesced to Britain's centralized control over imperial foreign policy and military defence.

3. There was no progressive movement towards changing the status quo of Canada's imperial relations with Britain, until the First World War. Until that time, Canadians did not even make any serious efforts to increase their voice through an advisory imperial council, despite the fact that Britain was making crucial decisions on Canada's behalf.

By comparison, the second predominant theme in Canadian historiography measures Canada's national development by its assumption of increasing military responsibilities to support a "tacit alliance" with Britain for the reciprocal defense of mutual interests.² The following major criticisms can be made of the "alliance" interpretation:

1. Until the middle of the First World War, the relationship between Canada and Britain cannot be properly described as an "alliance." Whereas an "alliance" properly signifies an agreement between two states with proportionate responsibilities and privileges, in this case the powers for foreign policy-making and military control were almost completely vested in Britain.

2. The military benefits of this unequal political relationship were not reciprocal, but rather were totally in Britain's favour. Canada supported Britain in South Africa and Europe, but did not receive reciprocal protection against the United States.

3. Canada and Britain did not always share mutual interests as was highlighted at the end of the First World War, when, for the first time, Canada began to articulate its own foreign policy objectives.

Any attempt to explain the events between 1899 and 1919 solely in terms of Canadian nationalism would reflect, to some degree or other, the respective shortcomings of the historiographical themes described above. It is undeniable that the self-volition and patriotic enthusiasm with which Canadians threw themselves into imperial undertakings was indicative of national loyalty. The error is to perceive this national loyalty only in the traditional context of the nation-state. Although, at the turn of the century, there was a growing political and economic basis for national loyalties to the Canadian state, this was still inadequate to overcome Canada's lack of a "natural nation." Canadian national aspirations were limited to internal self-government and economic nation-building. To compensate for the parochialism and materialism of Canadian nationalism, many English Canadians sought a cultural identity and vicarious sense of power and mission through loyalty to a pan Anglo-Saxon nation. English Canadians were able to maintain these dual loyalties as long as they provided

compatible solutions to different needs. Canada's participation in the Boer War and the subsequent commitments to imperial defence supported imperial unity without appearing to contradict Canada's own national interests. It was only the terrible sacrifices of the First World War that brought Canadian and imperial loyalties into sharp conflict. From then on, it would be Canada First.

LIST OF REFERENCESINTRODUCTION

1. Frank H. Underhill, The Image of Confederation, The Massey Lectures: Third Series (Toronto: Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, 1964), p. 3.
2. P.B. Waite, "Edward Cardwell and Confederation," in Ramsay Cook, ed., Confederation, Canadian Historical Readings, no. 3 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1967), p. 33.
3. C.P. Stacey, "Britain's Withdrawal from North America, 1864-1871," in Cook, ed., Confederation, p. 13.
4. Ibid., p. 14.
5. Underhill describes Confederation as an anti-American phenomenon on three counts because of Canadian reactions to the possibility of armed invasion at the time of the Civil War, abrogation of the Reciprocity Treaty of 1854, and the northern movement of American immigration. The Image of Confederation, p. 11.
6. G.P. de T. Glazebrook, "Some Thoughts on Canadian Nationalism," in Harvey L. Dyck and H. Peter Crosby, eds., Empire and Nations. Essays in Honour of Frederic H. Soward, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1969), p. 20.
7. Dennis L. Cole, "The Problem of 'Nationalism' and 'Imperialism' in British Settlement Colonies," Journal of British Studies 10 (May 1971): 167 (hereafter cited as Cole, "Problem").
8. F.R. Scott, "Political Nationalism and Confederation," CJEPS 8 (August 1942): 389.

9. William A. Foster, "Canada First; or, Our New Nationality," (1871), reprinted in Canada First: A Memorial of the Late William A. Foster, Q.C. (Toronto: Hunter, Rose & Co., 1890) pp. 13-47.
10. Carl Berger, "The True North Strong and Free," in Peter Russell, ed., Nationalism in Canada (Toronto: McGraw Hill Co. of Canada, 1966), pp. 3-26.
11. Carl Berger, The Sense of Power (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1970), pp. 60-62 (hereafter cited as Berger, Power).
12. Foster, pp. 13, 41.
13. Berger, Power, p. 66.
14. There is a revisionist school that criticizes both the nationalistic intent and results of the National Policy. In a pioneering article, Frank Underhill condemned the National Policy as narrow imperialism intended to promote the sectional interests of Central Canada industrialists, financiers and railroaders. "The Conception of a National Interest," CJEPS 1 (August 1935): 400. More recently, the economist, Melville Watkins, denies that the National Policy was in fact representative of wider nationalism or even a preconceived policy, and concludes that it actually worked against the goal of Canadian separatism in North America. "Economic Nationalism," review article, CHR 32 (August 1966): 388-92. However, these are retrospective judgements, and at the time the National Policy was widely supported on economic, and, particularly, emotional grounds.
15. W.S. Wallace asserts that the name of the 'National Policy is "justified by the fact that protectionism is merely nationalism in its economic aspect." "The Growth of Canadian National Feeling," CHR 1 (June 1920): 159. Robert Craig Brown has similarly argued that there was nothing unusual in Canada expressing nationalism in economic terms at a time when nationalism was often intertwined with economic expansion and integration. "The Nationalism of the National Policy," in Russell, ed., Nationalism in Canada. Although Canadian politicians were not given to abstract intellectualizing, Brown elsewhere contends that their "thoughts and acts have been decidedly nationalist in character," and the National Policy was a declaration of Canadian determination not to

subordinate themselves as "hewers of wood and drawers of water" for the United States. Brown concludes that the national objectives of Canada's economic policies were a major determinant in its foreign policies towards the United States throughout major issues such as the North Atlantic Fisheries Dispute, the Bering Sea Dispute and the Alaska Boundary Dispute. Canada's National Policy, 1883-1900. A Study in Canadian-American Relations (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1964).

16. Elizabeth Wallace, Goldwin Smith: Victorian Liberal (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1957), p. 19.
17. Goldwin Smith, Canada and the Canadian Question (Toronto: Hunter, Rose & Co., 1891), pp. 2-3.
18. George M. Grant, "Canada and the Canadian Question. A Review," reprinted from The Week by the Imperial Federation League of Canada (Toronto: C. Blackett Robinson, 1891).
19. George R. Parkin, Imperial Federation. The Problem of National Unity (London: Macmillan & Co., 1892), p. 126.
20. See Berger, Power, p. 175.
21. Parkin, p. 126.
22. George M. Grant, "Advantages of Imperial Federation," A Lecture Delivered to the Toronto Branch of the Imperial Federation League in Canada (Toronto: C. Blackett Robinson, 1891), p. 13.
23. Berger, Power, pp. 82, 170.
24. Parkin, pp. 103-5.
25. Ibid., p. 43.
26. Douglas L. Cole, "Canada's 'Nationalistic' Imperialists," review article, Journal of Canadian Studies 5 (August 1970): 46.

27. Cole, "Problem," p. 172.
28. Parkin, pp. viii-ix.
29. Foster, pp. 260-61.
30. Berger, Power, pp. 109-27 passim.
31. Cole, "Problem," p. 167.

CHAPTER ONE

1. Social Science Research Council, The Social Sciences in Historical Study, A Report of the Committee on Historiography, Bulletin no. 64 (New York: Social Science Research Council, 1954). The Council also has appropriately cautioned that historians often have to deal with situations where two or more concepts are applicable, and "the problem is not to prove one right and the other wrong, but to develop a more general explanation." pp. 22-29.
2. Hans Kohn, Nationalism: Its Meaning and History, new rev. ed. (Princeton, N.J.: D. Van Nostrand Co., 1965), p. 4.
3. John Emerich Dalberg-Acton, The History of Freedom and Other Essays (London: Macmillan & Co., 1907).
4. Benjamin Akjin, State and Nation (London: Hutchinson University Library, 1964).
5. Elie Kedourie, Nationalism, 3rd ed. (London: Hutchinson & Co., 1971).
6. Kohn, p. 10.
7. Hayes describes how the philosophy of nationalism that "rather suddenly" emerged in the eighteenth century re-evaluated political institutions in terms of subjective concepts of "natural law," "reason" and "progress." Even Rousseau who conceived the nation as the repository of the "general will" made no effort to define "nations" in objective terms. The preoccupation with racial exclusiveness and determinism came later with ideological contributions from French philosophers such as Comte, Taine, Barres and Maurass, and German philosophers such as Kante, Fichte and Hegel. The Historical Evolution of Modern Nationalism (New York: Russell & Russell, 1968). For the history of national ideologies, also see: Louis L. Snyder, ed., The Dynamics of Nationalism: Readings in Its Meaning and Development (Princeton, N.J.: D. Van Nostrand Co., 1946); Anthony D. Smith, Theories of Nationalism (London: Duckworth, 1971); Eugene Kamenka, ed., Nationalism: The Nature and Evolution

of an Idea (Canberra: Australian National University Press, 1973); David Thompson, ed., Political Ideas (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1969).

8. Frederick Hertz goes on to say that a nation "is a community of fate, to a large extent brought together and moulded by historical events and natural factors, and the individual has practically little opportunity of choosing his nationality." Nationality in History and Politics: A Psychology and Sociology of National Sentiment and Nationalism (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1944), p. 13.
9. Hertz describes three types of motivations which respectively connect nations with their past, present and future: (1) traditions are regarded as values simply because they are a collective heritage; (2) interests include individual safety, health and wealth which are important for the continuation and well-being of the group; and (3) ideals are motivations possessing a higher significance than individual interests. These national aspirations in turn typically give rise to four national aspirations that collectively add up to the "national will": (1) national unity including political and economic solidarity; (2) national liberty including independence from foreign domination; (3) national individuality or distinctiveness; and (4) national prestige and leadership amongst nations." pp. 15-45 passim. Leonard Doob describes two levels of national motivations. First, individuals may associate themselves with their national reference group to meet general psychological needs for achieving meaning and order to life by setting bounds, relating man to his environment, and providing a "self-identity." Second, individuals may make a more discriminating evaluation of the advantages (or disadvantages) of their membership in a specific nation. Patriotism and Nationalism: Their Psychological Foundations (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1964), p. 6.
10. Robert E. Dickinson, City, Region and Regionalism: A Geographical Contribution to Human Ecology (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1947), p. 11.
11. Karl W. Deutsch, Nationalism and Social Communication: An Enquiry into the Foundations of Nationality, 2nd. ed. (Cambridge: M.I.T. Press, 1966).

12. Royal Institute of International Affairs, Nationalism (London: Oxford University Press, 1939), p. 239.
13. Boyd Shafer also observed that "as all classes came to closely identify their individual interests with the national interest... and as the nation-state acquired more and more functions, national feelings deepened and widened." Nationalism, Myth and Reality (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1955), p. 115.
14. David M. Potter, "The Historians's Use of Nationalism and Vice Versa," in Alexander Riasanovsky and Barnes Riznik, eds., Generalizations in Historical Writing (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1963), p. 135.
15. Deutsch, pp. 96-97.
16. James C. King, Some Elements of National Solidarity (Chicago: University of Chicago Histories, 1935), p. 37.
17. Florian Znaniecki, Modern Nationalities: A Sociological Study (Urbana, Ill.: University of Illinois Press, 1952), pp. 16-17.
18. James E. Dougherty and Robert L. Pfalzgraff, Jr., Contending Theories of International Relations (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott Co., 1971), p. 275.
19. Deutsch, p. 37.
20. According to James E. Rosenau, the concept of "national sovereignty" which in reality is a relative term, has been used by national and comparative political analysts as a conceptual jail to reduce international linkages to a single variable. International analysts have similarly restricted their studies by fixed assumptions of a uniform "national interest." J.E. Rosenau, ed., International Politics and Foreign Policy: A Reader in Research and Theory (New York: The Free Press, 1961), p. 9. Indeed, in recent political research the very concept of a national interest as a touchstone for domestic and international policies has fallen into disrepute. The argument goes that the national interest is so variable in time and circumstances and by individual definition, it is a meaningless abstraction, and serves as

a deterrent to proper recognition of different interest groups within the state. See Dougherty and Pfalzgraff, p. 99. The term "national interest" is only used in this thesis with these qualifications in mind.

21. J.M.S. Careless, "Metropolitanism and Nationalism," in Russell, ed., Nationalism in Canada, p. 274.
22. J.M.S. Careless, "Frontierism, Metropolitanism and Canadian History," CHR 35 (March 1954): 13-14.
23. Hertz, p. 45.
24. Cole, "Problem," p. 178.
25. The Whigs appeared to be vindicated by a relatively peaceful period of European international relations, due in part to an efficient "balance of power." But, according to Edward H. Carr, appearances were supported by the de facto control of political events through London's unchallenged economic power, and the apparent unlimited prospects of economic growth. Nationalism and After (London: Macmillan & Co., 1945), p. 11.
26. Up to the time of Rousseau and Burke, the Lockean doctrine of Natural Rights was a serious impediment to any strongly collectivist concept of nationalism, "for it was intellectualist, while nationalism must be, at least in part, emotional; it was individualist, while nationalism must emphasize the social element in man; and above all it stressed the similarities which make men everywhere the same, whereas nationalism must stress the peculiarities which differentiate them." Royal Institute of International Affairs, p. 32. Whilst Rousseau defined the nation generically as a collective social and emotional body, he ignored the issue of national differences. However, Burke advanced an exclusive definition of nations, although it should be qualified that Herder had already pioneered the concept of national diversity.
27. Benjamin Kidd, Social Evolution (London: Macmillan & Co., 1895), pp. 312, 349.
28. Richard Faber, The Vision and the Need. Late Victorian Imperialist Aims (London: Faber & Faber, 1966).

29. D.K. Fieldhouse, "'Imperialism': An Historiographical Revision," Economic History Review 14 (no. 2, 1961): 204, 209.
30. J.R. Seeley, The Expansion of England. Two Courses of Lectures (London: Macmillan & Co., 1895); James Anthony Froude, Oceana. Or England and Her Colonies (New York: Charles Scribner & Sons, 1886); Charles Wentworth Dilke, Problems of Greater Britain, 2 vols. (London: Macmillan & Co., 1890). Also see Bernard Semmel for how imperial ideologies were translated into the political platform of the imperial movement in Britain, "Free Trade School" including the "Social Imperialists" and the "Tariff Reform School." Imperialism and Social Reform. English Social-Imperial Thought, 1895-1914 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1960). For the conflict between the Imperialists and the Whigs see A.P. Thornton, The Imperial Idea and Its Enemies. A Study in British Power (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1966).
31. George T. Denison, The Struggle for Imperial Unity (London, Macmillan & Co., 1909), p. 1.
32. Harold Guetzkow, Multiple Loyalties: Theoretical Approach to a Problem in International Organization, Publications of the Centre for Research on World Political Institutions, no. 4 (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1955), p. 8.
33. Carlton J.H. Hayes, Essays on Nationalism (New York: Russell & Russell, 1954).
34. Kohn, p. 9.
35. Potter, pp. 118, 128.
36. Morton Grodzins, "The Basis of National Loyalty," Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists 7 (1951): 359.
37. Guetzkow, pp. 37-39.
38. Eric Hoffer, The True Believer. Thoughts on the Nature of Mass Movements (New York: Harper & Row, Perennial Library, 1966), p. 30.
39. Akjin, p. 77.

CHAPTER TWO

1. Norman Penlington, Canada and Imperialism, 1896-1899 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1965), p. 261 (hereafter cited as Penlington, Imperialism). Penlington directly attributes Canada's support of imperial unity to anti-Americanism. "The compulsive power of Canadian jingoism in 1899 was stimulated by, and expressed through anti-Americanism," he writes, "and anti-Americanism in turn was largely responsible for imperial unity" (p. 213). However, Penlington presents little evidence to support his twin concepts of a tacit Anglo-Canadian alliance motivated by anti-Americanism. As Penlington himself, recognizes, during the Venezuelan Crisis of 1896 Canada did not turn to Britain for protection but reinforced its own militia (p. 31), and during the Spanish-American War of 1898 many Canadians were friendly to the Americans' cause (p. 106). The biggest source of acrimony was, of course, the Alaska Boundary Dispute, but Penlington does not demonstrate that this was an especially important factor concerning Canada's support in South Africa. Lastly, although Penlington repeatedly refers to Canada's economic jealousy of the United States, he recognizes that during the period of his study the Canadian economy was booming (p. 45).
2. Robert J.D. Page directly counters Penlington's argument by pointing out that there was no increase in imperial enthusiasm during the two high points of anti-American feeling in the winter of 1895-1896 (the Venezuela Boundary Dispute) and 1903 (the Alaska Boundary Tribunal). Indeed the latter marked a low period in imperial feelings. "Canada and the Imperial Idea in the Boer War Years," Journal of Canadian Studies 1 (February 1970): 45.
3. This famous phrase comes from a speech that Chamberlain made to the Toronto Board of Trade on December 30, 1887: "The idea is the greatness and importance of the destiny which is reserved for the Anglo-Saxon race - for that proud, persistent, self-asserting, and resolute stock...which is infallibly destined to be the predominant force in the future history and civilization of the world...but I should think that our patriotism was warped and stunted indeed if it did not embrace the Greater Britain beyond the seas...." Mason Wade, The French Canadians, vol. 1: 1760-1911, vol. 2: 1911-1967 (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1968), 1: 469 (*Italics mine*).

4. The desire to promote good trade relations with Britain can best be explained in terms of its intrinsic economic benefits. By comparison, Penlington interprets the British preference as an important sign of Canada's movement towards imperialism in reaction from anti-Americanism, Imperialism, p. 45. James A. Colvin similarly concludes that the British preference was a "reprisal" against American intransigency over Canadian overtures for reciprocity. "Sir Wilfrid Laurier and the British Preferential Tariff System," in Berger, ed., Imperial Relations in the Age of Laurier, Canadian Historical Readings, no. 6 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1969). However, at this time the Liberals were still uncommitted to continental reciprocity. To overcome the Liberals' annexationist stigma from the 1891 Reciprocity Election, Laurier was persuaded in the 1896 Election to accept the new party platform of commercial protection and preservation of the British connection. When, in 1898, the Americans proposed that a reciprocity treaty might be salvaged from the wreckage of the Joint High Commission negotiations, the Canadians flatly turned them down, for as Laurier observed "the general feeling of opinion in Canada today is not in favour of reciprocity." John Bartlet Brebner, North Atlantic Triangle. The Interplay of Canada, the United States and Great Britain, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace (New Haven, Mass.: Yale University Press, 1945), p. 257.
5. H. Blair Neatby writes: "But there was yet another form of Canadian imperialism; another way in which Canadians were conscious of belonging to the Empire and of being indebted to England. And this form is especially relevant because Sir Wilfrid Laurier was such an imperialist. This was the imperialism based on a respect for the principles, and especially the political principles, which Great Britain seemed to represent. To such imperialists, pride in the Empire was based on the the belief that the British Empire was the bulwark of liberty and justice in the world. This might be described as intellectual imperialism rather than racial or emotional imperialism. Being a reasoned rather than an emotional attachment to England, it was the most moderate form of imperialism but it was nonetheless significant." "Laurier and Imperialism," in Berger, ed., Imperial Relations in the Age of Laurier.
6. Oscar Douglas Skelton, Life and Letters of Sir Wilfrid Laurier, ed. D.M.L. Farr, vol. 2: 1896-1919 (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, Carlton Library, 1965), p. 31.

7. C.P. Stacey, Canada and the Age of Conflict. A History of Canadian External Policies, vol. 1: 1867-1921 (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1977), p. 54 (hereafter cited as Stacey, Conflict).
8. Donald C. Gordon, The Dominion Partnership in Imperial Defense, 1870-1914 (Baltimore: John Hopkins Press, 1965).
9. Wade, 1: 474.
10. Casey Murrow, Henri Bourassa and French-Canadian Opposition to Empire (Montreal: Harvest House, 1968), p. 20.
11. Skelton, p. 36.
12. Penlington, Imperialism, pp. 220-1.
13. Murrow, p. 20.
14. Denison, pp. 258-70 passim.
15. According to Skelton, Laurier's change of mind was prompted by the Boers absolute denial of the franchise to the Uitlanders because, "like many another Liberal, Sir Wilfrid was influenced by Mr. Chamberlain's clever tactics in clothing imperialist policies in radical formulas" (p. 35). More plausibly, Laurier was merely rationalizing a position into which he was forced by political exigencies.
16. Penlington, Imperialism, pp. 222-3.
17. Ibid., p. 224.
18. H. Pearson Gundy, "Sir Wilfrid Laurier and Lord Minto," in Berger, ed., Imperial Relations in the Age of Laurier, pp. 25-26. Minto has been frequently maligned as a member of a conspiratorial imperialist clique with Chamberlain and Hutton. The originator of this historical myth was probably John W. Dafoe who characterized Minto as "a combination of country squire and heavy dragoon who was sent to Canada to forward by every means in his power the Chamberlain policies." Laurier: A Study in Canadian Politics (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, Carlton Library, 1963), pp. 78-79. According to Gundy, however, Minto was "without taint of jingoism

and before coming to Canada had been critical of Chamberlain's South African policies (p. 33). Similarly, Frank H. Underhill emphasizes that "although the Governor General still acted as a constitutional monarch in internal matters, and to some degree as a viceroy representing external British interests, Minto scrupulously maintained a distinction between his two responsibilities by being forceful on the first, but only advising on the latter. "Lord Minto on His Governor Generalship," CHR 40 (June 1959): 33.

19. See Norman Penlington, "General Hutton and the Problem of Military Imperialism in Canada, 1898-1900," in Berger, ed., Imperial Relations in the Age of Laurier.
20. Aileen Elizabeth Barker, "Laurier, French Canada and the Boer War," (M.A. dissertation, University of British Columbia, 1961), p. 46.
21. Denison, pp. 261-2.
22. During the Fashoda Crisis in March 1899, Minto was asked to provide an interpretation of the Militia Act, and Laurier and his Cabinet confirmed that the Imperial authorities had the "undoubted right to move the militia to any part of the world in time of war." Laurier even maintained his position when Minto read to him Macdonald's refusal to send a contingent to the Sudan. According to Richard A. Preston it is possible that the Canadian government was only interested in using their troops for invading the French islands of St. Pierre and Miquelon. Canada and Imperial Defence. A Study of the Origins of the British Commonwealth's Defense Organization (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1967).
23. Penlington, Imperialism, p. 271.
24. Barker, p. 67.
25. John Willison, Reminiscences, Political and Personal (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1919), p. 303.
26. Montreal Star, 29 September 1899.

27. There is no proof that Canadians were manipulated by the British press. Indeed most British press releases came through American press organizations which modified them to match anti-British sentiments in their own country. Thus, the jingoism of many English-Canadian newspapers was a measure of their own editorial control. See Page, "Canada and the Imperial Idea in the Boer War Years," pp. 62-63.
28. Robert J.D. Page, Imperialism and Canada, 1895-1903, Canadian History Through the Press Series, eds. D.P. Gagan and A.W. Rasporich (Toronto: Holt, Rinehart and Winston of Canada, 1972), pp. 13-14 (hereafter cited as Page, Imperialism).
29. Montreal Star, 9, 11 October 1899.
30. Barker, p. 81.
31. Page, Imperialism, p. 65.
32. Page, Imperialism, p. 66; Penlington, Imperialism, p. 249; Page, Imperialism, p. 67.
33. Penlington, Imperialism, p. 248.
34. Skelton's words, p. 38.
35. Denison, p. 264.
36. Barker, p. 73.
37. Stacey, Conflict, p. 62.
38. Barker, pp. 75-82.
39. Even Penlington is forced to conclude that whether Laurier "saw the demand for participation as insurance for Britain's protection against the United States is doubtful." Imperialism, p. 260.

40. There is no proof to support H. Blair Neatby's contention that Laurier was able to change his position because he believed that "the Boer War was a just war." Laurier's pronouncements such as, "there never was a juster war on the part of England" were made after Laurier was forced to support English Canada and justify his actions to French Canada (p. 6).
41. Stacey, Conflict, pp. 64-65.
42. Published in La Patrie, 20 October 1899, reproduced in Joseph Levitt, Henri Bourassa on Imperialism and Biculturalism, 1900-1918, Issues in Canadian History, gen. ed. J.L. Granastein (Toronto: Copp Clark Publishing Co., 1970), pp. 35-36.
43. Cited in Stacey, Conflict, p. 69.
44. Page, Imperialism, p. 87.
45. Page, "Canada and the Imperial Idea in the Boer War," p. 47.
46. Richard Jebb, Studies in Colonial Nationalism (London: Edward Arnold, 1905), pp. viii, 113.
47. W. Sanford Evans, The Canadian Contingents and Canadian Imperialism: A Story and a Study (Toronto: Publishers Syndicate, 1901), pp. 9, 30.
48. J. Castell Hopkins and Murat Halstead, South Africa and the Boer War (Toronto: War Publishing Co., 1900), pp. i-iv.
49. Goldwin Smith, In the Court of History: An Apology for Canadians who were opposed to the South African War (Toronto: William Tyrell & Co., 1902).
50. Henri Bourassa, Great Britain and Canada (Montreal: C.O. Beauchemin et Fils, 1902).
51. Henri Bourassa, The French-Canadians in the British Empire (Montreal: Le Devoir Printing, 1912).
52. House of Commons Debate, 13 March 1900, reproduced in Levitt, pp. 37-38.

CHAPTER THREE

1. G.P. de T. Glazebrook has concluded: "The fact was that... cooperation in foreign policy was not keeping pace with cooperation in military policy; in other words, the control over the development of situation in which the military plans might be called into play was virtually left by the Dominions (so cautious about military control) to the British foreign office." A History of Canadian External Relations, rev. ed., vol. 1: The Formative Years to 1914, vol. 2: In the Empire and the World, 1914-1939 (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, Carlton Library, 1966), 1: 242 (hereafter cited as Glazebrook, External Relations).
2. Ewart was also rather unique amongst English Canadians in urging that a declaration of independence would unify Canada's scattered population and diverse ethnic groups, because "national sentiment is the only secure bulwark of national existence. We shall never have it as long as we remain a colony." Carl Berger, Imperialism and Nationalism, Issues in Canadian History, gen. ed. J.L. Granastein (Toronto: Copp Clark Publishing Co., 1969), pp. 82-84.
3. Whereas Bourassa's anti-imperialism was typical of French Canada, he was more unique in positively advocating a bi-cultural Canadian nationality, such as when he wrote in Le Nationaliste, 3 April 1904: "We consider the whole of Canada is our Fatherland, that is it belongs to us just as much as to other races.... Our nationalism is Canadian nationalism founded on the duality of races.... Separated by language and religion and the legal arrangements necessary for the preservation of their respective traditions, but united by a sentiment of brotherhood in a common attachment to a common country." Levitt, p. 2.
4. Unlike Ewart, however, it wasn't until 1916 that Bourassa also realized that the two nationalities would be brought closer together by independence itself. M.P. O'Connell, "The Ideas of Henri Bourassa," CJEPS 29 (August 1953), pp. 367, 373.
5. André Siegfried, The Race Question in Canada, ed. Frank H. Underhill (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, Carlton Library, 1966), p. 208.
6. Skelton, p. 111.

7. Richard Jebb, The Imperial Conference: A History and Study, 2 vols. (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1911), 1:234 (hereafter cited as Jebb, Conference).
8. Ibid., 1:355.
9. For the implications of Mahan's and Fisher's defense theories for imperial centralization see respectively Gordon (p. 121) and Preston (p. 302).
10. W.C.B. Tunstall, "Imperial Defense, 1897-1914," in E.A. Benians, J. Butler, and C.E. Carrington, eds., The Cambridge History of the British Empire, vol. 3: The Empire Commonwealth, 1870-1919 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1959), p. 572.
11. Preston, pp. 305-6 (Italics mine).
12. J.E. Tyler, "Development of the Imperial Conference, 1887-1914," in Benians et al., The Empire Commonwealth, 1870-1919, p. 416.
13. Preston, pp. 310-17.
14. Berger, Power, p. 123.
15. Stacey, Conflict, p. 99.
16. Ibid., p. 102.
17. Preston, pp. 336-43.
18. Stacey, Conflict, pp. 100-1
19. Tunstall, pp. 578-9.
20. Ibid., pp. 582-3.
21. Skelton, p. 109.
22. Jebb, Conference, 2:49-52.

23. Ibid., p. 72.
24. Ibid., p. 120.
25. Glazebrook, External Relations, 1: 439-40.
26. Jebb, Conference, 2: 154-70 passim.
27. See Robert Craig Brown and Ramsay Cook, Canada 1896-1921. A Nation Transformed (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1974), p. 152.
28. Murrow, p. 59.
29. Gordon, p. 228.
30. Stacey, Conflict, p. 129.
31. Ibid., pp. 129-30.
32. Tunstall, p. 588.
33. Glazebrook, External Relations, 1: 241.
34. Tunstall, p. 593.
35. Preston, pp. 404-6.
36. Wade, 1: 573-4.
37. Stacey, Conflict, p. 135.
38. Robert Craig Brown, Robert Laird Borden. A Biography vol. 1: 1854-1914 (Toronto: Macmillan Co. of Canada, 1975), p. 161 (hereafter cited as Brown, Borden).
39. Preston, p. 240.
40. Stacey, Conflict, p. 135.
41. Gordon, p. 256.

42. G.N. Tucker contends that Borden changed his position because he learned of the true seriousness of the naval scare during a personal visit to Britain in the summer of 1909. "The Naval Policy of Sir Robert Borden, 1912-1914," CHR 28 (March 1947): 2. However, Preston has rightly criticized Tucker for not providing any supporting evidence (p. 420).
43. Gaddis G. Smith, "Nation and Empire: Canadian Diplomacy During the First World War," (Ph.D. dissertation, Yale University, 1960), pp. 80-82.
44. Wade, 1: 574.
45. Henri Bourassa, "Le projet de loi navale: sa nature, ses consequences" (Montreal: Le Devoir, 1910).
46. Wade, 1: 588.
47. Tyler, p. 432.
48. Gordon, p. 254.
49. Notably Champ Clark's support of reciprocity, "because I hope to see the day when the American flag will float over every square foot of the British North American possessions clear to the North Pole." Likewise President Taft's repeated and misconstrued assertion that "Canada stands at the parting of the ways." Stacey, Conflict, p. 147.
50. Glazebrook, External Relations, 1: 170.
51. Brown and Cook, pp. 180-1.
52. Henri Bourassa, The Reciprocity Agreement (Montreal: Le Devoir Printing, 1911).
53. Glazebrook, External Relations, 1: 170.
54. Heath MacQuarrie, "Sir Robert Borden and the Election of 1911," CJEPS 25 (August 1959): 286.

55. See Brown, Borden, p. 236. Also, the Canadian Liberal Party embarrassingly drew attention to the fact that Churchill had already publicly endorsed the concept of separate colonial fleet units a few weeks before his meeting with Borden! "Canada and the Navy. A Memorandum Prepared by the Board of the Admiralty on the General Naval Situation." (Ottawa: Central Information Office of the Canadian Liberal Party, publication no. 5, 1913), p. 8.
56. Indeed, Harold A. Wilson has suggested that one of the main reasons Borden offered direct contributions was to obtain a commensurate share in imperial policy-making. The Imperial Policy of Sir Robert Borden, University of Florida Monographs: Social Sciences, no. 29 (Gainesville, Fla.: University of Florida Press, 1966), p. 10.
57. Preston, pp. 451, 448.
58. Henri Bourassa, Why the Navy Act Should be Repealed. Imperial Problems (Montreal: Le Devoir Printing, 1912), pp. 32, 34.
59. Federal Government of Canada, "The Naval Aid Bill," Speech Delivered by Rt. Hon. R.L. Borden, 5 December 1912.
60. F.H. Soward, "Sir Robert Borden and Canada's External Policy, 1911-1920," CHAAR (1941): 68.
61. Brown, Borden, p. 240.
62. Henri Bourassa, "Imperial Relations," An Address Before the Empire Club of Canada, Toronto, 6 March 1913 (n.p.).

CHAPTER FOUR

1. Robert MacGregor Dawson, ed., The Development of Dominion Status, 1900-1936 (London: Frank Cass & Co., 1965), p. 4. Whereas Dawson is somewhat equivocal about the influence of the war itself, H.A. Wilson asserts that "the importance of World War 1, in terms of changing connections between Great Britain and the Dominions, cannot be emphasized enough." (p. 22).
2. George L. Cook, "Canada's Relations with Britain, 1911-1919: Problems of Imperial Defence and Foreign Policy," (Ph.D. dissertation, Oxford University, 1968) (hereafter cited as G.L. Cook, "Imperial Defence").
3. Stacey, Conflict, pp. 173-6.
4. Robert Laird Borden, "Canada at War," Speech at The Special Session of the Dominion Parliament, August 1914 (n.p.).
5. Stacey, Conflict, p. 176.
6. J.B.D. Miller, Richard Jebb and the Problem of Empire, Commonwealth Papers, no. 3, gen. ed. K. Hancock, University of London: Institute of Commonwealth Studies (London: Athlone Press, 1956), p. 29.
7. Brown and Cook, p. 250.
8. Le Devoir, 8 September 1914, reproduced in Levitt, pp. 161-2.
9. Wade, 2: 651-2.
10. Henri Bourassa, The Duty of Canada at the Present Hour (Montreal: Imprimerie du "Devoir," 1914), pp. 6, 18.
11. Wade, 2: 652-3.
12. Skelton, p. 163.
13. Stacey, Conflict, p. 172.

14. G.L. Cook, "Imperial Defence," pp. 83-94 passim.
15. Ibid., p. 132.
16. G.G. Smith, pp. 26-38 passim.
17. G.L. Cook, "Imperial Defence," pp. 125-6.
18. Arthur Berriedale Keith, War Government of the British Dominions, Economic and Social History of the World War (British Series), gen. ed. J.J. Shotwell, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1921), p. 23.
19. G.L. Cook, "Imperial Defence," pp. 96-7.
20. G.G. Smith, pp. 195-8.
21. Ibid., pp. 186-9.
22. G.L. Cook, "Imperial Defence," pp. 143, 164.
23. Stacey, Conflict, pp. 179, 192.
24. Ibid., p. 190.
25. Ibid.
26. Ibid., p. 193.
27. G.G. Smith, p. 193. Soward wrongly assumes that the dispatch was delivered to the British Government and concludes that "this vigorous dispatch had surprisingly little effect upon Bonar Law" (p. 70).
28. Brown and Cook, pp. 228-249 passim.
29. G.L. Cook, "Imperial Defence," pp. 198-205.

30. In Curtis's words: "Dominion self government has not been applied to the first and greatest of public interests. The burden of controlling the issues of national life and death has not been placed, where alone it can rest with safety, on every citizen of the Commonwealth able to bear it." The Problem of the Commonwealth (Toronto: Macmillan Co. of Canada, 1916), pp. V, 246-7. Curtis's cogent and detailed proposal was derived from a mass of research collected in the Round Table's "Green" and "Annotated" Memoranda, but was published separately to protect the Movement's independence. James Earys, "The Round Table Movement in Canada, 1909-1920," in Berger, ed., Imperial Relations in the Age of Laurier, p. 73.
31. Richard Jebb kept up a running fight with Curtis and the Round Table commencing with his publication of The Brittanic Question. A Survey of Alternatives (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1913). Instead of recognizing only two alternatives for the Empire - separation or federation - Jebb postulated a third option of a "Brittanic Alliance" which would respect Dominion autonomy but advance the Empire's mutual interests in war and peace. Jebb believed that this function could be adequately performed by regular meetings of the Imperial Conference, supported by a permanent secretariat and continuing sub-committees with full-time Dominion representation in London.
32. A surprising measure of support for The Problem of Commonwealth was provided by Henri Bourassa, but to obliquely confirm his own anti-imperialist view. He agreed that "the active and intense participation of the self-governing Dominions in the war declared by Great Britain alone has revolutionized the political order of the Empire," and the Dominions cannot be expected to make contributions without a say in policy. Until Canada controlled its foreign policy it was "a nation independent by right but not in fact." "Independence or Imperial Partnership," reprinted from Le Devoir (Montreal, 1916).
33. Z.A. Lash, Defence and Foreign Affairs. A Suggestion for the Empire (Toronto: Macmillan Co. of Canada, 1917).
34. John W. Dafoe, "Our Future in the Empire: Alliance under the Crown," in J.P. Miller, ed., The New Era in Canada (London: J.M. Dent & Sons, 1917), pp. 279, 281, 291 (Italics mine).

35. Besides sharing a common disagreement with Curtis, it should not be assumed that Dafoe's "perpetual alliance" was synonymous with Jebb's "Brittanic Alliance." Dafoe believed that collective action was only needed in times of "clear and present danger," and later he did not see the need for any formal mechanisms for imperial consultation other than those between "an alliance of sovereign nations." Murray S. Donnelly, "J.W. Dafoe and Lionel Curtis - Two Concepts of the Commonwealth," Political Studies 8 (June 1960).
36. G.G. Smith, p. 63.
37. In April 1916, Borden temporarily took over the Minister of Militia's portfolio from Hughes whose "erratic temperament, countless indiscretions, absurd vanities and lack of systematic administrative capacity" had become an unbearable liability. Henry Borden, ed., Robert Laird Borden: His Memoirs, ed. H. Macquarrie, vol. 2: 1916-1920 (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, Carlton Library, 1969), p. 15 (hereafter cited as Borden, Memoirs). Later in October, Hughes left the government and Borden divided his portfolio between a Minister of Militia in Ottawa and a Minister for Militia Overseas, respectively filled by Sir Edward Kemp and Sir George Perley. A year later in October 1917, Perley was retained as High Commissioner but his new portfolio was given to Kemp, who in turn was replaced by General Mewburn.
38. Borden, Memoirs, pp. 43, 47, 60 (*Italics mine*).
39. G.L. Cook, "Imperial Defence," p. 210.
40. Ibid., p. 244. Besides requiring more troops, Lloyd George either by this time, or later, also looked to the Dominions as a counterweight to the British High Command. Stacey, Conflict, p. 250. By taking the Dominions into Britain's counsel, he thought that their own massive losses on the western front would prompt them to side with his opposition against the "Citadels" war of attrition, and support his plans for a new initiative in the east to "knock the props out" from behind. In view of Lloyd George's rather calculating objectives it is somewhat misleading for Soward to assert that with "the accession of Mr. Lloyd George as Prime Minister, the attitude toward the Dominions changed almost overnight" (p. 70). The overriding concern of British policy was still the protection of British interests, but Lloyd George was astute enough to realize that the Dominions would only support his plans, if he awarded them the privilege of consultation.

41. G.G. Smith, p. 288.
42. Wilson, p. 39.
43. G.L.Cook, "Imperial Defence," pp. 255-7.
44. Ibid., pp. 263-8.
45. Borden, Memoirs, p. 65.
46. In matter of fact, the Resolution was sufficiently ambiguous to satisfy everybody, and at the so-called "Conference of Prime Ministers" in 1921, the British delegation evoked their own interpretation of a centralized imperial executive that could impose majority decisions on the Dominions. The Round Table also claimed that since the Conference acted as an imperial executive it held up their interpretation of Resolution IX as maintaining imperial diplomatic unity and one uniform foreign policy for the entire Empire. However, Dominion acquiescence was somewhat based on misunderstandings and hence was misleading. In any event, the 1923 Conference rejected the concept of a uniform foreign policy and returned to a merely consultative body. Dawson, pp. 43, 85.
47. Stacey, Conflict, p. 88.
48. During his speech to the House on May 18, 1917, Borden explained his position as follows: "Hitherto we have depended upon voluntary enlistment. I myself stated to the Parliament that nothing but a voluntary enlistment was proposed by the Government. But I return to Canada impressed at once with the extreme gravity of the situation, and with a sense of responsibility for our further effort at the most critical period of the war." Borden, Memoirs, p. 78.
49. Ibid., p. 76.
50. G.L. Cook, "Imperial Defence," p. 258.
51. Brown and Cook, p. 267.
52. Borden, Memoirs, p. 60.

53. G.L. Cook, "Imperial Defence," p. 307.
54. John W. Dafoe, Clifford Sifton in Relation to His Times (Toronto: Macmillan Co. of Canada, 1931), p. 413.
55. Ramsay Cook, "Dafoe, Laurier and the Formation of Union Government," in C. Berger, ed., Conscription 1917, Canadian Historical Readings, no. 8 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, n.d.).
56. G.L. Cook, "Imperial Defence," p. 308.
57. O.D. Skelton, The Life and Letters of Sir Wilfrid Laurier, vol. 2: 1896-1919 (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1921).
58. Elizabeth Armstrong, The Crisis of Quebec, 1914-1918 (New York: AMS Press, 1967), pp. 177-9.
59. Wade, 2: 660.
60. Ramsay Cook, The Politics of John W. Dafoe and the Free Press (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1963), p. 71.
61. Dafoe, Laurier: A Study in Canadian Politics, p. 95.
62. Bourassa concluded that "the defence of Belgium's neutrality may have been the official and popular motive of Great Britain's intervention in the war. But the true and "decisive factor" was "the determination to keep the supremacy of the seas and to attack the only war fleet capable of threatening that domination." The Foreign Policy of Great Britain (Montreal: Imprimerie du "Devoir," 1915).
63. Henri Bourassa, Que Devous-nous a l'Angleterre? (Montreal: n.p., 1915).
64. Bourassa agreed that he had originally supported Canada's intervention "as a nation, for the defence of superior interests uniting Canada with France and Britain." Now he opposed Canadian involvement because advantage was being taken of war enthusiasm to promote the "doctrine of imperial solidarity." He condemned the war itself as "imperialistic" because it was engineered by "dealers in human flesh who, in England as in Germany, in France as in Russia, have brought the peoples to slaughter in order

to increase the reapings of cursed gold." Canadian Nationalism and the War (Montreal: n.p., 1916).

65. Dafoe, Laurier, A Study in Canadian Politics, p. 104.
66. Dafoe, Clifford Sifton in Relation to His Times, p. 416.
67. Le Devoir, 12 November 1917, reproduced in Levitt, p. 178.
68. Wade, 2: 752.
69. A.M. Willms, "Conscription 1917: A Brief for the Defence," in Berger, ed., Conscription 1917, p. 10.
70. R. Cook, "Dafoe, Laurier and the Formation of Union Government," p. 34.
71. Borden wrote to Archbishop Bruchesi: "If the measure were abandoned or if no such measure had been introduced and the present Government should persist in attempting to carry on the affairs of the country in the face of so intense and vehement a feeling, disorders as grave perhaps even graver than those which your Grace apprehends would be extremely probable if not inevitable." Willms, p. 10.
72. Indeed during 1916-17 the stock of the government had been particularly low because of graft and corruption, unemployment and inflation, and the poor progress of the war. Between August 1915 and June 1917, the Conservatives lost general elections in no less than seven provinces.
73. Borden, Memoirs, pp. 131-2.
74. George L. Cook, "Sir Robert Borden, Lloyd George and British Military Policy, 1917-1918," Historical Journal 24 (2, 1971), p. 395.
75. G.L. Cook, "Imperial Defence," pp. 406-7.
76. Wilson, pp. 53-71, 76.
77. Wade had estimated that 83,355 men were raised by conscription, of which 47,509 went overseas, and in turn of which 24,132 reached the front line (2: 768).

CONCLUSIONS

1. The "autonomist" interpretation closely follows contemporary Liberal appeals for laissez-faire internationalism (Goldwin Smith), pacificism, isolationism and neutrality (Henri Bourassa), and national autonomy and self-determination (John S. Ewart). Also influential was John Hobson's Imperialism. A Study (1902), because it associated imperialism with commercial exploitation and disclosed Britain's single-minded pursuit of its own self interests. Aversions to being drawn into European militarism were also vindicated in the most terrible manner by the First World War, and the post-war failure to guarantee peace through collective security. Thus, even early historical interpretations by John W. Dafoe and O.D. Skelton were decidedly unfavourable to British influences and were stridently nationalistic. "British influences, in short, were largely equated with imperial leading strings," J.M.S. Careless recalls, "and the more nationalistic writers were ever on guard against imperialist designs to enmesh pure young Canada into a web of power politics." "Frontierism, Metropolitanism and Canadian History" (p. 4). The most pervasive and central argument of the autonomist interpretation was what A.R.M. Lower has called the advancement of "colony to nation" against imperialist opposition. "The whole movement toward autonomy," writes W.S. Wallace, "is...so closely intertwined with the growth of Canadian nationalism as to be almost indistinguishable from it" (p. 140). But according to F.R. Scott, "history records how the realization of this concept was frustrated and delayed by the innumerable resistances of imperialism, operating through traditional channels, both in and out of Canada...." (p. 415).

2. The "alliance" interpretation counters that independent isolationism was little different to colonialism because Canada still relied on British protection against the United States, and had a reciprocal interest in maintaining the international balance of power in favour of Britain and the Empire. Moreover, Canada achieved its full national status not by separating from Britain but standing beside it as an equal partner. Thus, according to Donald G. Creighton, the British connection was in fact "an alliance of Kingdoms, formally expressed in agreements and institutions with benefits on each side and shared responsibility and power. It had begun as an alliance for the defense of Canada in North America. It had become an alliance for the assertion and protection of Canadian interests in the world at large." "Sir John A. Macdonald" in Claude T. Bissell, ed., Our Living Tradition. Seven Canadians (Toronto: Published in association with Carlton University, University of Toronto Press, 1957),

p. 60. The main thrust behind this interpretation is the Laurentian thesis of Creighton and others who argue that the British connection was instrumental in preserving Canada's unique national identity against continental homogenization. Thus, Canadian competition with the United States and the interdependence of Canada and Britain are common themes. Major contributions have been made by Norman Penlington's attribution of much Canadian imperialism to anti-Americanism, the recognition of broad strategic factors in military histories by Gilbert N. Tucker, Richard A. Preston and C.P. Stacey, and Carl Berger's portrayal of the imperial movement in Canada as another form of Canadian nationalism.

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