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# Women's War Talks to Women



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## SHOULD WOMEN KEEP OUT OF POLITICS?

**The Unique Opportunity For Those Who Have Votes, And  
Those Who Haven't, Is To Sustain the  
Men at the Front**

*By KATHLEEN BOWKER.*

Should women want to keep out of politics at this crisis in the affairs of the nation, even if they could?

We are in the fourth year of the war, and we realize, as never before, that the war is very far from being won. What can we women of Canada do to shorten the war and to bring about most quickly an honourable peace? Is anything closer to our hearts than this great end?

In all this weary time, filled with personal anxiety and sorrow for many of us, we have put the needs of the men on active service first. Comforts for the men in the field, Red Cross supplies for the wounded and suffering, and food for the prisoners—we have been thankful for the opportunity to serve in these ways. Will we take advantage of the new opportunity of service open to us?

On August 11th, 1917, General Sir Arthur Currie cabled from France, "IF SUPPORT IS NOW WITHHELD, OR EVEN DELAYED, IT MEANS THAT ADDITIONAL BURDEN WILL HAVE TO BE BORNE BY MEN ALREADY DOING THE SEEMINGLY IMPOSSIBLE." Can we help to hurry the necessary support to our men? YES, BY HELPING TO RETURN THE UNION GOVERNMENT WHICH IS PLEDGED TO ENFORCE THE MILITARY SERVICE ACT.

What actual power have women in the coming election? All women who are next of kin of soldiers overseas, or of those who have died on the field of honour, have a vote in the coming election. That means the mother, wife, daughters and sisters (twenty-one years of age or over) of every man who has seen overseas service since the war began; of every man who is in the British naval or military service outside of Canadian units.

Those of us who have this vote can cast it for the candidate in our locality, who IS SUPPORTING UNION GOVERNMENT

AND ITS WIN-THE-WAR POLICY. This precious vote is given to women because of the sacrifices their men folk have made, and are making, in the defence of right.

You women of Canada have given your prayers, your thoughts, your strength, time and money to the support of your men, should now rejoice in THE OPPORTUNITY WHICH IS GIVEN YOU TO HELP SEND FORWARD QUICKLY THE REINFORCEMENTS SO BADLY NEEDED. The loyal women who are not next of kin to our soldiers, and have no vote, will find their opportunity of service in assisting to bring home to all women voters the importance and the need of their votes, and the first necessity of registering.

Should women keep out of politics? Not with such important work as this to do. Let us show ourselves the power we are by SWINGING THE SCALE IN FAVOUR OF WIN-THE-WAR CANDIDATES AND A UNION GOVERNMENT.

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## WOMEN ARE AT ATTENTION.

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In War Work They Have Toiled With the Men; And Now Share In the Election. Should Raise the Tone Of Public Life in Canada

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By *MRS. JESSIE MACIVER,*  
*Editor of Women's Century.*

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Our lesson? Are we learning it. Our opportunity? Are we using it. To both these questions I think we may truthfully reply "yes." There is, of course, much of our lesson still to be learned; and much of our opportunity still to be grasped before we fully realise what the unspeakably sad tragedies of to-day are teaching the womanhood of our generation.

At one time we viewed women as being altogether too illogical to be of any practical value to the community. Woman has become an actual asset. It has been said that the Empire having once tapped so great and valuable a reservoir of reserved energy will surely never again commit the folly of blocking its outlet. Here then is woman's opportunity. New powers and new responsibilities are hers, and although she has been called almost

with startling suddenness into active service in many hitherto forbidden arenas, she has, thank God, already given convincing proof not only of her willingness to take a full and intelligent share in the heavy burdens confronting all alike, but of her determination to carry out to its completest detail, each task as it is entrusted to her.

Without waiting for a direct invitation, she has been found standing at attention with the words upon her lips "Here am I, send me." Men and women alike are FACING THE FACTS, and they are facing them TOGETHER. Co-ordination of work and methods is sought for by both alike. Both recognise that whilst sympathy of thought and purpose must be the key-note for united action, no cause can be brought to a successful issue without work, hard work sometimes but patient and persevering work always.

It can surely be claimed for the women of Canada, certainly for those who have for several years been already trained by organization for the possible solution of many sociological and civic problems, that they are not likely to be patriotic in a narrow sense. They are just a band of sane, practical women who by the brave front with which they have met and conquered many discouragements in the past are likely to prove good comrades when called upon to stand side by side with their fathers, husbands and brothers in the ranks of the great Win-the-War regiments of their beloved Dominion.

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## FOR CANADIAN UNITY.

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**The Great Question Shall We Win the War or Quit the War  
Can Only Be Answered by a United People Behind  
The Union Government**

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*By MRS. HARRIET BOOMER,  
President London Council of Women.*

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No woman who has been engaged in patriotic service during more than three years of war can afford to remain indifferent to the issues involved in the approaching general election. Women are not concerned with the political controversies that have

separated the nation into two party camps, but with the nation itself, its position in the war and its place in the world when victory has crowned the allies. Whatever of sorrow or loss has accompanied this greatest struggle of the ages, Canada has found her soul and her name has been enrolled among those which will be for ever linked with the sublime vindication of liberty in these days.

The one question to be answered at the coming general election, is whether Canada is to pursue unwavering and unflinchingly, the path of duty, or whether she is to stumble, to halt, to lose her position and place and to put an ineffaceable blot upon her honourable escutcheon.

The essential unity of the people has found expression in a Union Government. It came into existence under the pressure of a necessity which led leaders in both political parties to sink their differences of opinion, and their personal antagonisms, to the end that Canada may remain honourably in the war. What they have done in obedience to the call of national service should not be difficult for patriotic women to do, who have not hitherto concerned themselves with party politics.

Matters of the utmost concern to Canada after the war as well as during the war must be settled, and settled right. **WHAT GOVERNMENT IS BETTER QUALIFIED TO DO THIS, FOR THE NATIONAL WELFARE, THAN A UNION GOVERNMENT, DEVOTED EXCLUSIVELY TO THE TASK?** Now is women's opportunity to make it certain that the Canada of the future shall be worthy of her heritage and her fame. **BY VOTING AND WORKING FOR THE SUCCESS OF THE UNION GOVERNMENT.**

What, specially, should women do at this supreme national, imperial, and world crisis? There is general agreement among all patriotic citizens, whether men or women, that the unmistakable and paramount duty of Canada is to devote all her energies, powers and resources to the business of winning this war, and of sustaining her part in the great company of allied democracies that are battling to preserve the liberties of the world against the tyranny with which it is menaced.

That duty can be performed only by sustaining the fighting forces of the Canadian army at the front. Need it be recalled what the Canadian army has already accomplished, the imper-

ishable laurels it has won, the honour and glory which it has brought to the Dominion. THESE MEN WHO HAVE BORNE THE BURDEN OF CANADA'S DEFENCE, WHO HAVE SUFFERED AND ENDURED GLADLY AND WHO HAVE DIED THE NOBLEST AND MOST HEROIC OF DEATHS, CRY TO US FROM ACROSS THE SEAS, TO FILL THE GAPS IN THEIR DEPLETED RANKS.

That is why a Union Government has been made possible and has been achieved in spite of the greatest difficulties and obstacles. Women cannot remain outside this Win-the-War Campaign. THEY MUST UPHOLD THE PRINCIPLE OF NATIONAL SERVICE AND THE UNION GOVERNMENT THAT EMBODIES THE UNALTERABLE DETERMINATION OF THE PATRIOTIC MEN AND WOMEN OF THE DOMINION.

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### **LEADERS OF WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS STRONGLY SUPPORT UNION**

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According to the views expressed by the leaders of Canada's national women's organizations the place of women in the election will be of exceptional importance. Almost all sections of organized womanhood, while not taking sides officially, are bringing their influence to bear on the public opinion which must decide the fate of the Union Government, and the continued participation in the war.

#### **The Daughters of Empire**

Mrs. Albert E. Gooderham, President of the Daughters of the Empire, said: "The Order, which has forty thousand members in the Dominion cannot officially take a side in a general election, because women of all political faiths belong to it, and our platform is so broadly Imperial that it allows for much latitude of conviction on questions of immediate public importance. But the National Executive has passed a resolution encouraging our membership, as individuals, to do all they can to secure the return of a "Win-the-war" Government. We declared for conscription at our annual meeting last May, and of course I do not see how any believer in conscription can help supporting a Government that will press the war aggressively to a victorious conclusion."

## Ontario Equal Franchise Union

The suffrage having been achieved provincially by Ontario women, and promised without reservations by the Prime Minister of the Dominion, the Ontario Equal Franchise Union has become the Women's Citizenship Association. Mrs. A. B. Ormsby, the President, has been holding meetings to inculcate the full discharge of their civic duties by women, whether enfranchised by the War-Time Election Act or not, "That is the policy of our Association," Mrs. Ormsby explained, "as laid down by the Executive, in a resolution which endorsed a Union Government, pledged to strong win-the-war-policies. Our membership, on the whole, was against the limitation of the women's franchise in this election. We felt that Parliament should have honored the franchise conferred by the Legislature. But that feeling makes absolutely no difference to our support of the Union Government. We want to do all we can to help the voting women to understand the issues that are to be decided, and to act accordingly. We have appointed Mrs. W. H. Becker field secretary, and are doing **every thing to support the Union Government**, and to consolidate an informed opinion that will be effective after the election, and during the long, trying time that is ahead of the country.

## Women's Christian Temperance Union

The Women's Christian Temperance Union is one of the most powerful women's bodies in the land. The Ontario president is Mrs. E. A. Stevens, who, having taken part in the great win-the-war conventions, in Montreal during May, and in Toronto last August, personally endorsed the granting of a partial franchise to women for purely war purposes. Mrs. Stevens put the situation in this way:—

"The W.C.T.U. has been, and will always be, absolutely independent of political parties. We have helped and criticised both, as they have satisfied or disappointed us, on the platform of moral and social reform on which we stand. While we have deplored some aspects of the Canadian military administration, there is no question about our wish that the Government shall go all the way to win the war. At our Cornwall convention there was some criticism of my stand in support of the War-time Election Act. We have as a body supported suffrage, and it was not easy for us to accept a limitation. **But we recognized**

the peculiar conditions and though we do not enter the campaign as an organization, I am personally doing everything in my power, in conjunction with the Win-the-war League, to support the Government."

### The Equal Franchise Union

Mrs. L. A. Hamilton, chairman of the Women's section of the Win-the-war League, is, of course an out and out supporter of the Union Government, for which she has argued on many platforms. Her position as President of the National Equal Franchise Union gave special weight to her championship in the press of the creation of an election brigade of war women. Mrs. Hamilton said:—

"We are going to hold a mass meeting of women in Toronto, with a view to influencing the nomination of candidates, because we feel very strongly that though only a part of our womanhood is enfranchised, that part should take the fullest responsibility in the election. The choice of candidates, especially in Toronto, is the real election. We do not think we should be placed in the position of merely saying "Ditto" to what a few gentlemen, however excellent they may be, decide behind closed doors. We are in a war for democracy and all the electorate should have every opportunity in choosing candidates as well as choosing between candidates. We are glad that Sir Robert Borden publicly advised his supporters that women should participate in the selection of candidates, and we want to help him, and to help the men to take his very sound advice."

