

Manifesto

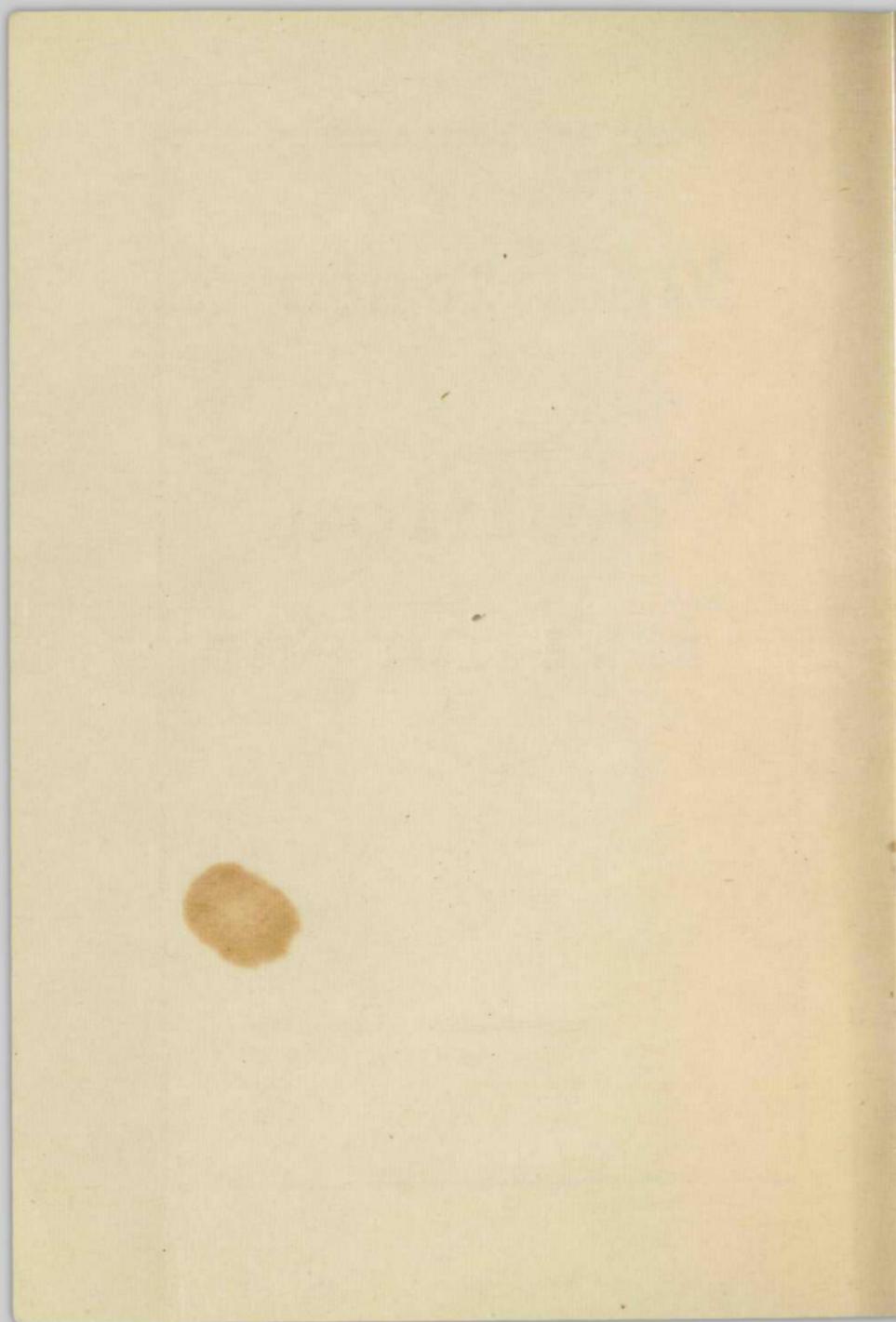
of the ☆ ☆ ☆

Coalition

Government



*as outlined in Radio Address
delivered by Premier John Hart
on Tuesday, October 2nd, 1945*



When the Coalition Government came into office in 1941, it did so under circumstances that were most compelling. No political party in the Province had a clear majority in the Legislature, and the situation in the Pacific was exceedingly dangerous, particularly following the events at Pearl Harbour. An invitation was extended to all parties to submerge their political differences for the common good and security of the people during this period of great national emergency which was fraught with so many dangers for British Columbia.

The C.C.F. rejected this plea made on behalf of the welfare of the people. Consequently, a Coalition of the Liberal and Conservative parties was effected to administer the affairs of the Province during this critical period.

When Coalition was formed, its policy was to give good business administration and render the fullest co-operation to the Dominion in its war effort. Starting from that point, it examined the needs of the people and the requirements for the development of the Province.

Government's Record

It studied ways and means of raising our social and living standards to the highest of any Province in Canada. It sought to improve labour conditions and carried into effect legislation which has been acclaimed as a new charter for labour unexcelled in any part of this continent. It, further, sought ways and means of raising educational standards, improving conditions in our Agriculture, Mining, Forestry, and Fishing industries, and to bring about generally a greater development of our natural resources.

Year by year, it set for itself a new programme of activity. With each succeeding Session, the Coalition found itself in the happy position of being able to report that its policies had been fulfilled. This was particularly emphasized during the last two years when the Government announced two successive programmes, one containing twenty-seven major points of policy and the other twenty-two. In each instance, without exception, those policies have been fulfilled or are in the process of being carried out.

During its four-year term of office, the Coalition Government has given a record

of achievement which it believes to be unsurpassed in the history of this Province. The carrying out of these undertakings has brought the Government to the point where it believes that, if it is to proceed with its plans for the future, it must secure a mandate from the electorate.

Future Policy

Our policies for the future involve the expenditure of vast sums of money. Upon those policies rests the development of our great natural resources; the opening up of new areas; the creation of great reservoirs of electrical power for industrial expansion and rural electrification; the raising of our standards of living and social security; the further improvement in our educational facilities; and the stimulating of greater activity and development in our four basic industries. In short, those policies envision a new era of economic and social progress in British Columbia based on careful and expert planning having due regard to the inalienable rights of man to exercise his own initiative and profit by his own private enterprise and, by so doing, create opportunities for others.

Issue at Stake

The people must now decide whether they want a Government, which has given them action, and is prepared to march forward toward a new era of economic and social security within traditional bounds of free enterprise and personal initiative, or whether they want to embark upon an experiment in Socialism.

This is the clear-cut issue at stake. It is upon this and the submission of the Coalition Government's policy that a general Provincial election has been called for October 25th.

The policy of the Coalition, which is submitted to the public for their approval, is one that is flexible. It cannot be foreseen what other plans may present themselves for the benefit of the people and the advantage of the Province as a whole. Consequently, in presenting its platform, the Coalition does so asking the people to bear in mind that throughout the past four years it carried out policies and exercised initiative without being bound to a rigid platform. However, in order that the people might know what some of its plans are, a programme has been prepared, and is herewith presented with the

full assurance that it will be carried out in the same manner and with the same expedition as has been the experience in the past.

The Manifesto

The policies of the Coalition are as follows:

(1) To reduce the tax burden on real property, extend financial assistance to municipalities and equalize the tax incidence of the cost of education.

For years the cost of education has been a vexatious problem, both as to the severity of the burden on land and improvements and the inequality in the division of responsibility insofar as the incidence of taxation was concerned.

In order to overcome these difficulties, a Commission was appointed in 1944, and Dr. M. A. Cameron of the University of British Columbia was constituted as sole Commissioner.

Commissioner's Proposals

The Commissioner's report has been presented to the Government and con-

tains far-reaching proposals which may be summarized as follows:

- (a) The establishment of a uniform basis of taxation and the setting up of a Commission for the Equalization of Assessments.
- (b) The institution of a uniform basic tax of five mills on the total assessed value of all land throughout the Province, no matter where located, and on 75% of the assessed value of improvements thereon. This tax to be levied and collected by either the municipalities or the province, depending on the location of the real property.
- (c) The abolition of the personal property tax in rural areas for school purposes.
- (d) The continuation of the system of local school boards; but, by the enlargement of districts, to effect a reduction in the number of school boards from the more than six hundred which now exist to less than one hundred. Also, by increasing the number of teachers, to reduce the congestion in certain small elementary schools.

- (e) The establishment of a basic educational standard that will be the highest in the Dominion, and which involves a financial per capita contribution by the Province which will be greater than that borne by any other Provincial Government. This involves among other things; the adoption of basic salary schedules for teachers with appropriate increments; a generous financial participation by the Government in the provision of other school costs; the assumption by the Government of the employer's share of teachers' pensions contributions which represent seven per cent of the teachers' salaries and which is now paid by school districts; finally bonuses for teachers in isolated districts.
- (f) Over and above the basic educational programme, the Government to assume fifty per cent of the cost of school buildings and equipment, and
- (g) To bear fifty per cent of the cost of transportation and allied services.

Summary of Cost

A summary of the cost of the basic educational programme for the year 1945-46 shows that:

There would be required for	
teachers' basic salaries	\$7,000,000.00
For minimum general ex-	
penses	1,685,000.00
For teachers' pensions.....	575,000.00
	<hr/>
Total	\$9,260,000.00

Towards this cost, the proposed five mill tax on land and on 75% of improvements will yield an estimated

	3,100,000.00
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This would leave a balance to be contributed by the Government of

	\$6,160,000.00
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This excludes building and University appropriations.

Additional Contribution

In addition to this contribution by the Government, there will be annual current expenditures for general administration, special aid, night schools, and the fifty

per cent share of transportation and allied services involving approximately \$1,020,000.00, bringing the total anticipated annual current cost to the Province of \$7,180,000.00.

Any expenditure over the basic programme will be borne by the school districts.

The Commissioner's recommendations regarding buildings and their equipment anticipate capital expenditures amounting to approximately \$3,000,000 annually for the next five or six years and, therefore, involve a Provincial cost of approximately an additional \$1,500,000 annually during that period.

Increased Contribution

The result would be that the Province, instead of contributing 32% towards the basic cost of education, would contribute approximately 55%, and in addition the cost of the University of British Columbia.

It should be borne in mind that the Province contributes substantial sums to the University of British Columbia and that these and others, when added to the suggested programme, will increase the

annual current expenditures for education to \$8,029,244 which, together with the 50% of capital outlays, may bring the total to \$9,529,244 as against the \$5,219,244 now appropriated.

To Implement Recommendations

The Government has given careful study to these proposals and has decided to accept them and will recommend their implementation to the Legislature at the next Session.

The effect of this will be to relieve and equalize the burden of taxation for school purposes upon land and improvements, and thereby give financial aid to municipalities, and property holders in unorganized areas.

New Municipal Survey

(2) To appoint a committee of experts to study the general financial relationship between the Province and Cities and Municipalities in order to ascertain whether the existing arrangements constitute a fair division of responsibility; to determine whether there is an equitable assessment basis throughout the Province, and to review the Municipal Act in order to effect such changes as may be recommended or found necessary.

Power Development

(3) To supplement the \$10,000,000 already made available to the B. C. Power Commission, thereby enabling it to carry out without delay a comprehensive programme of power development that will revolutionize our farming methods; put electric light and electrical appliances in every home and farm throughout the Province where feasible and establish a vast reserve of power for industrial development. This policy involves the expenditure of millions of dollars.

P.G.E. Extension

(4) To press forward the negotiations already undertaken to secure extension of the Pacific Great Eastern Railway and the development of the great resources of the northern part of this Province through joint co-operation with the Dominion Government, the Canadian National Railway and the Canadian Pacific Railway.

As a result of representations made by the Provincial Government, it has been agreed by all parties concerned to set up a committee of six experts as follows: Dominion Government, one; Canadian National Railway, one; Canadian Pacific

Railway, two; and the Provincial Government, two.

This committee will proceed immediately with a comprehensive study of all reports and surveys that have been submitted in the past and which deal with the development of our Northern resources and the extension of the Pacific Great Eastern Railway. The report and findings of this committee will form the basis of further discussion in connection with the proposed Pacific Great Eastern Railway extension and the development of the vast natural resources of the north country.

In 1925, a Bill was passed by the Legislature authorizing land grants for the purpose of interesting outside capital to develop and extend the Pacific Great Eastern Railway.

This land grant consisted of 16,075,000 acres. The Government has decided that it would not be in the interest of the people to make any such grants and, consequently, will recommend to the next Legislature the repeal of this Act.

Any agreement, arising out of the negotiations that have been instituted and which may be forthcoming, following the

discussions based on the report and findings of the joint committee now appointed, must have the approval of the Legislature before it becomes binding on the Province.

Forestry Commission

(5) To implement the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Forestry with a view to perpetuating this Industry on sound economic lines in order that our timber resources will not be depleted and industrial use of our forests will be placed on a sustained yield basis. This policy will be carried out with the same expedition as has been the case of all such submissions to the Coalition Government.

University Programme

(6) To work in close liaison with the the University of British Columbia and render the fullest aid to see that the \$5,000,000 expansion programme financed by the Government, and which includes establishment of Medical, Pharmacy and Law Faculties, is carried out as quickly as the institution can develop it, and further to assist in any other way that may be deemed necessary, particularly in

connection with the provision of temporary accommodation for ex-servicemen and women.

Education of Veterans

(7) To supplement the aid already given the University and other authorities in providing educational and vocational training for those returning from the armed forces.

Vocational Training

(8) To implement immediately the Vocational Training Agreement between British Columbia and the Dominion which provides for the training of:

- (a) Discharged persons from the Armed Forces, the Province providing the administration, and 50% of the cost of equipment, and,
- (b) Industrial Workers, the Dominion paying 60% and the Province 40% of the cost. Living allowances will be paid by the Dominion.

To consummate a further draft agreement to provide additional vocational training in our High Schools. This agreement has been approved by British Columbia, and only awaits final decision by the Dominion.

Land Settlement

(9) To devise a well-planned land settlement scheme that will extend beyond the privileges now given British Columbia veterans.

Labour Policy

(10) To take Labour into the Government's confidence in the widest meaning of that word, in order that still greater benefits may accrue to the working man and even closer harmonious relationship be established between employer and employee.

Freight Rates

(11) To fight unremittingly for equalization of freight rates. British Columbia already has secured an important place on the agenda of the next Dominion-Provincial Conference for this subject.

Defense Policy

(12) To continue our fight for establishment of strong Naval, Military and Air Force commands on the Pacific Coast of British Columbia.

Dominion-Provincial Conference

(13) To study and evaluate the proposals submitted by the Federal au-

thorities to the Dominion-Provincial Conference with respect to social security and full employment so that at the next meeting of the Conference, British Columbia will be in a position to submit its views and findings in connection therewith and co-operate to the fullest extent in implementing such measures as may be deemed to be in the best interest of Canada as a whole.

Housing Assistance

(14) To assist Municipalities financially in connection with the Dominion Government's slum clearance and low-rental housing programme. Housing has been accepted by the Dominion Government as a national problem. The Dominion National Housing Act is in operation and gradually relieving the situation. Materials, labour and prices are under Dominion control. Low rent housing is the most pressing need.

The National Housing Act provides a basis of financing Limited Dividend Corporations for low-rental projects and slum clearance. The Dominion will pay one-half of the loss incurred by Municipalities in site clearance and land.

The Coalition Government pledges it-

self to pay 50% of the balance, borne by Municipalities, as Provincial aid to low-rental housing and slum clearance projects.

Shipbuilding Policy

(15) To take every step possible, and follow up representations already made, to maintain shipbuilding as a major industry on this coast.

Use of Credit and Surpluses

(16) Utilize British Columbia's excellent credit standing and surplus reserves to foster highway projects, to construct necessary institutional and administrative buildings, to expand the University of British Columbia, to develop power and generally develop our resources.

Road Reconstruction

(17) To commence, immediately labour and materials are available, a \$10,000,000 programme of reconstruction and improvement of our highways for which provision already has been made.

Peace River Outlet

(18) To press forward to completion the work now being carried out on the

Peace River highway outlet and to connect same with the existing Alaska Highway.

Hope-Princeton Highway

(19) To start construction without delay on the Hope-Princeton Highway in order to cut down the distance and transportation time between the Coast and the Interior.

Road Maintenance

(20) To provide greater appropriations for road maintenance so that our highway system will be kept in good condition and apace of our programme of road extension.

\$210,000,000 Public Works

(21) To press for Dominion approval of our \$210,000,000 highway programme so it may be included in the Federal Government's public investment programme.

Alaska Highway

(22) To co-operate with the United States and Dominion Government in locating and constructing a new highway to Alaska.

Post-War Public Works

(23) To carry out further projects of the Government's \$30,000,000 immediate post-war programme as soon as labour and materials are available.

Parks Programme

(24) To undertake a comprehensive programme of park development, already planned, entailing the expenditure of large sums of money and the employment of large numbers of men so as to develop natural scenic areas for public enjoyment and recreation.

Irrigation Policy

(25) To implement measures, based on surveys already completed, to improve conditions in irrigation districts.

Agricultural Policy

(26) To review all agricultural endeavors in this Province with a view to securing higher returns on production and encourage the establishment of new industries to support farming enterprises.

(27) To co-operate with the Federal authorities in implementing proposals submitted at the Dominion-Provincial Conference which embrace among other

things the provision of greater stability in farm income; a greater measure of security; prevention of disturbing fluctuations in farm price levels and expansion of Government agricultural services to promote productive efficiency and to improve opportunities and living standards.

(28) To give further consideration, in concert with the Dominion, to the agricultural marketing field, particularly in regard to transportation and sales on the one hand and the grading and inspection of products on the other.

Land-Clearing

(29) To expand the land-clearing programme for farmers as rapidly as machinery and personnel are available.

Encourage Higher Education

(30) To encourage higher education among our young men and women so they may have every opportunity and be equipped to play their part in the development of their own Province.

Expand Student Loans

(31) To encourage the use of student loans and expand the scope so that all may have an equal opportunity for University training.

Extend Educational Facilities

(32) To extend educational facilities so that those living in more scattered parts of the Province may enjoy the benefits of higher education.

Hospital Building Programme

(33) To supplement the \$1,600,000 already appropriated as grants-in-aid for the building of hospitals throughout the Province, and to improve generally the various health services including T.B. control.

Raise Welfare Standard

(34) To take such steps as will lead to improvement of Old-Age Pensions, Social Service Allowances, Mothers' Pensions and other welfare services, and generally raise the standard of living and social security in British Columbia.

B.C.E.R. Co., Ltd., Policy

(35) To assist municipalities in the proposed acquisition of the B.C. Electric Railway Company's power distribution and transit systems so that the consumers may benefit from the savings to be derived from such public ownership.

To Review Utility Rates

(36) To have reviewed constantly the rates charged the consumers by public utility corporations so that re-adjustments may be made either by reduction in rates or non-billing periods, thereby passing on to users of such services the savings to which they are entitled.

To Expand Trade

(37) To resume the peacetime services of British Columbia House in London so as to encourage trade between this Province and the United Kingdom.

B.C. House Services

(38) To maintain a "home away from home" for our British Columbia men and women still remaining in the Old Country and render such services and counsel as will enable them to plan for the future when they return home for discharge and rehabilitation.

Coal and Oil Resources

(39) To take steps to encourage and develop our vast coal and oil resources having due regard to the people's rights with respect thereto.

Post-War Plans

(40) To continue our close liaison with the Federal Government on rehabilitation matters so that our plans may be fitted into the Dominion scheme thereby providing opportunities for our men and women returning from the services and those who are being released from war industries.

Mining Policy

(41) To continue to assist prospectors in uncovering new mineral wealth through grubstaking and other means of encouragement.

To Expand Research Work

(42) To continue research work to develop not only mining opportunities but also Forestry, Agriculture, Fisheries and the secondary industries dependent thereon, and generally to encourage the processing and fabricating of our raw products so that the greatest benefit will be derived from the development of our resources.

Utilize Resources

(43) Utilize every resource within our power to put what advantages British

Columbia possesses into the Federal scheme for post-war reconstruction.

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It has been the endeavour in the above to give some concept of the achievements of the Coalition Government during the past four years, and more particularly to outline our plans for the future.

We have endeavoured at all times to give good, sound business administration and implement such measures as would improve conditions for the people and provide for the development of the Province.

I am convinced that, as a result of the good business management given, the measures that have been adopted for the welfare of the people, and the planning that has been carried out that British Columbia today stands on the very threshold of a new era of prosperity such as this Province has never before experienced—an era that will see development along sound economic lines and that will bring to our people even higher standards of living, social security, higher income and full employment, if the electorate entrusts the administration of its affairs to those with experience.

Fulfillment of the policies just outlined is guaranteed by a record of action unsurpassed in the history of this Province.

I ask for your continued support of the Coalition Government, which has brought you to this point. The Coalition stands pledged to work for the welfare of the people.

The policies just outlined, backed by the record of the past four years, constitute the platform upon which the Coalition asks your endorsement.

The issue of this campaign is clear-cut.

You are asked to choose between an experiment in socialism with untried and inexperienced leaders, or a government that has given you sound business administration with forward-looking measures, and which now offers a programme of far-reaching importance to the people.



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