

## Imperialism

The policy of extending a nation's authority by territorial acquisition or by the establishment of economic and political hegemony over other nations.

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In Canada, it was more a feeling of still belonging or being part of Britain, over half of the Canadian population immigrated from Britain.

The queen or king was still the head of state (this didn't change until 1982)

The union jack was the most common flag found on government buildings.



Children in school sang "God save the queen" every morning. [Anthem](#)

## The Boer War

**The South African War (1899-1902) or, as it is also known, the Boer War, marked Canada's first official dispatch of troops to an overseas war.**

**In 1899, fighting erupted between Great Britain and two small republics in South Africa. (See Map)**

**The two republics, settled by Boers, descendants of the region's first Dutch immigrants, were not expected to survive for long against the world's greatest power. Pro-Empire Canadians nevertheless urged their government to help. The war, they argued, pitted British freedom, justice, and civilization against Boer backwardness.**

**While many English-Canadians supported Britain's cause in South Africa, most French-Canadians and many recent immigrants from countries other than Britain wondered why Canada should fight in a war half way around the world. Concerned with maintaining national stability and political popularity, Prime Minister Sir Wilfrid Laurier did not want to commit his government. Yet the **bonds of Empire** were strong and public pressure mounted, so he chose the "**sunny way**". As a compromise, Laurier agreed to send a battalion of volunteers to South Africa.**

**Over the next three years, more than 7,000 Canadians, including 12 women nurses, served overseas.**



Why is the Boer war an important historical event in Canada's development?

