

# VIMY 100 IN THE CLASSROOM

THE VIMY FOUNDATION  
LA FONDATION VIMY

With the support from  
*Tim Hortons*

## VIMY QUOTATION ANALYSIS

Please read the following series of quotations about the Battle of Vimy Ridge. For each one, discuss with a partner or in groups what the quotation reveals about Vimy. Which of the quotations do you think is the most interesting? (Note that these quotations will also be of use in preparing your remarks for the debate activity.)

“Consider too that [the casualties of Vimy] contributed to the most divisive political debate in Canadian history. Having gained for Canada the promise of a new place within a British Commonwealth, Prime Minister Robert Borden went to France in April to visit the wounded of Vimy Ridge. He then returned home in May convinced of the need for compulsory military service. On May 24, anti-conscription riots broke out in Montreal.”

-- *Vimy Ridge: A Canadian Reassessment* (2007)



*Prime Minister Sir Robert Borden visits the Western Front. “Sir Robert Borden with Brig.-Gen. Macdonnell taking the Salute of a Canadian Bn. in France.” March 1917. Canada. Dept. of National Defence/Library and Archives Canada. Accession number PA-000927.*

“Looking back on Vimy, Currie doubted that it was Canada’s most important battle. “In my mind,” he wrote in April 1922, “that is very far from being a fact. We fought other battles where the morale and material results were greater and more far-reaching than Vimy’s victory. There were other victories also that reflected to a greater degree the training and efficiency of the Corps...” Currie went on to explain that Vimy did not demand the initiative and resourcefulness that marked Canada’s final battles, from August to November 1918.”

-- **Andrew Iarocci**, *Legion Magazine*, **March 15, 2015**

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“To be held in the highest esteem, any battle should have involved the entire Canadian Corps of four divisions in a victory in an offensive operation. While several of the memorialized battles (and some that are not, such as Hill 70) can claim this distinction, only Vimy has the honour of being the first. Additionally, it was only at Vimy that the entire Canadian Corps of four divisions attacked simultaneously against a single objective.”

-- **John Boileau**, *Legion Magazine*, **March 15, 2015**

“The Battle of Vimy Ridge during the First World War was a moment that defined our nation. It was the first time that soldiers from all four Canadian divisions—representing every region of our country—fought side-by-side on the same battlefield. As Brigadier-General Alexander Ross later said of Canada’s accomplishments at Vimy, ‘I witnessed the birth of a nation’.”

-- **Prime Minister Justin Trudeau**, *statement*, **April 9, 2016**

“Memories of Vimy have faded. Valor in the field no longer commands the universal respect it aroused half a century ago. The young today regard the giving of 3,598 lives for a few miles of tactical territory an act of lunacy. There is nothing in their experience that gives them comprehension of sacrifice on such a scale.”

-- **Globe and Mail editorial**, *April 9, 1977*