

Mackenzie King and the Conscription Crisis (1991)

He appeared harmless enough – a roundish, pompous little man who loved his dog and communicated with his dead mother with the help of a crystal ball – but, in fact, William Lyon Mackenzie King was a ruthless politician who knew how to walk the knife edge of Canadian politics. Never was this more evident than during one of the most important political events in Canadian history: the Conscription Crisis.

From the beginning of the war in 1939, Prime Minister King tried to avoid conscription, lest civil war break out in Canada. Most English Canadians thought they had a duty to the Mother Country, young men should be sent to fight. Most French Canadians vehemently disagreed. They saw the War as a European war and wanted no part in it.

Mackenzie King had seen this same division nearly tear the country apart during the First World War. Now a similar pressure was building. Should he impose conscription? In spite of delaying tactics, King had to make a decision in the final year of the war.

Mackenzie King and the Conscription Crisis combines archival footage with excerpts from The King Chronicles, a dramatic film series written and directed by Donald Brittain.

Durée/Runtime : 31 min

Langue/Language : English