War on the Home Front

Total War

World War I was the first "total" war of the twentieth century. It was "total" in the sense that it enlisted the efforts, energies, and passions of civilians as well as soldiers. Vast armies of citizen soldiers replaced the elite professional armies of the past. In battles and bombings, civilians were targeted as well as soldiers. People on the home fronts were enlisted to give full support to the battle fronts. Every effort was made to secure victory. People of all ethnic identities, women, children, elderly, poor, and wealthy participated in the war effort. Countries gathered all their resources and geared their industries to pump out war supplies. This war affected the lives of everyone.

The Canadian government issued the following advice for the home during the war.

Advice for the Home

1. Use nut-butter or margarine.
2. Remake leftover bread into new bread, cake, or pudding.
3. Instead of one beefless day, why not try for six to make up for people less patriotic?
4. Eat as little cake and pastry as you can.
5. Use oats, corn, barley, and rye instead of wheat.
6. Use ham and pork bones in other dishes.
7. Chew your food thoroughly—you will be satisfied with less.
8. All kinds of cold cereal can be saved, and when not enough to roll into balls to fry, they can be used in batter cakes and corn breads.
9. Cut each slice of bread as required.
10. Mix your own cleanser (use white sand, washing soda, soap, and chalk).
11. Fifty million dollars is thrown away in garbage cans annually.
12. Do not display the roast of meat on the table. It is an inducement to eat more than you need.
13. Do not eat both butter and jam with bread.

1. If you were living in Canada during World War I, what effects do you think the war would have on your everyday life?
2. Brainstorm actions you think the Canadian government might have to take during the war. Suggest reasons for each action.

Support for the War Effort

During World War I, people on the home front were encouraged to do all they could to support the troops overseas. Posters, patriotic community groups, and government campaigns suggested that no sacrifice should be spared to ensure a victory in Europe. Many people planted "victory gardens" to produce as much food as possible. They reduced the amount of food they ate and tried to waste as little as possible. Meals contained less meat, butter, sugar, and bread so that these foods could be sent overseas. Canada was shipping vast quantities of food to the fighting forces and civilian populations of other Allied countries.

Although Black Canadians were discriminated against in Canada, many women worked for the war effort. These women worked through the Coloured Women's Club of Montreal during the war.

On the wheat fields of the West, thousands of students were often dismissed from school early to help bring in the harvests. Farm women worked long hours in the fields, and women from the cities also lent a hand. They were needed to replace the farm workers who were fighting overseas.

Groups of women of all ages also met regularly to organize community fund raisers and to roll bandages for the troops. Every community held card games, dances, bazaars, and variety shows. The profits from these evenings were used to send soap, writing paper, pencils, and candy to the troops. Some groups also raised money for war victims and war relief.

Not all groups were made up of women of British heritage. Many other ethnic communities including Chinese, Japanese, Jewish, Italian, Aboriginal, and Black women and men also raised funds and contributed what they could. Women of the Six Nations organized a Women's Patriotic League in 1914. It raised money through garden parties and tag days for Six Nations soldiers overseas. Aboriginal people on the Tyendenaga Reserve near Deseronto, Ontario, allowed some of their land to be used for a flying school during the war. Polish organizations worked with the Red Cross to send money, food, and clothing for war relief in Poland. Chinese women held Rice Bowl festivals and

bazaars to raise money for war victims. The Coloured Women's Club of Montreal worked with the Red Cross to provide support for the war effort overseas.

Many of these ethnic communities were discriminated against in Canada during this period. They faced racism and intolerance, and did not have the right to vote. However, they were eager to show their loyalty and support the war effort.

Terror on the Home Front

No battles ever took place on Canadian soil during World War I. But from the beginning of the war, there were fears of sabotage and suspicions about spies in Canada. Even before war was declared, Britain warned Canada to take precautions. Militia were posted at major bridges, canals, and railways to guard against sabotage.

Early on the morning of 6 December 1917, however, the horrors of the war did come to the doorsteps of Canadians. A terrible explosion rocked the city of Halifax. Halifax was a major shipping port in the war. Most of the North American convoys with supplies for Europe set out from Halifax.

On that morning in 1917, the *Mont Blanc*, a French munitions ship carrying a cargo of explosives, collided with the Belgian vessel *Imo* in the harbour. Almost 3000 tonnes of explosives were set off. The blast levelled large sections of Halifax and was heard all over the province. It was even felt in Sydney, over 320 km away. Fires roared through the wooden buildings of the city. A huge tidal wave swamped other ships in the harbour and tossed them in pieces onto the shore. Two thousand people were killed and thousands more were injured or left homeless.

The explosion was one of the worst disasters in Canadian history. It is said that,

Halifax, after the devastating explosion in 1917.

until the atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima in 1945, the explosion in Halifax was the biggest artificial explosion ever recorded. All that was ever found of the *Mont Blanc* was a cannon and part of an anchor that landed over 3 km away.

Within hours, however, aid was on its way from neighbouring towns. Within two days, a ship from Boston arrived with over $3 million in relief supplies. Thirty million dollars was collected from around the world to help rebuild the city and assist the survivors. American generosity is still celebrated today with a gift of a special Christmas tree shipped from Nova Scotia to Boston each year.

"Enemy Aliens"

War often has a way of bringing out both the best and worst in people and nations. On the one hand, Canadians were united as never before, making courageous and generous sacrifices for the war effort. On the other hand, the pressures of war also encouraged suspicion, blind intolerance, and personal greed.

When war broke out, there were about 500 000 German, Austrian, and Hungarian people living in Canada. Others, such as the Ukrainians, had come from the territories or allies of the German and Austrian empires. At first, the government urged that these citizens be treated fairly. During the Laurier years, they had been welcomed into Canada. Many had come to escape militarism and oppression in their home countries. They had become successful farmers, business people, and workers in Canada's industries.

But as war fever turned to hysteria, these people were viewed with suspicion and even hatred. Rumours of spies and sabotage, including fears that enemies were planning to blow up the Welland Canal, fueled the suspicions. People demanded that these "enemy aliens" be fired from their jobs and locked up.

In response to the pressures, the government used the **War Measures Act** to place restrictions on **"enemy aliens."** The War Measures Act gave the government sweeping powers to ensure "the security, defence, peace, order, and welfare of Canada." People suspected of sympathizing with the enemy could be arrested or searched. Many people labelled as "enemy aliens" were rounded up and sent to internment camps in remote areas.

Over 8597 "enemy aliens" were held in these labour camps during World War I. The majority were Ukrainians. Conditions in the camps were harsh. The men worked long hours and were often poorly fed and clothed. Other "enemy aliens" were forced to register with their local police and report on a regular basis. Some had their homes or businesses vandalized.

Mr Spade, who was German, lived at 2 or 4 Jersey Avenue in Toronto. At that time we lived at number 14. This happened after supper because I didn't see it, but I heard them talk about it. A whole gang of men came around and got him and took him over to Clinton Street. They tarred and feathered him. Why I don't know. Except he was a German.

People of German ancestry in the town of Berlin, Ontario, tried to show they were loyal to the British side in the war. They changed the name of the town to Kitchener, after the British War Minister. Carlstadt in Alberta also changed its name to Alderson after the British commander of the Canadians at Ypres. Other "enemy aliens" contributed to the war effort by raising funds. An official investigation by the North-West Mounted Police found that "there was not the slightest trace of orga-

The Spirit Lake enemy alien internment camp in northern Quebec. Rather than live alone, some women joined their husbands in the camps. Describe the conditions of the camp shown in this photo.

nization or concerted movement amongst the enemy aliens" that could be considered a threat to Canada.

Under the War Measures Act, the government also introduced censorship. It banned the publication and distribution of books and magazines in "enemy" languages. When the war ended, the War Measures Act was no longer in effect.

Today, people question the trade-off involved in passing such an act. On the one hand, the government needed special powers to respond to the emergencies of war. To many people, this was a war for democracy. On the other hand, the act meant that Canadians lost some of their basic democratic rights and freedoms.

FAST FORWARD

The War Measures Act has been used three times in Canada's history. The first time was during World War I. The act was introduced again during World War II. In World War II, Japan was an enemy nation and more than 16 000 Japanese Canadians were sent to internment camps under the act. In 1988, the Canadian government formally apologized to these Japanese Canadians and provided them with financial compensation. No apology has ever been extended to those who were interned during World War I, however. Some communities, such as the Ukrainians, are attempting to raise awareness of this fact.

In 1970, the War Measures Act was passed again to deal with the terrorist FLQ crisis in Quebec. It was the first time the act was ever used in peacetime. Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau justified his government's action by saying that the crisis in Quebec represented a threat to overthrow the government. Some people believe it was used more to put down political protest in Quebec, and that there was no real threat to the government. The issue is still controversial.

The Changing Role of Government

By 1917, Canadians were feeling the hardships of war. With so many men away fighting and industries booming at home, almost everyone who could work had a job. But the war was beginning to put a strain on the country's resources. Food and fuel became scarce and prices soared. The shortage of coal for furnaces meant many Canadians shivered through the winter of 1917. During the winter of 1918, schools and factories closed because they had no heating.

Canada's tremendous wartime production was not without its scandalous side. This 1917 cartoon shows Joseph Flavelle, chair of the Imperial Munitions Board. Flavelle's meat-packing company was said to have done very well as a result of the war and gained Flavelle the title of "Sir Lardship."

While many Canadians struggled to deal with these shortages, some business people seemed to be making huge profits during the war. There were cries of profiteering. Some people believed a few businessmen were stockpiling food and fuel until prices rose so high, the goods could be sold at a big profit.

To deal with these problems and to keep up the war effort, the government introduced an increasing number of controls. Many of these controls directly affected the everyday lives of Canadians. Before the war, the government in Ottawa seemed distant to most people. It had little real effect on their day-to-day lives. The war changed that. Government-appointed fuel controllers promoted "heatless days" to conserve coal. Food controllers urged Canadians to eat less and waste nothing. Government officials introduced "Meatless Mondays" and "Fuelless Sundays."

By the fall of 1918, Canadians were buying "war bread" that was made with some flour substitutes. By a system of "honour rationing," people limited themselves to a pound and a half of butter and two pounds of sugar a month. Honour rationing meant that people were expected to reduce the amount of food they ate voluntarily. Anyone caught hoarding or stockpiling food, however, could be fined or jailed. Other controls included a ban on the sale and drinking of alcohol.

Keeping up the war effort was also expensive. By 1918, the war was costing Canada over $1 million a day! The government launched a major campaign urging people to buy **Victory Bonds**. Citizens who bought the bonds were lending money to the government for the war effort. After the war, the bonds could be cashed in at a profit. Business people also lent money to the government—in total over $1 billion. The loans would be paid back with interest when the war was over.

Children played a part by buying Thrift Stamps. Each stamp cost 25¢ and was stuck on a card. When $4.00 worth of stamps were bought, the child received a War Savings Stamp. A War Savings Stamp could be cashed in for $5.00 in 1924.

In another effort to raise finances for the war, the government introduced a

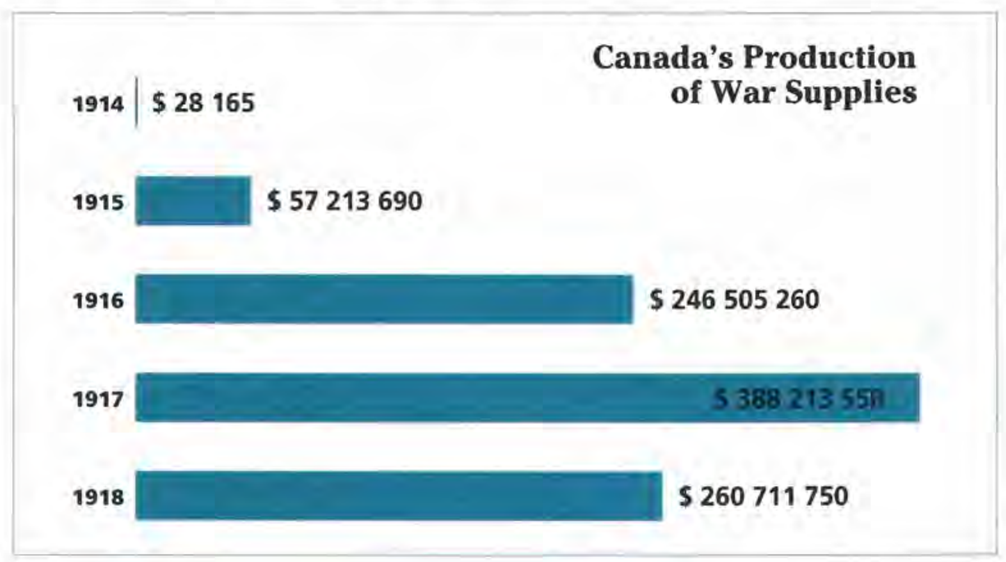
business profits tax and income tax for the first time. Income tax was supposed to be a "temporary measure," but as we know, it has never been abolished! Taxes were also placed on tea, coffee, tobacco, cars, and trains. Such measures, however, were not enough. During the war, the Canadian government's debt increased phenomenally from $463 million in 1913 to $2.46 billion by 1918.

A Booming Economy

The government also took a greater role in the country's economy. Before 1914, few factories in Canada were capable of producing munitions (military weapons and equipment). After war was declared, factories were quickly reorganized to produce war supplies. The first war materials Canadian factories produced were poor quality. However, after government leaders organized an Imperial Munitions Board, factories began to turn out quality munitions at an astounding rate. Plants manufacturing airplanes, shells, and ships sprang up across the country. By 1918, 300 000 Canadians were employed in these factories and one-third of the shells fired by the armies of the British Empire were made in Canada. Textile, pulp and paper, steel, and food factories also boomed during the war.

The government urged farmers to produce as much as they could. The wheat crop in 1915 was the largest in Canadian history. In the following years, however, crops fell off badly. In 1917, a Board of Grain Supervisors (which became the Canadian Wheat Board in 1918) took over wheat production and distribution. The government also supervised the large quantities of fish, pork, beef, and cheese that were sent overseas.

By 1917, Britain's coffers were beginning to run dry. It could not afford to buy all that Canadian factories could produce. But in that year, the United States entered the war. It quickly became a major market for Canada's munitions (including new warships and aircraft), food, and industrial products. A War Trades Board was formed to work closely with the United States and to manage imports, exports, and problems of scarcity. Canada's economy continued to boom until the end of the war.



IMPACT ON SOCIETY

POSTERS IN WORLD WAR I

One way for the government to encourage support of the war effort was through a massive poster campaign. Since television had not yet been invented and not everyone owned a radio, posters were the most effective means of getting a message across. Colourful posters were put up on street corners, in post offices, and in other public places where everyone could see them. They were also printed in magazines and newspapers. The posters were part of a major propaganda campaign to back the war effort and promote the Allied cause. **Propaganda** is a systematic spreading of ideas influencing people to support a particular cause or point of view.

1. List the different purposes for which posters were used by the government.
2. What major images are used in each poster? Why do you think these images were used?
3. Summarize the message of each poster in a sentence.
4. a) What reasons do the posters suggest for supporting the war effort?
   b) Do the posters show a bias? Explain.
5. How successful do you think these posters would be? Why?
6. What means of communication does the government use today to get messages across to the people? What kinds of messages does the government send out? Give some specific examples.
7. Design your own posters. In groups, create posters which could be used to:
   - recruit soldiers
   - encourage the purchase of war bonds
   - help reduce food consumption
   - recruit children to work in the war effort.

New Roles for Women

World War I brought other great changes, especially to the lives of Canadian women. As soon as the war began, hundreds of Canadian women volunteered to work overseas as nurses or ambulance drivers. Many worked in field hospitals just behind the front-line trenches. One operating room nurse wrote in a letter home, "We ... had 291 operations in ten nights, so that will give you a fair idea of a week's work."

Women also played an important part in the war effort at home. With the general shortage of labour in Canada, the number of women employed in industry rose dramatically. Thirty thousand Canadian women worked in munitions factories and other war industries. These jobs in heavy industry would have been considered unsuitable for women before 1914. Working conditions were difficult and sometimes dangerous. Women also drove buses and streetcars. They worked in banks, on police forces, and in civil service jobs.

I had a very hard job. It had to be that you run a machine of weights into the shell, and the weight had to be just exact. Quite a few of them didn't have the patience.

It was interesting work but very hard on your nerves. There was a machine went on fire. This friend from Beaverton was on the machine that blew up, and I run to her and we had to go down on our hands and knees and crawl out of the place. So we had a little experience of what it was to be right in a war.

In wartime, there were few men left to work on the farms. Women on the farms brought in the harvests and city women were also recruited to go out and help.

We decided to become farmerettes when we read in the paper that there was a big crop and they needed people to come, and there were no men. So this friend and I said that we would go. We volunteered. Masses of young people went out and brought that all in.

Groups of women of all ages met regularly to knit socks for the soldiers and to roll bandages. They arranged many of the card games, dances, and variety shows that helped fund the parcels sent to the troops.

I wanted to help do my share, and I joined the Red Cross and helped roll

During the war, women worked in munitions factories, sometimes under dangerous conditions.

bandages and knit socks. My first ones were big enough to fit an elephant, and after that, I became very proficient—so proficient that I knit a pair of socks a day without any trouble.

You see, everybody felt they had to do something. You just couldn't sit there. There was a phrase, 'Doing your bit.' Well, that was pretty well the keynote feeling all through that First World War. Everybody was extremely patriotic, and everybody wanted to 'do a bit.' If there's anything we could do to help, we must do it.

The Struggle for Women's Rights

Since women were doing so much for the war effort, they wanted a share in making decisions about the country. It was during World War I that an important step forward was taken in Canada for women's rights. At the beginning of the twentieth century, women in many countries had begun to organize themselves to gain the right to vote. Members of this movement in Canada were called **suffragists**.

Nellie McClung was a suffragist and one of Canada's great social reformers. She wrote, "Certainly women belong in the home, but not 24 hours a day. They should have exactly the same freedom as men." When World War I broke out, it helped to prove that Nellie McClung was right. Women did jobs once performed only by men. The war brought women together in volunteer organizations and employment. They began to share ideas and work for political equality with men. They also took active roles in journalism and campaigned for better public health, working conditions, and wages. They pushed for equal opportunities in careers such as medicine and law, and for the right to own property.

Nellie McClung, Alice Jamieson, and Emily Murphy. This famous photo was taken on the day women won the right to vote in Manitoba, 1916.

Suffragists campaigned enthusiastically for women's suffrage (the right to vote). Their leaders included Dorothy Davis in British Columbia, Margaret Gordon in Ontario, Emily Murphy and Alice Jamieson in Alberta, and the dynamic Nellie McClung in Manitoba. The first breakthrough for women's suffrage came in Manitoba. In 1916, women were given the right to vote in that province. Within months, Saskatchewan and Alberta also granted women suffrage. Ontario and British Columbia followed suit the next year.

But the main goal was to win the right to vote in federal elections. In the federal election of December 1917, the **Wartime Elections Act** granted the vote to the mothers, sisters, and wives of soldiers in the Armed Forces. Canadian nurses serving in the Forces could also vote. By the time the war had ended, the right to vote in federal elections had been extended to almost all women in Canada over the age of 21. The **Dominion Elections Act** (1920) also gave women the right to run for election to Parliament. However, Aboriginal women (and most Aboriginal men), Asians, and many other members of minority groups in Canada were not allowed to vote.

Spotlight On . . .

Nellie McClung

"Never retract, never explain, never apologize—just get the thing done and let them howl," said Nellie McClung. Nellie McClung was one of Canada's great social reformers. She was a tireless worker for women's rights and political suffrage (the right to vote).

Born in Owen Sound, Ontario, in 1873, she moved with her family to Manitoba when she was seven years old. At 16, she had become a teacher and caused a stir when she allowed her female students to join in lunchtime football games. In 1890, she married and found she shared many common views with her mother-in-law, Annie McClung. Annie McClung was president of the Manitou chapter of the Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU). Nellie joined the WCTU, which provided help to people in need, campaigned against the ill effects of alcohol, and supported the rights of women to have a voice in social and political affairs. The WCTU raised petitions, acted as a pressure group on governments, and encouraged debate on key issues to meet its goals.

By 1911, Nellie McClung was increasingly involved in journalism and political activism. She was a founding member of the Political Equality League in Manitoba and spoke out for women's suffrage across the province. Women's pleas for the vote, however, fell on deaf ears in the provincial government. In 1914, Premier Roblin responded to the women's requests with the words, "Now you forget all this nonsense about women voting. Nice women don't want to vote."

Nellie McClung and her supporters decided to fight back by staging a mock parliament in Winnipeg's Walker Theatre. The parliament was run by women and Nellie was premier. Roles were reversed and men were asking for the vote. In a speech, Nellie cleverly turned the tables on the premier's words. "If men are given the vote," she declared, "they will vote too much. Politics unsettles men. Unsettled men mean unsettled bills—broken furniture, broken vows, and divorce . . . . Men cannot be trusted with the ballot. Men's place is on the farm."

The performance was a roaring success. When World War I broke out some months later, women proved that they could perform the same jobs as men. They provided massive support on the home front for the soldiers overseas. Governments had to admit that the war could not have been won without the support of women. In 1916, women made their breakthrough in Canada. They first gained the right to vote in the province of Manitoba. By 1918, they had gained the right to vote in federal elections.

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1. Nellie McClung wrote: "War is not inevitable. . . . War is a crime committed by men, and therefore when enough people say it shall not be, it cannot be. This will not happen until women are allowed to say what they think of war." Do you agree? Why or why not?
2. Governments did not grant Asian and Aboriginal women, women of colour, and women of other minority groups the vote during the war, even though they also worked for the war effort and campaigned for their rights through their own organizations. Why do you think this was so?

Dates Women Gained Suffrage in Canada

Province	Suffrage (The Vote)	First Woman Elected
Manitoba	January 1916	June 1920
Saskatchewan	March 1916	June 1919
Alberta	April 1916	June 1917
British Columbia	April 1917	June 1918
Ontario	April 1917	August 1943
Nova Scotia	April 1918	June 1960
New Brunswick	April 1919	October 1960
Prince Edward Island	May 1922	May 1970
Newfoundland	April 1925	May 1930
Quebec	April 1940	December 1961
Federal Dominion of Canada	Close relatives of member of armed forces September 1917; all women May 1918	December 1921

Dates Women Gained Suffrage in Other Parts of the World

New Zealand	1892
Australia	1902
Finland	1906
Norway	1913
Denmark	1915
Britain	1918
Netherlands	1919
Germany	1919
United States	1920
Sweden	1921
Turkey	1934
Brazil	1946
France	1946
Switzerland	1971
Liechtenstein	1986

Conscription

One of the greatest crises in Canada during the war occurred in 1917. It centred around the issue of conscription. **Conscription** means that all able-bodied men would be required to join the army. They would have no choice. Enlistment would no longer be on a voluntary basis only.

The war had dragged on much longer than anyone had thought. By 1917, the death toll was mounting and the number of volunteers was dwindling.

Early in 1917, Prime Minister Robert Borden left to visit the Canadian soldiers at the front. Borden was shocked by the information he received. Casualties were mounting daily on the Western Front. Military officials urged Borden to send even more Canadian troops to Europe. In Canada, volunteer enlistments were not keeping up with the number of men killed or wounded. Borden was concerned. The slaughter of men in the war was horrendous, but he became convinced that the war could not be won without more reinforcements. He returned home and solemnly asked Parliament to pass a conscription bill.

A Country Divided

The mention of conscription brought a storm of protest in some parts of Canada, especially among French Canadians. Many English Canadians believed that Quebec was not doing its part in the war. English-Canadian newspapers pointed out that Ontario had provided 63 per cent of the volunteers in proportion to its population. Manitoba and Saskatchewan provided 81 per cent, Alberta 92 per cent, British Columbia 104 per cent, and the Maritime provinces 38 per cent. Quebec had provided only 20 per cent of the volunteers in proportion to its population.

Why were there fewer volunteers from Quebec? The majority of Quebeckers were farmers, many with large families. Fewer farmers than city people joined the Armed Forces since farmers were considered essential to produce food for the war effort. But most French Canadians also did not

Enlistment/Casualty Rate for 1917

Month	Enlistments	Casualties
January	9 194	4 396
March	6 640	6 161
May	6 407	13 457
July	3 882	7 906
September	3 588	10 990
November	4 019	30 741

share the enthusiasm that English Canadians felt for Britain's war. They did not believe that their sons should be forced to join the war. Many also did not feel any real tie to their country of origin, France. They felt they had been deserted by France when they were conquered by British forces in 1760. French language rights had been taken away in Manitoba and other western provinces, and in Ontario schools. French Canadians felt they were being treated like second-class citizens in Canada.

Sir Sam Hughes, as Minister of Militia, had stirred further protest in Quebec when he appointed a Protestant clergyman to supervise recruiting in that province. Quebeckers were mostly Roman Catholics. Training programs for French-Canadian volunteers were also in English, even though the men often did not speak the language.

Very few French-Canadian officers received important army posts. Only one French-Canadian regiment—the 22nd, the famous "Vandoos"—had been sent to the Western Front to fight. It seemed to many French Canadians that Hughes's policies had done little to encourage their greater participation in the war. Eventually, Hughes was dismissed by Borden, but not before he caused long-term resentment in Quebec.

The opposition to conscription in Quebec was led by Henri Bourassa. Bourassa summarized his position in a pamphlet published on 4 July 1917.

We are opposed to further enlistments for the war in Europe, whether by conscription or otherwise, for the following reasons:

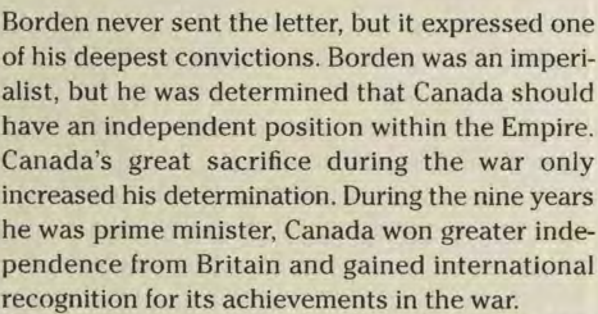
- *Canada has already made a military display, in men and money, proportionately superior to that of any nation engaged in the war*
- *any further weakening of the [labour force] of the country would seriously handicap agricultural production and other essential industries*
- *an increase in the war budget of Canada spells national bankruptcy*
- *it threatens the economic life of the nation and, eventually, its political independence*
- *conscription means national disunion and strife, and would thereby hurt the cause of the Allies to a much greater extent than the addition of a few thousand soldiers to their fighting forces could bring them help and comfort.*

Conscription brought a storm of protest in Quebec.

Spotlight On . . .

Robert Borden

In January 1916, Canada's Prime Minister, Robert Borden, wrote in a letter to the British government:



It can hardly be expected that we shall put 400 000 or 500 000 men in the field and willingly accept the position of having no more voice and receiving no more consideration than if we were toy automata.

Borden never sent the letter, but it expressed one of his deepest convictions. Borden was an imperialist, but he was determined that Canada should have an independent position within the Empire. Canada's great sacrifice during the war only increased his determination. During the nine years he was prime minister, Canada won greater independence from Britain and gained international recognition for its achievements in the war.

Borden was prime minister of Canada during very trying times. The challenges of leading Canada through World War I were immense. Borden did not have the flare and charisma of some other prime ministers, but he was hard-working, methodical, and steadfast. As a young man in Nova Scotia, he had had to work hard to get an education first as a teacher and then as a lawyer. In 1896 he joined the Conservative party and helped to rebuild it after years of disarray following the death of John A. Macdonald. In 1911, Borden defeated Laurier in the federal election. After just three years in office, he was plunged into World War I.

Under Borden's leadership, Canada raised, trained, and equipped a large fighting force during the war. The country's businesses, industries, agriculture, and transportation were all reorganized to support the war effort. New measures were introduced to finance the war. On the international front, Borden persistently insisted that Canada should have a greater voice in the way the war was waged. He was sometimes appalled at the senseless slaughter of soldiers and the incompetence of the British generals. After Passchendaele, he bluntly told Britain's prime minister, " . . . if there is ever a repetition of the battle of Passchendaele, not a Canadian soldier will leave the shores of Canada as long as the Canadian people entrust the government of Canada to my hands."

In 1917, Borden's persistence paid off. Canada and the other dominions of the Empire were represented at the Imperial War Conference. Britain was finally recognizing that it could not ask for yet more soldiers without at least consulting the dominions. At the conference, Borden played a major role in drafting a resolution that promised the dominions autonomy (complete control over their own affairs) after the war and an "adequate voice" in Empire foreign policy. At the Paris Peace Conference after the war, Borden ensured Canada had a voice independent from Britain.

But Borden's leadership was not without crisis and controversy. He faced a country that was bitterly divided when he introduced conscription in 1917. His government interned "enemy aliens" and with the Wartime Elections Act, unjustly took away the vote from conscientious objectors and all those born in an enemy country. Finally, exhausted from the war and with failing health, Borden resigned as prime minister in 1920.

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1. How did Borden contribute to Canada's growing sense of identity during World War I?
2. Would you consider Robert Borden a "great" Canadian prime minister? Justify your answer.

More moderate French-Canadian opinion was represented by Sir Wilfrid Laurier, the leader of the federal Liberal party and former prime minister. Laurier had struggled all his life to keep Canada united. He did not support conscription. He realized it was an issue that could tear the country apart. Laurier was disillusioned when 22 Liberals from Ontario, the West, and the Maritimes voted with the government for the conscription bill. Only the Liberals in Quebec and a handful of English-speaking Liberals stood with Laurier against conscription.

Borden also knew that conscription was a dangerous policy. It could divide French and English Canadians. Farmers would also protest the loss of their remaining sons and farm hands. Still, Borden felt the shortage of troops was so severe that he had no other choice. The **Military Service Bill** was passed in the summer of 1917. The bill made conscription a law. Military service became compulsory for all males between the ages of 20 and 45. Only men in vital wartime production jobs, those who were sick, or conscientious objectors (those for whom fighting was against their religious or other beliefs) did not have to join the Forces.

The Election of 1917

With a general election coming in December 1917, the government passed two further bills. They were both meant to strengthen Borden's position on conscription. The **Military Voters Act** allowed soldiers overseas to vote. More important was the Wartime Elections Act. It gave the vote to female relatives of soldiers. These women could be expected to vote for conscription and a government that promised to support their loved ones overseas. The **Wartime Elections Act** also took away the vote from people born in enemy countries or who spoke the language of an enemy country, and conscientious objectors.

The election of 1917 was particularly bitter. Conservatives and Liberals who believed in conscription formed a **Union government**. Voters were asked by the Union government: "Who would the Germans vote for?" Laurier and his followers were accused of letting down the soldiers at the front. The election results saw Borden and the Union government returned with an overwhelming majority, but with only three seats in Quebec.

The split in Canada that Laurier had feared for so long had occurred. There were riots in Montreal and Quebec City against conscription. Four people were killed and many were injured. Troops had to be sent in with machine guns to restore order.

Emotions among other Canadians also ran high. Many people saw support of the war effort as a moral duty. They felt justified in putting down others who did not fulfil this duty. Conscription and the dire need for men overseas hardened these attitudes. Men who had not signed up to fight overseas were seen as "slackers." One woman admitted:

> *When you had your own there voluntarily, you hated all those others sitting around having a nice time while yours were being killed. You didn't like them. You'd no respect for them. But I was never one of those or approved of going around handing out white feathers. Do you know that some women did? . . . They actually went to men on the street whom they knew, or if they didn't know them—strong working men—and handed them a white feather.*

The white feather was a symbol of cowardice.

Resentment also increased against pacifists. **Pacifists** were against war on the basis of spiritual or moral beliefs. They included Mennonites, Doukhobors, and Quakers who had come to Canada not many years earlier to avoid military service in their home countries and for religious freedom. The Canadian government had guaranteed that they would not have to serve in the military. When the war broke out, however, these people faced hostility and ridicule. They were seen as "shirkers." The fact that Mennonites spoke German heightened suspicion of them.

As conscientious objectors, they were exempt from conscription. The fact that they did not have to fight while others were now obligated to give their lives only increased feelings of bitterness toward them. The government was responding to public opinion when the Wartime Elections Act took away the vote from conscientious objectors. Some Mennonites contributed to the war effort by buying Victory Bonds and working in farming, forestry, road-building, and industry. Few Canadians during the war, however, were willing to acknowledge this contribution.

Other pacifists believed war was a destructive and wasteful way to solve world problems. They supported nonviolent ways to bring about change and to root out the causes of war. The Canadian Women's Peace Party was an example. This group continued to speak for peace and freedom throughout the war.

Did conscription work? The call for conscripts did not begin until 1918. Thousands of men claimed exemption from service. A man could be excused from military service if he had a physical disability, an essential occupation (e.g., farmer), was a conscientious objector, or was a member of the clergy. By the time the war ended in November 1918, only about 45 000 conscripts had reached the battlefield.

Was conscription a success in Canada? Most historians would say no. English Canadians were arguing against French Canadians, Protestants against Roman Catholics, majority against minority. There was widespread disagreement about conscription between farmers and city dwellers, and between civilians and soldiers. National unity seemed a high price to pay for 45 000 soldiers. When the war ended in November 1918, Canada was a divided nation.

Peace: The Treaty of Versailles

Almost five years after the assassination of Archduke Ferdinand at Sarajevo, government leaders met at Versailles, near Paris, to sign the peace treaty. Thirty-two victorious countries were represented, including Canada. Canada was not content just to be part of the British delegation. Borden demanded that Canada be represented as a separate nation at the meetings and at the official signing of the treaty. He argued that Canada deserved a voice in the peace talks because of its major contribution to the war and the Allied victory. Canada was given two seats of its own at the conference. The main decisions, however, were made by the leaders of three countries—Britain, France, and the United States. These countries were referred to as "The Big Three."

The American president Woodrow Wilson suggested that a **League of Nations** be set up to settle future disputes. The League of Nations would be an organization promoting international co-operation. Canada joined the League as an independent nation. Canada had entered World War I as a colony of Britain with no say over its own foreign affairs. By the end of the war, it had gained a new sense of nationhood and international recognition.

Major Terms of the Treaty of Versailles

- Germany must accept the complete independence of Austria, Czechoslovakia, and Poland.
- Poland will allow persons, goods, vessels, carriages, wagons, and mail to pass freely between East Prussia and the rest of Germany over Polish territory. (This was necessary because Poland was given a strip of German territory to provide it with access to the sea at the city of Danzig. This was called the Polish Corridor. It separated East Prussia from the rest of Germany.)
- Germany must give up all its rights and titles to its overseas possessions (colonies in Africa and East Asia).
- After 31 March 1920, the German army must not exceed 100 000 soldiers. The army shall be used only to maintain order within Germany and to control the frontiers. German naval forces must not exceed 6 battleships, 6 light cruisers, 12 destroyers, and 12 torpedo boats. Germans are forbidden to have any submarines. The armed forces of Germany must not include any military air force.
- Germany must accept the responsibility for causing all the loss and damage that the Allies and their citizens have suffered. (This is known as the War Guilt Clause.)
- The Allied governments require Germany to pay for all wartime damages to the civilian population and the property of Allied powers. (These payments are known as reparations.) The amount of the above damage will be determined by an Allied Commission.
- A guarantee is needed to make sure the treaty will be carried out by Germany. Therefore, the German territory west of the Rhine River will be occupied by Allied troops for 15 years.

Prime Minister Robert Borden (centre) at the Paris peace conference. Borden insisted Canada be represented as an independent nation at the talks.

Developing Skills: Interpreting and Comparing Maps

When we look at a world map, we tend to think that the world has always been as it is pictured and always will be. It is difficult to imagine that the boundaries between countries could change overnight—but they have. New countries have been created and some destroyed many times in history.

In 1991, the Soviet Union was dissolved and several new countries emerged. If Quebec separates, the map of Canada could change dramatically. At the end of World War I, the map of Europe also changed dramatically. These changes had a tremendous effect on the way people lived and related to one another.

By comparing maps before and after the changes, you can begin to hypothesize (think) about the effects the changes had on people living in these countries or regions.

Try It!

Select maps of the same area from two different time periods. You can compare maps of Europe in 1914 before World War I (see page 68) and Europe in 1919 after the war, for example. But you could choose other maps, such as Canada at Confederation and Canada today.

Step I Comprehension

The first step is understanding the maps. Ask yourself these questions.

1. What does each map show? At what period of time?

2. What countries or regions are shown? What symbols are used and what do they represent?

Step II Interpretation

The next step is to gather important information from the maps. In this case, you compare two maps to determine the major changes that occurred over a period of time. Use the following points as a guide.

3. Compare the size of Germany before and after the war. Locate and name two countries that received territory in 1919, which formerly belonged to Germany.

4. What happened to Austria-Hungary in 1918? Name the newly independent nations that were created in Europe.

5. Name and locate four new countries that were created from former Russian territory. To what other countries did Russia lose territory?

Step III Hypothesizing

At this stage, you use the information you have gathered from the maps to draw some conclusions and speculate about possible effects in the future. Consider these questions.

6. Locate the Polish Corridor on the map. How might the creation of the Polish Corridor lead to problems among nations in the future?

7. How might the creation of a number of new small nations in Europe lead to future territorial disputes?

Effects of the War on Canada

By 1918, most Canadians were weary of the war. The heady enthusiasm of 1914 was long played out. Rising death tolls, food and fuel shortages, and nervous suspicions had left Canadians exhausted. The war had exacted a heavy cost. A total of 60 661 Canadians had lost their lives. Another 173 000 were wounded or gassed. Many thousands of the injured lived on for years in veterans' hospitals. For these people, the suffering of war never ended. They were victims who had lost limbs, whose lungs had been destroyed by gas attacks, or who had experienced severe emotional trauma. One veteran described the scars of the war:

> *I was gassed for a few seconds at Valenciennes in 1918 and became very ill. After a week in the hospital I was able to return to the front. When the war was over, I got a job in an office but by the summer of 1925 I fainted at work several times. My doctor said it was because of the poison in my system caused by my "bad" bottom teeth and that I would have to have them pulled. This did not help me at all. In 1930 I was finally sent to a doctor in Toronto who asked me if I had been in the Great War. He questioned me further and discovered that I had been gassed in '18. He recommended a partial disability pension, but by 1935 the fainting spells became so frequent that I was put on full pension and have not worked since.*
>
> *I never could marry and have been living alone for over 40 years.*

Another disastrous effect of the war was the deepening resentment between French and English Canadians over conscription. The gulf between Quebec and the rest of the country steadily widened. The hurt, pain, and distrust lingered after the war.

People labelled as "enemy aliens" also suffered serious effects after the war. These people had had their civil rights taken away. Many had lost their jobs or had their homes and businesses vandalized. They had to build new lives for themselves. The Canadian government has never apologized or offered compensation to people interned during World War I.

On the positive side, women had gained the right to vote during the war. World War I had also produced a great boom in Canadian industries. Steel and

The war took a heavy toll in lives and left many mothers, wives, and families suffering from the loss of loved ones.

Netsurfer
To find out about Canada's war veterans and war memorials, visit Veterans Affairs Canada at www.vac-acc.gc.ca.

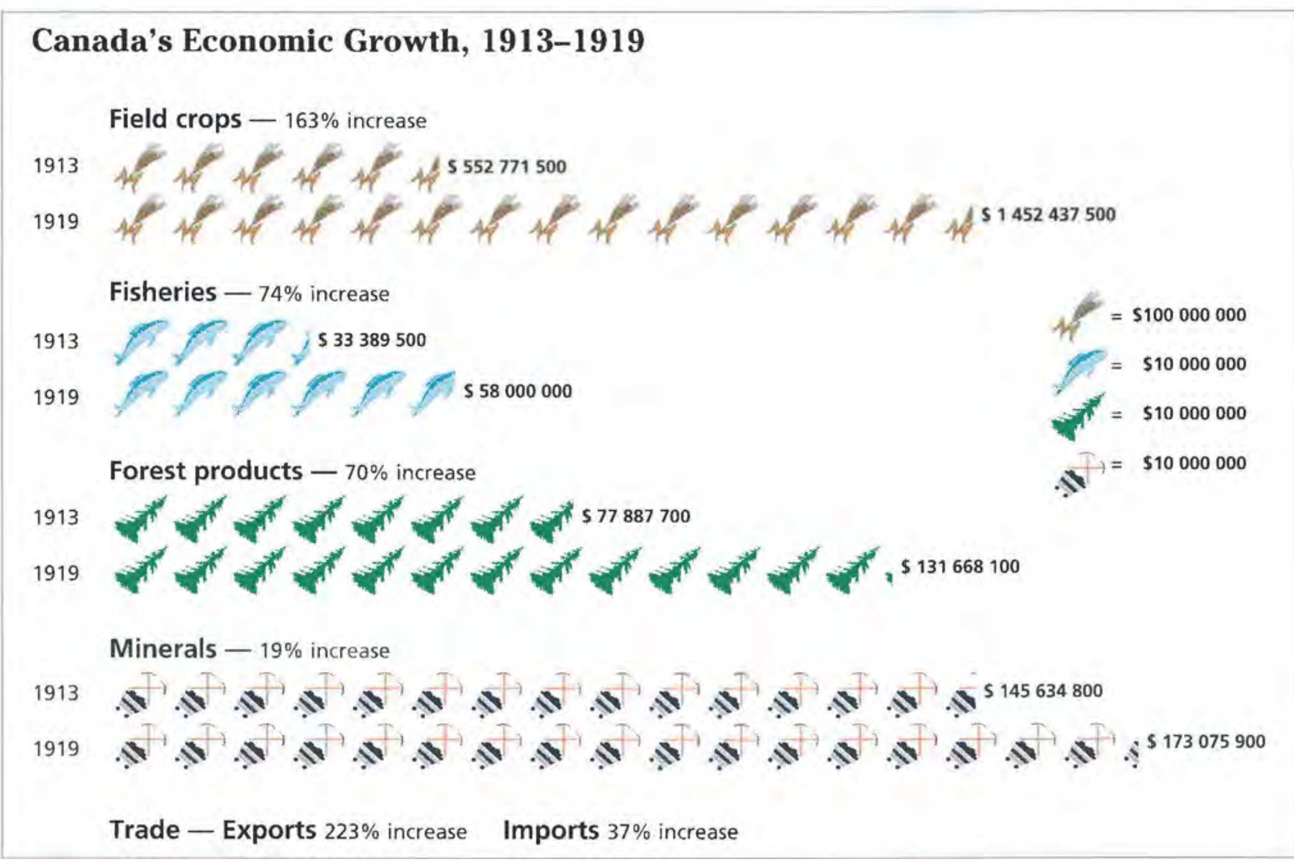
munitions production and manufacturing had grown fantastically. During the war, almost everyone who could work had a job.

Canada also emerged from the war a more independent country. Canada's war effort had earned the country international respect. The outstanding contribution of Canada's soldiers won a separate seat for Canada at the peace conference following the war. Previously, Britain would have signed the peace treaty on behalf of all the British Empire. Now Canada signed the treaty as a separate nation. Canada had achieved a degree of national sovereignty—the right to control its own affairs without interference. Canada was still part of the British Empire, but Britain had agreed to grant the colonies "autonomy (the right to self-government) within the Empire."

As the decade drew to a close, three of the most important Canadian leaders were also leaving the spotlight of politics. On 19 February 1919, Sir Wilfrid Laurier died of a stroke. With his main opponent gone, Henry Bourassa became less involved in the political scene. Sir Robert Borden, exhausted from leadership during wartime, resigned as leader of the Conservative party in 1920. Three new leaders in Canada were about to emerge—William Lyon Mackenzie King, Arthur Meighen, and J.S. Woodsworth.

Canadian Corps Casualties

Thousands of Casualties
18
16
14
12
10
8
6
4
2
Total casualties
Killed in action
Second Ypres
Mount Sorrel
The Somme
Vimy Ridge
Hill 70
Passchendaele
Hundred Days
J F M A M J J A S O N D 1915
J F M A M J J A S O N D 1916
J F M A M J J A S O N D 1917
J F M A M J J A S O N 1918



Activities

Understand Facts and Concepts

1. Add these new terms to your *Factfile*.

   - "enemy aliens"
   - War Measures Act
   - Victory Bonds
   - propaganda
   - suffragists
   - Military Voters Act 1917
   - Wartime Elections Act 1917
   - Dominion Elections Act 1920
   - conscription
   - Military Service Bill 1917
   - Union Government 1917
   - pacifists
   - Treaty of Versailles
   - League of Nations

2. Describe how each of the following contributed to the war effort at home.
   a) women
   b) workers
   c) children
   d) families in their homes
   e) Aboriginal, Black, Asian, and other ethnocultural communities

3. Why did a spirit of excitement and confidence exist in Canada at the outbreak of the war in 1914? How and why did this mood change?
4. Explain why these statements are true or false.
   a) World War I was "total" war.
   b) During the war, "enemy aliens" posed a threat to Canada.
   c) The Canadian economy grew as a result of the war.
   d) Only French Canadians opposed conscription.
   e) The conscription issue caused division in Canada.
   f) The war helped women gain the right to vote in Canada.
5. a) Explain why Canadians were considered to be part of the British army.
   b) How did this relationship between Britain and Canada change by the end of the war?

Think and Communicate

6. Work in groups. List ways in which the government became involved in the everyday lives of Canadians during World War I. Do you think these actions were justified? Report your ideas to the class.
7. Imagine you and your family were considered "enemy aliens" during World War I. What problems would you and your family face at work, in school, and in the community. How would you feel about the actions of the Canadian government? Write a journal entry or letter to the editor expressing your views and experiences.
8. Suppose you have a vote on conscription in the parliament of 1917. Will you vote for or against? Evaluate the pros and cons and justify your decision.

Conscription	Pros	Cons	Decision

9. a) Refer to the bar graph showing Canadian casualties during World War I on page 126. In which year did Canada suffer the most casualties? Why was the number of casualties in this year significant?
   b) Refer to the pictograph showing the growth in Canada's economy during the war years on page 127. Which two areas of the economy showed the most growth? Suggest why.
10. a) Present evidence that Canada emerged from World War I as a more independent and respected nation.
    b) Present three facts to support the following statement: "The growth in Canada's economy from 1914 to 1919 was mainly due to World War I."

Apply Your Knowledge

11. Canada's economy boomed during World War I largely because of the great demand for food and war products. What problems might have arisen when the war ends? Why?

12. Why might Canadians feel that the experiences of World War I made the country better prepared to take control of its own affairs?

13. a) Which of the following terms of the Treaty of Versailles do you consider fair treatment of Germany? Explain why.
    i) the Allies took away all Germany's colonies
    ii) Germany's army was limited to 100 000 soldiers
    iii) Germany was held responsible for causing World War I
    iv) Germany was required to pay reparations
    v) Germany would not be allowed to have troops in the Rhineland for 15 years
    b) It has been said that the Treaty of Versailles contained within it the seeds of another war. What do you think this statement means? Do you think it is correct? Why?

14. How did World War I contribute to Canada's growing identity? Design a web site on this topic. Decide on what your site should include and create an index of topics or site map. Then discuss the visuals and text you will use for each topic. Present your ideas.

Get to the Source

15. The following poem was written by a Ukrainian Canadian, Dale Zieroth, about his grandfather who had spent time in an "enemy alien" internment camp during the war.

Detention Camp, Brandon, Manitoba

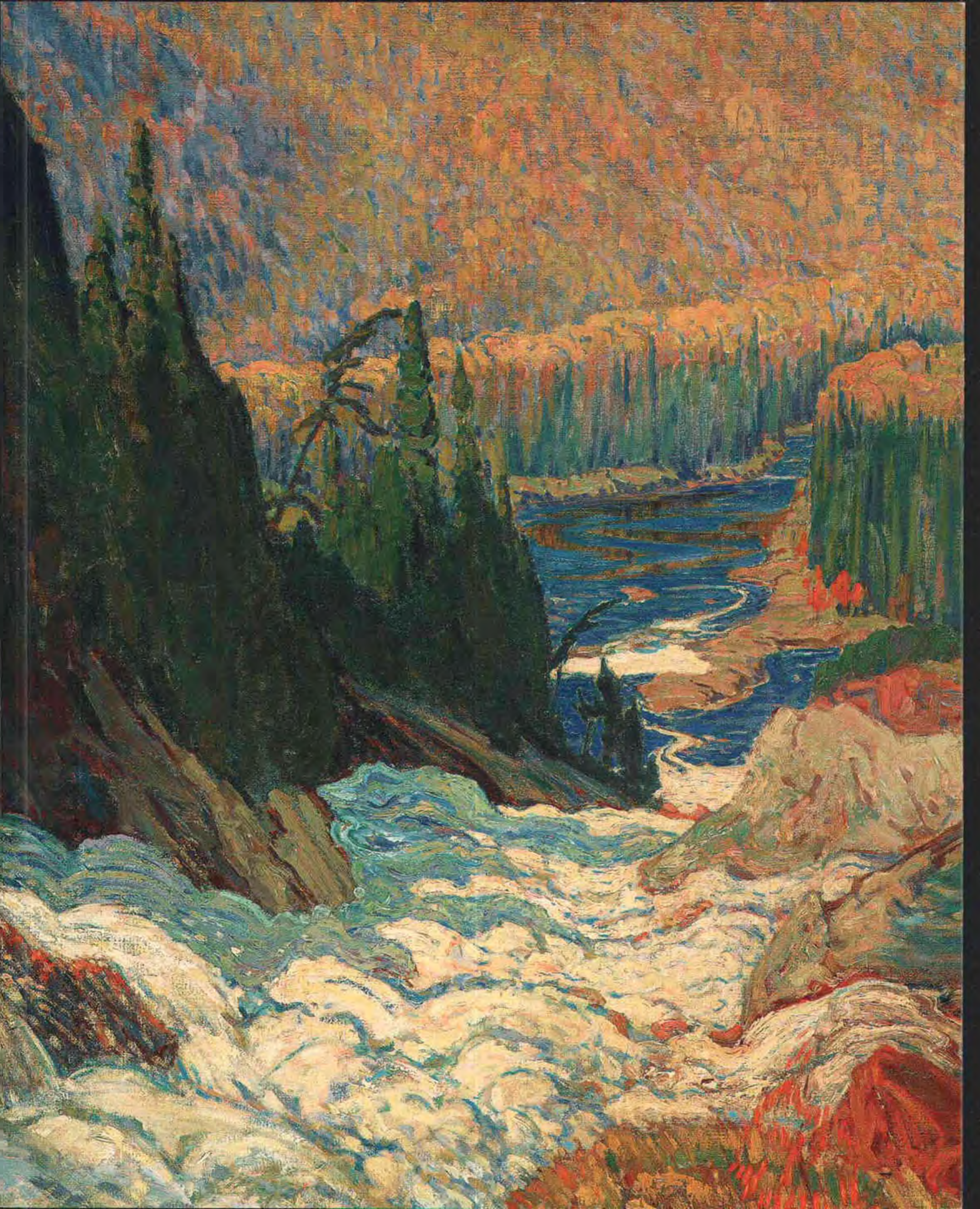
On the morning of the fourth day,
two men were missing. Later, brought back,
they talked for a while
of some part of summer they'd seen,
then they were quiet, turned bitter,
even a little crazed: these received
no letters from the outside and spoke now
of nothing they wished to return to.
Bodies at night would moan, asleep
with others somewhere who dreamt
of them. The sunrise on the wall
became a condition, the sunset a way
of counting days. The prisoners carried
these things close to their bodies.
This my grandfather came to know
before leaving.

He did not celebrate his homecoming.
His wife was older, his children
came to him less. Even the sky
was not as blue as he'd remembered,
and the harvest, three-quarters done,
reminded him too often of wasted
time, of war in Europe. Winter
came too quickly that year and,
next spring the turning of the earth
held no new surprises.

Source: Dale Zieroth, *Clearing: Poems from a Journey* (Toronto: House of Anansi, 1973).

a) How does this poem express the thoughts and feelings of the prisoners in the internment camps?

b) What long-term effects does this poem suggest the internment camps had?



THE ROARING TWENTIES AND DIRTY THIRTIES

1919-1939

The two decades after World War I were years of turmoil in Canada. In 1919, Canadians hoped for a better life after the hard years of the war. Instead, thousands of people lost their jobs as war-time industries geared down.

It wasn't until the mid-1920s that the economy began to turn around. Gradually, more people could afford new luxuries such as automobiles and radios. People took risks investing in the stock market and buying on credit. At the same time, Canadians were building on a new sense of national identity following the war. The country gained full independence from Britain in 1931. Canadians such as the Group of Seven were developing distinctly Canadian arts.

When the stock market crashed in 1929, the economy went into a downspin. Businesses went bankrupt. Workers were laid off and roamed the country looking for work. The West was hit with devastating drought and plagues of grasshoppers. The Dirty Thirties were a decade of hardship for most Canadians.

1. **In 1920, Canada's famous Group of Seven artists held their first exhibition. This painting, titled *Falls, Montreal River,* is by Group of Seven artist J. E. H. MacDonald. What impression of the landscape does this painting create?**
2. **Before this time, most painting was very realistic, focusing on reflecting precise details. How is this painting different?**
3. **a) What makes this painting distinctly Canadian?**
   b) How important do you think it is that Canadians develop their own distinctive arts? Why?

Year	Events
1918	Federal government introduces prohibition
1919	Winnipeg General Strike breaks out League of Indians is formed Immigration Act restricts non-British immigrants
1920	Arthur Meighen (Conservative) becomes prime minister Group of Seven has its first exhibition
1921	William Lyon Mackenzie King (Liberal) is elected prime minister Banting and Best discover insulin Agnes Macphail is first woman elected to House of Commons
1923	Chinese Exclusion Act is passed
1924	Major oil strike is made in Alberta
1928	Canadian athletes including Bobbie Rosenfeld and Ethel Catherwood win medals at Amsterdam Olympics
1929	Stock Market crashes Emily Murphy wins the Persons Case
1930	R. B. Bennett (Conservative) becomes prime minister Great Depression begins
1931	Statute of Westminster extends Canada's independence within the Commonwealth
1932	Canadian Radio Broadcasting Commission (CRCB) is formed Co-operative Commonwealth Federation (CCF) is founded
1935	Bennett presents his "New Deal" Mackenzie King (Liberal) returns as prime minister Union Nationale party is formed in Quebec Social Credit party is elected in Alberta
1936	CBC is formed
1937	Governor General's Awards are created
1939	National Film Board is established Jewish refugees from Europe aboard the *Saint Louis* are refused entry into Canada

Strands & Topics

Communities: Local, National, and Global

Canadian Identity

- Group of Seven artists establish a Canadian painting style
- Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC), Governor General's Awards, and National Film Board (NFB) are created

External Forces Shaping Canada's Policies

- influence of American culture leads to establishment of Canadian cultural organizations
- controversy arises over Americanization of the Canadian economy
- Canada gains greater autonomy from Britain

French-English Relations

- Union Nationale party led by Maurice Duplessis aims to stop federal government interference in Quebec and to develop Quebec's resources

War, Peace, and Security

- Canada becomes isolationist and resists involvement in foreign conflicts
- immigration is restricted and Canada adopts a closed-door policy toward Asians and Jewish refugees from Europe

Change and Continuity

Population Patterns

- immigration levels drop drastically
- urbanization continues with development of automobiles and industrialization

- thousands leave the Prairie Provinces and the Maritimes during the 1930s Depression

Impact of Science and Technology

- Edward Rogers develops the batteryless radio
- automobiles are mass produced
- talking films are introduced
- Banting and Best discover insulin

Canada's International Status and Foreign Policy

- by Statute of Westminster 1931, Canada becomes an independent, self-governing nation within the British Commonwealth

Citizenship and Heritage

Social and Political Movements

- women win representation on the Senate after the Persons Case
- workers organize unions and strikes
- Aboriginal peoples form political organizations
- farmers establish co-operatives

Contributions of Individuals

- Prime Ministers Mackenzie King and R. B. Bennett lead Canada
- Emily Murphy spearheads campaign for appointing women to the Senate
- Frederick Banting and Charles Best discover insulin
- Joseph Bombardier and Edward S. Rogers are among important inventors and entrepreneurs
- Fred Loft and other Aboriginal leaders organize Aboriginal political movements
- Percy Williams, Lionel Conacher, The Edmonton Grads, and Bobbie Rosenfeld represent important sports figures

Social, Economic, and Political Structures

The Economy

- unemployment and rising prices are problems after the war
- industrial development and prosperity return in the mid-1920s
- Canada becomes increasingly dependent on exports of raw materials
- Americans establish branch plants in Canada
- stock market crashes 1929
- Great Depression hits 1930-39

The Changing Role of Government

- government continues policies to assimilate Aboriginal nations
- immigration is restricted
- some social support programs such as relief payments, old age pensions are introduced
- new political parties are formed

Methods of Historical Inquiry

Skill Development

- decision-making
- creating multi-media presentations
- using simulation games
- interpreting graphs

Activities

- pp. 157–59, 177–78, 205–07

Expectations

At the end of the unit, you will be able to:

- evaluate developments in the labour movement
- analyze concerns over the Americanization of the Canadian economy and culture
- evaluate the role of government in protecting a distinct Canadian identity
- compare economic conditions in the 1920s and 1930s
- assess the changing relationship between English Canada and Quebec
- evaluate Canada's immigration policies
- summarize the growth in Canada's autonomy
- evaluate developments in the women's movement
- describe the contributions of Aboriginal political organizations
- describe the development of new political parties
- describe advances in technology and their impact
- evaluate government responses to the Depression
- apply effective decision-making skills
- use simulation games
- develop effective multi-media presentations
- construct and analyze useful charts and graphs

Times of Turmoil

Bloody Saturday

In June 1919, thousands of workers in the city of Winnipeg went on strike. On Saturday, 21 June, tensions reached the boiling point and violence broke out in the streets. This account by D.C. Masters is based on eyewitness reports of the events.

The crowd in front of the City Hall became more and more dense. There were soldiers in uniform and civilians in working clothes and holiday attire. Some had come to parade and others to see the excitement. People were moving up and down Main Street in large groups. Soldiers had begun to line up the silent parade in the square ...

Before long the Mounties, immaculate in red or khaki coats, clattered along Portage and wheeled down Main. Armed with baseball bats, they galloped into the crowd. Soon they were slowed to a walk in the seething mass of people, but still they pressed on, vigorously flailing out with their bats. They passed the City Hall, turned south and fought their way toward Portage amid a shower of tin cans, stones, bricks, and lumps of concrete. . . .

Amid wild confusion the mayor emerged on the front platform of the City Hall and read the Riot Act. His voice was drowned in bedlam. Again the Mounties came north and, as they did so, each transferred his club to the left hand and drew 'an ugly-looking black revolver.' They swung left on William Avenue and fired a volley into the crowd. They rounded the City Hall and slowed to a walk at the corner of Market and Main streets. Again they drove into the crowd which was surging around a streetcar, beleaguered and on

fire, in front of the City Hall. This the crowd was attempting to upset. The Mounties fired their second volley and Mike Sokolowiski, who stood in front of the Manitoba Hotel, was shot in the heart and killed instantly. Other figures lay on the street and road.

1. What do you think would cause a riot like Bloody Saturday in Winnipeg in 1919?
2. a) How do you think workers across the country will react to this strike?
   b) How might employers and government officials react? Explain.

Post-War Problems

World War I ended in November 1918. But the devastating effects of the war did not go away quickly. The social problems that workers, women, Aboriginal nations, immigrants, and the poor had faced before the war also resurfaced. The war had only pushed issues such as poverty, unsafe working conditions, and inadequate health care into the background for a time. The years immediately after World War I in Canada were a period of turmoil and unrest.

Prohibition

Some battles against social problems were won during the war. Women's groups, such as the Women's Christian Temperance Union, had campaigned for a ban on liquor since before the turn of the century. The women's groups were supported by farm, church, lodge, and merchant associations. During the war, their campaign gained momentum. It was pointed out that grain should be used to feed soldiers and civilians, rather than to make alcohol. Also, the production of liquor did nothing to support the war effort. Workers were needed to produce necessary war supplies. During the war, every provincial government except Quebec banned the sale of liquor. In 1918, the federal government introduced **Prohibition**, banning the production, import, and transportation of liquor across the country.

But a complete ban on alcohol created a new kind of crime. People bought "bootleg booze"—illegal liquor made and sold by organized bootleggers and other small-time operators. Elegant private clubs called "speakeasies" sprang up. Customers were approved through a peephole in the front door. Inside the surroundings were fashionable and drinks were readily available. Some druggists did a roaring business by filling prescriptions of alcohol as a tonic.

The United States was also officially "dry" from 1919 to 1933. Some Canadians made fortunes smuggling Canadian liquor south of the border. Under the cover of dense woods, smugglers known as rum-runners used horse-drawn sleighs and snowshoes to get booze across the Quebec border into Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont. From ports along the shores of Lake Ontario and Lake Erie, fast boats ran cargoes of rum to the American shores. Estimates suggest that almost $1 million of liquor also crossed from Windsor to Detroit each month.

During the Prohibition era, smugglers sometimes carried liquor bottles in hidden pockets under their coats as they crossed the border into the United States.

Prohibition had some positive social effects. The crime rate dropped, and arrests for drunkenness decreased dramatically. More workers took their pay cheques home instead of to the tavern. Industrial efficiency improved because fewer work days were missed. However, it became obvious during the 1920s that Prohibition was impossible to enforce. Underworld characters on both sides of the border were making fortunes in illegal liquor.

Provincial governments realized that they were losing millions of dollars in potential taxes on liquor sales. Prohibition was also unpopular with many citizens. Pressures increased for a more moderate liquor policy. People argued that legalizing liquor under strict government controls would be easier to enforce than total Prohibition. Gradually, individual provinces dropped Prohibition throughout the 1920s. Prince Edward Island was the last province to eliminate the law in 1948. Since then, Canadian governments have generally chosen to tax bad habits rather than forbid them.

Influenza Epidemic

As soldiers returned home from the war, the country was struck with a terrible epidemic—"Spanish flu." Soldiers carried the virus with them from overseas. The epidemic ravaged countries around the world. People weakened from the virus often got pneumonia. In these days before the discovery of penicillin and sulpha drugs, thousands of people died from pneumonia.

To stop the spread of the flu, schools, threatres, and churches closed their doors. Some communities tried to set up a total quarantine, allowing no one to travel in or out. Public health departments and clinics across the country were flooded with the numbers of sick and dying. In all, about 50 000 Canadians died during the epidemic. This was only 10 000 fewer than the number of people killed during the war. Death had come to the home front.

The epidemic pressed the government into action. A federal Department of Health was created in 1919. Before this time, responsibility for public health had been divided among the three levels of government. Planning and action on health concerns were haphazard. The new federal Department of Health took control over national concerns such as border quarantines. It also co-operated with the provinces and volunteer organizations on campaigns such as child welfare. In addition, the federal and provincial governments began collecting vital statistics such as birth and death rates, and infant mortality rates. It took some years for the Department of Health to have a real impact, but it signalled that Canadians were becoming more aware of public health concerns.

The Technological Edge

The Discovery of Insulin

In 1921, over a million people in North America had diabetes. At that time, no one knew what caused the disease or how to treat it. Thousands who suffered from the illness died every year.

In 1922, at the University of Toronto, Canadian medical researchers discovered a ground-breaking treatment – insulin. An Ontario doctor, Frederick Banting, was given the major credit for the discovery. After serving in the medical corps during World War I, Banting set up a small medical practice in London, Ontario. His practice was not a busy one and he spent some of his time thinking about the problem of diabetes. People with diabetes could not absorb sugar and starch from the bloodstream and they wasted away. They were missing an important hormone called insulin. Banting believed that if he could somehow isolate the hormone in animals, he could treat diabetes patients with injections of it.

On the night of 20 October 1920, Banting woke up with an idea. He thought of a way to get the hormone from dogs. Banting went to see Professor J.R.R. Macleod at the University of Toronto. Macleod agreed to give Banting a research laboratory and the help of a graduate student, Charles Best. In the summer of 1921, Banting and Best had managed to isolate insulin with the help of J.B. Collip. They were ready to test it on human patients. The results were astounding. By late 1922, insulin was made available to treat diabetes.

In 1923, Frederick Banting and J.R.R. Macleod were awarded the Nobel Prize for the discovery. Banting did not believe that Charles Best had been given due credit. He shared half his $40 000 award with Best, and Macleod shared his with Collip. Today, there is still controversy over who deserves most credit for the discovery. There is no doubt, however, that the discovery of insulin has saved the lives of millions of people. It remains a major landmark in the history of medical research in Canada.

Frederick Banting (right) and Charles Best in 1923.

1. Do some research to find out about the contributions of other Canadian pioneers in the field of medicine. Some people you can consider include Dr. Elizabeth Bagshaw, Norman Bethune, Sir William Osler, Wilder Graves Penfield, and Tak Wah Mak.

Labour Unrest

The end of the war caused problems for workers as well. Wartime industries, such as military supply factories, geared down. Women, who had played such an important role in wartime factories, now found themselves under pressure to take up household duties once more so that returning soldiers could have jobs. Thousands of veterans were flooding the job market looking for work.

But jobs were hard to find. Many war veterans found their old jobs had disappeared. Some resented the fact that while they were in Europe fighting, a few industrialists at home had become enormously wealthy producing war materials. Veterans felt they were at least entitled to a job and a chance to make an honest living.

Those lucky enough to have jobs in 1919 were not much better off. One problem was inflation. During the war, prices of food and clothing had increased dramatically. Wages had also gone up, but they had not kept pace with rising prices. Between 1914 and 1919, the cost of living more than doubled. Housing was scarce and costly, and rents were high. Workers and returning soldiers had been told that the war was fought to create a better world. Now they expected to receive a larger share of economic benefits and more control over their own lives.

RCMP and Vancouver police clear out the Post Office after a sit-down strike in 1938. Strikes by workers continued through the 1930s.

In 1919, workers had no unemployment insurance, compensation for injuries on the job, or pensions. Thousands had joined unions to fight for better working conditions. But the law was weighted against employees and their organizations. Labour law did not compel employers to bargain with employee representatives (a process we call collective bargaining today).

In many cases, there was only one way for workers to make their demands heard—strike. However, employers could easily get injunctions against strikers. Injunctions are orders from the court that forbid a strike and send workers back to their jobs. Employers also brought in strikebreakers (non-union labour) and crushed the strikers financially. The strikers were left without their jobs and their wages.

In 1918-1919, union membership climbed and a wave of labour unrest swept across Canada. Miners and steelworkers in Cape Breton, machinists in Toronto, loggers in West Coast lumber camps, and streetcar drivers in Windsor, Ontario, were just a few of the groups that walked off the job.

Strikes and Lockouts in Canada, 1917 - 1919

Year	Number of Strikes
1917	160
1918	230
1919	326

One Big Union (OBU)

In 1917, a small group of radicals in Russia called Bolsheviks overthrew the government in a violent revolution. The Bolsheviks called for a revolution by working people around the world. They believed that everyone in a community should own and control the way goods are produced and distributed. Some union leaders and working people in Canada were influenced by these ideas.

The Canadian government and employers reacted with alarm. They believed the revolution in Russia was an example of what could happen if worker unrest got out of hand. Some employers and government officials feared that workers in Canada were planning a revolution. They were particularly suspicious of "foreign" workers, who they believed brought dangerous ideas about political and social change into Canada.

When western Canadian trade unionists met in Calgary in 1919, the government made sure that police agents were there to monitor events. At that meeting in Calgary, labour leaders decided that to improve conditions, workers had to join together in one general union. These western union leaders were dissatisfied with the Trades and Labour Congress (TLC), which was mainly a large union for craft workers (carpenters, stonecutters, masons, shoemakers, etc.). Many unskilled and semi-skilled workers in Canada's growing industries were not represented in the TLC. The western unionists resolved to establish **One Big Union (OBU)**, which united skilled and unskilled workers. They believed that by standing together, workers could force employers to pay higher wages and establish shorter working hours.

The Winnipeg General Strike

Worker unrest came to a head in Winnipeg in 1919. Winnipeg was a growing economic centre. A large number of immigrant workers had settled in the city, especially in a neighbourhood called "the North End." They wanted to improve working and living conditions. Such ideas for change drew suspicion from wealthier citizens, many of them British-Canadians. Some strongly opposed the demands of people they saw as "radical foreigners." Tensions were high in the city.

On 1 May, the Building and Metal Trades Councils in Winnipeg voted to go on strike. They were asking for three things:

1. decent wages (85 cents per hour)
2. an eight-hour day
3. the right to bargain collectively for better working conditions.

The Building and Metal Trades Councils asked for the support of other workers in Winnipeg. On 15 May, 30 000 additional workers in the city walked off the job. Workers in Vancouver, Toronto, and Montreal went on sympathy strikes to show their support.

In Winnipeg, the strike spread from industry to industry. It quickly escalated into a general strike, in which almost all industries and key services were shut down. Stores and factories closed. Dairies and bakeries stopped deliveries. Streetcar operators, garbage collectors, postal workers, telephone operators, firefighters, and hydro workers refused to work. Even the police expressed their support for the strike, but agreed to remain on duty when the strike leaders asked them to.

Winnipeg was split into two hostile camps. On one side were the strikers, their families, and their supporters. The strike was under the direction of the Central Strike Committee. In the interests of public health and safety, the Central Strike Committee allowed some bakers, dairy workers, and electric power operators to work.

On the other side were the owners, the employers, and leading citizens of Winnipeg. They called themselves the Citizens' Committee of One Thousand and were strongly opposed to the strike. Many were convinced that this was the beginning of the revolution they had been fearing.

Winnipeg officials and the Citizens' Committee of One Thousand were determined to crush the strike. All parades and demonstrations were banned. Newspapers across the country were generally hostile toward the strikers. The Winnipeg *Citizen* accused the strikers of trying to bring about a revolution. The Canadian government became increasingly alarmed by events in Winnipeg and quickly made changes to the Criminal Code. Any foreign-born person who was suspected of trying to cause a revolution could be arrested and deported without a hearing or a trial. Meanwhile, Ottawa sent troops and machine guns to Winnipeg.

As the strike dragged on into June, the families of many strikers experienced real hardship. There was no strike pay. Some became so discouraged that they gave up and drifted back to their jobs. Then on 17 June, in the early morning hours, Mounties raided the homes of the union leaders and labour headquarters. Documents were seized and 10 strike leaders were arrested.

The general strike dragged on for 37 days. On 21 June, a day that became known as **Bloody Saturday**, violence erupted. A huge crowd gathered to watch a parade protesting the arrest of the strike leaders. Parades had been banned. The Mayor, fearing trouble, read the Riot Act and called in the Royal North-West Mounted Police. Not long afterward, the crowd overturned a streetcar and set it on fire. The Mounted Police charged the crowd. Shots were fired. One man was killed and 30 were injured. Hundreds were arrested. The crowds dispersed in panic. Five days later, the Central Strike Committee ordered the workers back to their jobs. The general strike was over.

Workers and police clash on the streets of Winnipeg during the General Strike.

The Riot Act

His Majesty the King charges and commands all persons being assembled immediately to disperse and peaceably to depart to their habitation or their lawful business upon pain of being guilty of an offence for which upon conviction they may be sentenced to imprisonment for life.

Results of the Strike

To many workers, the Winnipeg General Strike looked like a complete failure. Their leaders were arrested and sentenced to jail terms. Many families, their savings gone, would never recover from their financial losses. When strikers went back to work, some were forced to sign "yellow-dog contracts." These contracts stated that they would not join a union or take part in union activities.

Others found they had no jobs to go back to. Employers branded them as troublemakers and fired them on the spot. With the collapse of the strike, the attempt to create One Big Union was doomed. The dream of a strong united Canadian labour movement was buried for the next 30 years. The bitterness between employees and employers, and between strikers and non-strikers, would last for a long time in Winnipeg.

In July 1919, the federal government changed the Criminal Code once again. Persons proposing violence to bring about political or economic changes could be searched without a warrant. Their property could be seized, and they could be sentenced to jail for up to 20 years. A person could be charged with being a member of an illegal organization for attending a strike meeting or handing out strike literature. This legislation was not changed until 1936.

But the Winnipeg General Strike had some positive effects. Thinking citizens began to appreciate how important workers were to the community. The superintendent of nurses in a Winnipeg hospital wrote, "The General Strike . . . made the people of Winnipeg realize that no modern community can function without the workers to carry on the humble and monotonous tasks which make a city safe and healthy to live in."

The strike drew attention to the social and economic problems faced by many working people. A Royal Commission was appointed to investigate the causes and the conduct of the strike. H. A. Robson, who headed the Royal Commission, concluded that the strike was caused by the high cost of living, poor working conditions, and the low wages paid to workers. Robson also determined that the Winnipeg strike was not an attempt to start a violent revolution.

Labour Leaders in Government

After the Winnipeg General Strike, labour leaders became more involved in politics. They decided that the way to solve unemployment and economic problems was to have a say in government. Many strike leaders went on to play important roles in government. In the Manitoba provincial election of 1920, four strike leaders (Ivens, Queen, Armstrong, and Dickson) were elected to the provincial government while still in prison. Other strike leaders served in city government as councillors or school trustees.

In the federal election of 1921, J. S. Woodsworth became MP for Winnipeg North Centre. He held this post until his death in 1941. Later, Woodsworth became the first leader of the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation (CCF), a pro-worker political party. Another strike leader, A. A. Heaps, was elected to Parliament in 1925. In years to come, both Woodsworth and Heaps were tireless champions of labour and social reform.

A demonstration protesting the arrest and trials of labour leaders during the Winnipeg General strike.

Politics and Regional Protests

In July 1920 Arthur Meighen, a Conservative, was sworn in as prime minister of Canada. He took over from Sir Robert Borden, who had resigned after the war. The Canada that Meighen inherited was restless and torn apart by strikes and regional interests.

French Canadians were still seething over the conscription crisis of 1917. After the election of 1917, Quebec also did not have a single MP on the government side. French Canadians felt increasingly alienated in Canada after the war. In the 1920s, a group called *Action Nationale* led by Abbé Lionel Groulx warned that French culture had to be protected in Quebec. Groulx wanted French-Canadian ownership of large industries such as hydroelectricity and opposed foreign investment in the province. The movement also supported French-Canadian rural life and traditional values.

The Maritime provinces also felt increasingly alienated in the country. Several Maritime manufacturing companies had moved out of the region to Central Canada, where they could have access to a larger market. Other Maritime industries also struggled with high freight rates on railways. Government policies favoured the growth of manufacturing companies in Central Canada, not in the East. Declining world demand for key Maritime products such as fish, coal, and farm goods also hit hard. Even the steel industry faced tough times as railway building basically stopped after the war. Unemployment soared. Many workers had to move to other parts of Canada to find work.

A Maritime Rights Movement wanted the federal government to increase subsidies (payments to the provinces), encourage more national and international trade through Maritime ports, and help protect Maritime industries with higher tariffs (taxes on imported goods). In 1926, a royal commission was set up to look into the problems. The commission recommended lower rail rates, aid to steel and coal industries, and higher federal subsidies. But the government made only minor changes. The fundamental economic problems in the region remained.

In the West, prairie farmers were also suffering from the post-war slump. In 1920, the world market for wheat collapsed. War-torn Europe could not afford to buy Canadian wheat. Many prairie farmers were desperately short of cash and becoming increasingly frustrated. They claimed that high tariffs pushed up the prices of farm machinery, equipment, and consumer goods. High freight rates on the railways also increased their costs. Farmers had been protesting over these issues since before the turn of the century, but saw no real action from governments. Many farmers believed federal political parties were dominated by business interests in Central Canada.

In 1920, a number of farmers decided to form their own federal political party—the **National Progressives**. The party campaigned for lower freight rates and tariffs. It also believed voters should have a chance to propose laws and to recall MPs who were not representing their concerns. In the federal election of 1921, the Progressives stunned everyone and won 65 seats in the House of Commons. This was second only to the Liberals, who won the election.

But members of the National Progressives party often could not agree on major issues. Some eventually joined the Liberals, while others dropped out of politics. Farmers' parties, however, continued to stand for farmers' concerns in provincial elections. While the National Progressives did not last, they showed that the traditional two-party system in Canada was not enough to represent the diverse concerns of groups across the country.

The federal election in 1921 was a tumultuous one. But the man who became prime minister for most of the 1920s was destined to be the most successful political leader of his age. He was the grandson of William Lyon Mackenzie, the leader of the 1837 Rebellion in Upper Canada. For almost 30 years until his death in 1950, William Lyon Mackenzie King dominated the Liberal party and political life in Canada.

On the surface, King seemed to possess few qualities that would attract large numbers of voters. He was cautious and careful, and extremely shrewd. He had a strong interest in spiritualism and sometimes, through mediums and seances, tried to contact the dead. There were times when King believed he had been in contact with his dead mother and had received political advice from important figures of the past, including Laurier.

King's political genius lay in making Liberal policies acceptable to various groups and regions across the nation. He listened to what various regions of Canada wanted. Often, he put off reaching a decision until he worked out compromises among the diverse interests.

William Lyon Mackenzie King during the election campaign. What does this photo suggest about how politicians reached the voters before the days of television?

Veterans and Social Support

War veterans, who had fought for their country, believed they were entitled to a job, a decent wage, and some compensation for the injured. Over 70 000 veterans who returned from the war were injured or disabled. Through a government program, hospitals and clinics across the country provided free medical care for veterans. Many needed artificial limbs, or help for visual impairments, shell-shock, and the effects of gassing. A Canadian veteran, Captain E. A. Baker, returned from the war without his sight and worked to establish the Canadian National Institute for the Blind in 1918.

A vocational training program was set up, and thousands of veterans were given training to help them find new jobs. The Soldier Settlement Act in 1919 offered those who wanted to farm a grant of land. Pensions were paid to veterans, widows, and the wives and children of disabled veterans.

William Derby of Port Alberni, BC, was the first to receive a pension cheque in Canada following the Pension Act in 1927.

But in the early 1920s, even veterans who had received training could not find jobs. Those on farms found it difficult to keep up their mortgage payments. Others found their disabilities or injuries had worsened, making it difficult for them to work. The government responded by raising the cost-of-living bonus on pensions and providing unemployment assistance. In 1930, the War Veterans Allowance Act provided veterans who were unemployable and those who reached the age of 60 with a pension. These were some of the first social support programs in Canada.

Meanwhile, labour and farmers' groups were also pressuring the federal government to introduce social support programs such as unemployment insurance and "old-age" pensions for people beyond the veterans. The government was slow to act, despite widespread public support for the schemes. In 1926, J. S. Woodsworth and A. A. Heaps sent a letter to Prime Minister King:

Dear Mr. King:
As representatives of Labour in the House of Commons, we ask whether it is your intention to introduce at this session (a) provision for the Unemployed; (b) Old-Age Pensions.

Despite opposition from Conservatives in the Senate, the **Pension Act** was passed in 1927. Opponents of the scheme believed that if people knew the government would support them when they turned 70, they would make little effort to provide for themselves. By the Pension Act, British subjects over the age of 70 were entitled to a pension of $240 a year. Pensioners had to have lived in Canada for at least 20 years. Anyone who earned more than $365 in income a year could not receive a pension, and people who owned a home had to transfer it to the

Pension Authority. The Pension Authority sold the home and used the money to pay the person's pension. Women could receive a pension only if they were widows. Aboriginal peoples and people who were not British subjects were not eligible for the pension. A small step had been taken toward social support programs, but they did not apply equally to everyone in society.

Aboriginal Political Movements

Throughout the 1920s and 1930s, Aboriginal nations struggled to keep their cultures and to have their rights recognized. Since the Indian Act, which was passed in 1876, government policy had stressed assimilation. That is, the government wanted Aboriginal nations to give up their traditional ways and be absorbed into Canadian culture, which was predominantly "white" culture.

The Indian Act had made Aboriginal peoples "wards of the state." In other words, they were not considered independent, self-governing nations. They were placed under the guardianship of the Canadian government. A Department of Indian Affairs determined the rules by which they would live. Many Aboriginal nations had been moved onto reserves, lands set aside for them. They were given housing, fishing, and hunting rights on reserves and rights to education. These rights were part of their status as "Indians" under the Indian Act, or part of their treaty rights. But the government considered this status as temporary. It expected Aboriginal peoples to eventually give up their status and become assimilated Canadian citizens.

Duncan Campbell Scott, Superintendent of Indian Affairs from 1913 to 1932, put the government's policy this way:

> *The happiest future for the Indian race is absorption into the general population, and this is the object of the policy of our government. The great forces of intermarriage and education will finally overcome the lingering traces of native custom and tradition.*

One way the government aimed to assimilate children of Aboriginal nations was through residential schools. Residential schools were funded by the government, but run by various churches. The first schools were established in the mid-1800s. By 1931, there were 80 residential schools operating across the country. At first, attendance was voluntary. But in 1920, all children of Aboriginal nations between the ages of 7 and 15 were required to go to the schools. These children were taken from their families and sent to live in the schools. They were not allowed to speak their own languages or to follow their traditional cultural and spiritual practices. Rules were strict and

FAST FORWARD

In 1998, the Canadian government made a formal apology to Aboriginal peoples for the treatment they received in residential schools. A total of $350 million was set aside to compensate the victims of the schools. But for many, it was too little too late. The schools had a devastating effect on Aboriginal cultures. Today Aboriginal communities are working to revive lost traditions, languages, and spiritual practices. They hope to heal the damage done during this difficult period in their history.

Thomas Moore attended a residential school in Regina. The photo on the left shows him as he entered the school. The photo on the right shows him after he had been in the school for a time.

1. Compare the photos. What changes do you notice in Thomas Moore's appearance, clothing, pose, and surroundings?
2. What effects do you think these changes would have on children of Aboriginal nations?
3. What do these photos show about the purpose of residential schools?

punishment was severe. Students were sometimes beaten for speaking their languages. Teachers were often poorly trained. Few children received a good education and many were ill-treated. The schools broke the connection between children, their parents, and their cultures. Many traditional Aboriginal ways were lost or forgotten. Residential schools were not phased out until the 1960s.

On reserves, Aboriginal peoples struggled with the loss of their traditional lifestyles. The government wanted Aboriginal peoples to become farmers. But land on reserves was often poor and agents sent to teach farming were not well trained. Aboriginal people who tried to live off reserves in Canadian towns and cities faced discrimination and prejudice. They were given few opportunities to find good jobs and make a living. Many faced poverty and despair.

In the 1920s and 1930s, Aboriginal peoples began to form organizations to fight for their rights. In 1919 Frederick Loft, a Mohawk veteran from World War I, organized the **League of Indians**. The League was the first attempt at a united voice for Aboriginal nations. After the war, the government wanted to enfranchise Aboriginal veterans. By enfranchisement, the veterans would have the right to vote, but only if they gave up their Aboriginal status. Many Aboriginal veterans refused. To them, giving up their status meant giving up their identities. Loft believed that Aboriginal

people should have the right to vote without giving up their status.

Edward Ahenakew, a Cree, helped to extend the League into western Canada. During the 1920s and 1930s, the League worked for better health and education programs, more financial aid, control over reserve lands, and the right to hunt, fish, and trap without government interference.

In British Columbia, organizations such as the Allied Tribes pushed for recognition of Aboriginal land rights. The government had never signed treaties in British Columbia for Aboriginal lands. Aboriginal nations believed they had rights to land as the original inhabitants. The Allied Tribes took their case to the Privy Council in London, but they were blocked by officials at the Canadian High Commission. At a meeting in 1927, Duncan Campbell Scott rejected the Allied Tribes' land claim saying it would "smash" Confederation.

In response to this political activism, the government made it illegal for Aboriginal nations to raise funds for land claims. It also restricted their right to form political organizations. Bans on traditional ceremonies such as the potlatch were more strictly enforced. Some West Coast Aboriginal people were thrown into jail for taking part in a secret potlatch ceremony. In 1884, the Canadian government had banned the potlatch. By the 1920s the police were seizing masks and other sacred objects.

When the Six Nations attempted to gain international recognition as an independent nation equal to other nations in the world, the government blocked the actions. An RCMP detachment was stationed on the Six Nations reserve in 1923. In 1924, the police expelled the traditional council and seized sacred wampum belts. By 1930, these early political movements by Aboriginal nations had been stifled by the Canadian government, at least temporarily.

Mohawk Fred Loft, founder of the League of Indians in 1919.

Immigration

Immigration became another major issue in the 1920s. During World War I, immigration had slowed to a trickle. After the war, the federal government once again began to promote the Canadian West as a land of opportunity. But Canada was looking primarily for British immigrants. British youth and British ex-service men were actively recruited for the development of agriculture in Canada. Non-British, or "foreigners," were shut out.

Why? During the war many Canadians had become more suspicious and less tolerant of "foreigners" (non-British) and ethnic minorities.. An intense dislike of foreigners is known as **xenophobia**. Changes to the Immigration Act in 1919 reflected feelings of xenophobia. It became compulsory for immigrants to pass an English literacy test. Canada was looking only for immigrants who could be easily assimilated into society. A large part

of the population and the Canadian government, whether it was Liberal or Conservative, did not want more non-British people in the country.

James Gray describes feelings in Winnipeg at this time:

None of the city's chartered banks, trust companies, or insurance companies would knowingly hire a Jew, and anyone with a Ukrainian or Polish name had almost no chance of employment except rough manual labour. The oil companies, mortgage companies, financial and stockbrokers, and most retail and mercantile companies except the Hudson's Bay Company discriminated against all non-Anglo Saxons ... There was a possible solution if they could beat the accent handicap. They could change their names .... Caoline Czarnecki overnight became Connie Kingston, Mike Drazenovick became Martin Drake, and Steve Dziatkewich became Edward Dawson.

Feelings of resentment against people from former enemy countries and pacifists also remained. In 1919 the government passed an Order-in-Council barring all Mennonites, Doukhobors, and Hutterites from coming to Canada. Just the year before in 1918, a number of Hutterites had moved into Manitoba and Alberta from the United States. The government had granted them exemption from military service, permission to settle communally, and the right to independent private schools. These were the same rights the Mennonites and Doukhobors had been granted when they came to Canada. But hostile public opinion pushed the government to overturn its policy. People complained about the special privileges given to the Hutterites. Many returned to the United States. Mennonites were not allowed into Canada again until 1922, and Doukhobors not until 1926.

In British Columbia, the discrimination was mostly directed against Asians. Immigrants from China, Japan, and India had over the years settled in British Columbia. They worked building railroads, mining, fishing, in sawmills, and in businesses. But all these groups faced racial discrimination. They were often paid lower wages than other workers for the same job, were excluded from most professions, and did not have the right to vote even if they were born in Canada. Many could find jobs only within their own communities.

On 1 July 1923, Canada passed the **Chinese Exclusion Act**. This Act banned all Chinese except students, merchants, and diplomats from entering Canada. From 1923 until the Act was repealed in 1947, only eight Chinese people were admitted to Canada. To Chinese Canadians, 1 July 1923 is known as "Humiliation Day."

Other policy changes followed. In 1927 officials in prairie cities complained to the federal government that many European immigrants were not staying on farms as intended. Instead, they were flocking into the cities and towns looking for jobs. This was adding to growing unemployment problems in cities. Under pressure, the federal government agreed to restrict European immigrants. In 1928, the government also limited to 150 the number of Japanese allowed to enter the country. That same year, the provincial Liberal government in British Columbia petitioned Ottawa to end all Asian immigration and to patriate, or send home, as many Chinese or Japanese people as possible. Applications were still accepted from British citizens who wanted to immigrate to Canada, however.

Economy on the Upswing

By the mid-1920s, the economy started to turn around in Canada. The after-effects of the war were wearing off. Business picked up as foreign investors gained new confidence in Canada. By the middle of the decade, the economy was on the upswing. Industries were growing again. The Maritime provinces benefited least, however. Growth in oil and hydroelectric industries only sent the region's coal production into further decline.

Wheat on the Prairies

The Prairie Provinces enjoyed huge wheat crops from 1925 to 1928. Europe was hungry again for Canadian wheat as economies began to recover, and the world price of wheat moved steadily upward. Farmers began to buy trucks and mechanical harvesters. They replaced their horses with tractors. Marquis wheat was now being grown successfully across the Prairies, including in more northerly regions.

Some farmers organized wheat pools and co-operatives. These co-operatives were businesses owned by farmers. Their goal was to loan money to other farmers at lower interest rates than eastern Canadian bankers charged. Farmers also hoped that the co-operatives would be able to find customers for their grain, cattle, and dairy products. In this way, they could skip the dealers by marketing their own products and receiving a greater share of the profits. By 1928, Canada had a record wheat crop and a major share of the world market. Grain elevators were filled to the top, and prices of wheat remained at an all-time high through the first half of 1929.

Marquis wheat was being grown across the Prairies by the 1920s. Farmers enjoyed bumper crops from 1925 to 1928.

Pulp and Paper

In the 1920s, the production of newsprint became Canada's largest industry after agriculture. From Nova Scotia to British Columbia, vast forests of softwoods such as spruce, pine, and poplar were used to make newsprint. Most of the American sources of pulpwood had been used up. Giant American newspapers provided a ready market for Canadian pulpwood. By 1929, exports of Canadian pulpwood equalled total pulp exports from the rest of the world. So much newsprint was shipped across the border that the Canadian government finally had to urge Canadian producers to save some of the supply for our own newspapers.

The boom did have a down side. Canada's forests were being destroyed. Canada's economy was also becoming more and more dependent on the export of raw materials. Thousands of Canadian workers were following the materials to the United States and finding jobs in American industries.

Hydroelectric Power

Quebec and Ontario saw a dramatic increase in the production of hydroelectric power in the 1920s. Niagara Falls had been used for power since 1895. Rivers such as the Saguenay and the St. Maurice were developed as resources for water power in the 1920s. More industries were using hydroelectric power instead of coal. People were demanding electricity for their homes, especially as new electrical appliances became available. Canada's output of hydroelectric power became the second largest in the world.

Oil and Gas

People called the 1920s the "Oil Age!" As more Canadians took to the road in automobiles, the demand for gasoline and oils soared. Oil and gas were also being used for heating and cooking. An all-out search for new sources of thin "black gold" was on.

In October 1924, oil speculators in Alberta struck it rich. The well they were drilling in the Turner Valley south of Calgary exploded into flames and burned out of control for several weeks. Eventually, the fire was brought under control and the well became a great moneymaker. It produced a million barrels of oil and large quantities of natural gas. The confidence and optimism of the Alberta oil speculators grew. They continued to pour investment dollars into exploration and development of oil resources.

Mining

Exciting new mining discoveries were made in the 1920s. Large deposits of copper were found in the Canadian Shield near Noranda along the Ontario-Quebec

A natural gas flare lights up an oil derrick in the Turner Valley of Alberta. The oil strike marked the beginning of a major oil and gas boom in the province.

ArtsTalk

Stormy Weather, Georgian Bay by Frederick Varley.

A Haida Village by Emily Carr.

The Group of Seven

At the turn of the century, art and especially painting was changing considerably. Some of the old rules were breaking down. Artists around the world were experimenting with new techniques and ways of expressing themselves. Impressionists, for example, wanted to express their feelings for their subjects through their art. They were less concerned about representing their subjects to look exactly as they were. Canadian artists, particularly members of the **Group of Seven**, were influenced by the Impressionists.

Members of the Group of Seven were also determined to create art that dealt with the Canadian experience. They took their inspiration from the Canadian landscape. The first exhibition of paintings by the Group was held in May 1920 at the Art Gallery of Ontario. The pictures portrayed Canada as a land of spectacular open spaces, rivers, lakes, and forests.

Lawren Harris was one member of the Group. In 1912, Harris saw an exhibition of paintings by J. E. H. MacDonald that changed his life. Not only was he impressed with the work, but through MacDonald he was introduced to other Toronto-based artists. Franklin Carmichael, Frank Johnston, Arthur Lismer, and Fred Varley became members of the Group. In 1913, MacDonald wrote to a Montreal friend, A. Y. Jackson, whose work they admired. Jackson soon moved to Toronto to join the other six. A. J. Casson joined the Group of Seven in 1926. By that time, Frank Johnston had left the Group.

Some of the most inspiring pictures were produced on sketching trips in northern Ontario, but members of the Group also illustrated other parts of Canada including areas of Quebec, Nova Scotia, and the Rocky Mountains. The painters used bright, strong colours to portray the forces of nature. Often the paint was applied thickly with vivid brush strokes.

They captured the vitality and ruggedness of the landscape by using simple, bold shapes.

Later, West Coast artist Emily Carr also exhibited with the Group. Many of her paintings took their inspiration from the life and culture of Aboriginal nations on the West Coast.

The Group of Seven were the first to create a Canadian national style in painting. Their influence and popularity spread steadily during their lifetimes. Today, Canadian art collectors eagerly seek out and pay high prices for works by the Group of Seven.

1. Stage an art exhibition. Find and display reproductions of paintings by the Group of Seven.
2. How do you think the Group of Seven's paintings created a national style or identity for Canadian art in the 1920s? To answer this question, describe the subjects of the paintings and the moods they create.
3. Make a list of the subjects that you would paint to depict Canada today.
4. Imagine a Group of Seven painting is the opening scene in a movie. Write a paragraph to describe what happens next.
5. Do some further research on one of the members of the Group of Seven. Create a small portfolio of the artist's work, including a short biography and summary of his or her accomplishments on the first page of the portfolio.

border and at Flin Flon in northern Manitoba. At Sudbury, Ontario, by 1929, Canada was producing almost 80 per cent of the world's supply of nickel. Kimberley, in British Columbia, produced lead and zinc in one of the world's largest mines. Many of these rich mining deposits were developed with American financing.

Foreign Investment

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the biggest foreign investors in Canada were the British. Bankers from Britain had invested in Canadian government bonds and railroads. They invested less in industrial enterprises because of the greater uncertainty of making a profit.

With the outbreak of World War I, British investment in Canada slowed down. But as British investment fell off, American investment increased. Americans preferred to put money into the rapidly expanding areas of the Canadian economy. These included mining, pulp and paper, and hydroelectric power.

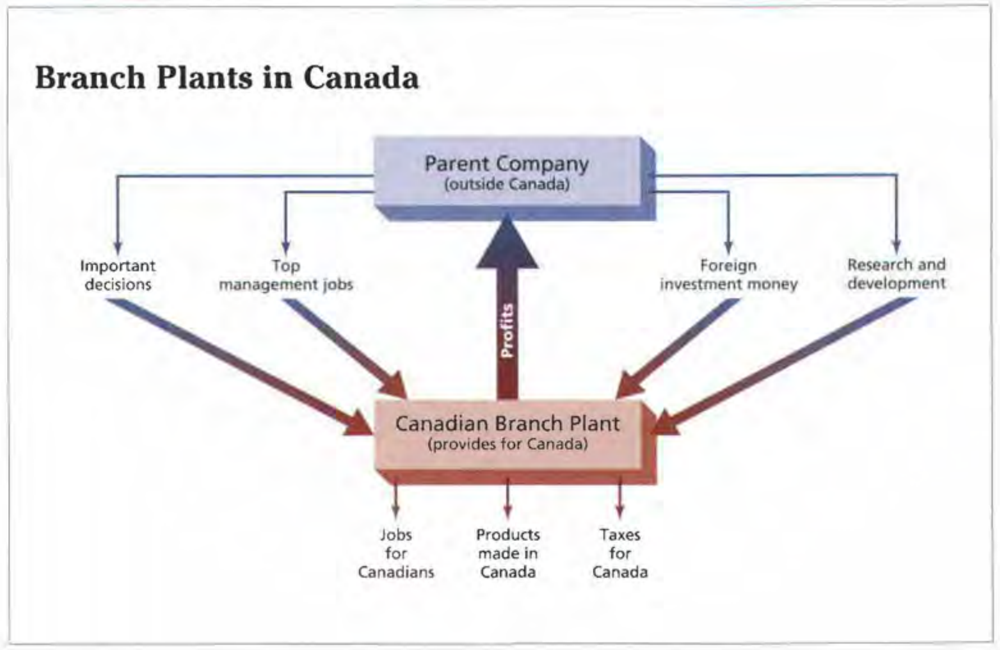
There was another difference between American and British investors. American investors took greater control over the industries. British investors usually left Canadian business people to run the businesses in their own way. Americans introduced the **branch plant** system. These branch industries were copies of the American parent company. They produced the same product as the parent company in the United States, but the products could be marked "Made in Canada." In this way, the parent company avoided paying high tariffs on imports at the border.

Canadian opinions about American investment differed widely. Some people believed the foreign capital was essential to develop industries and provide jobs in

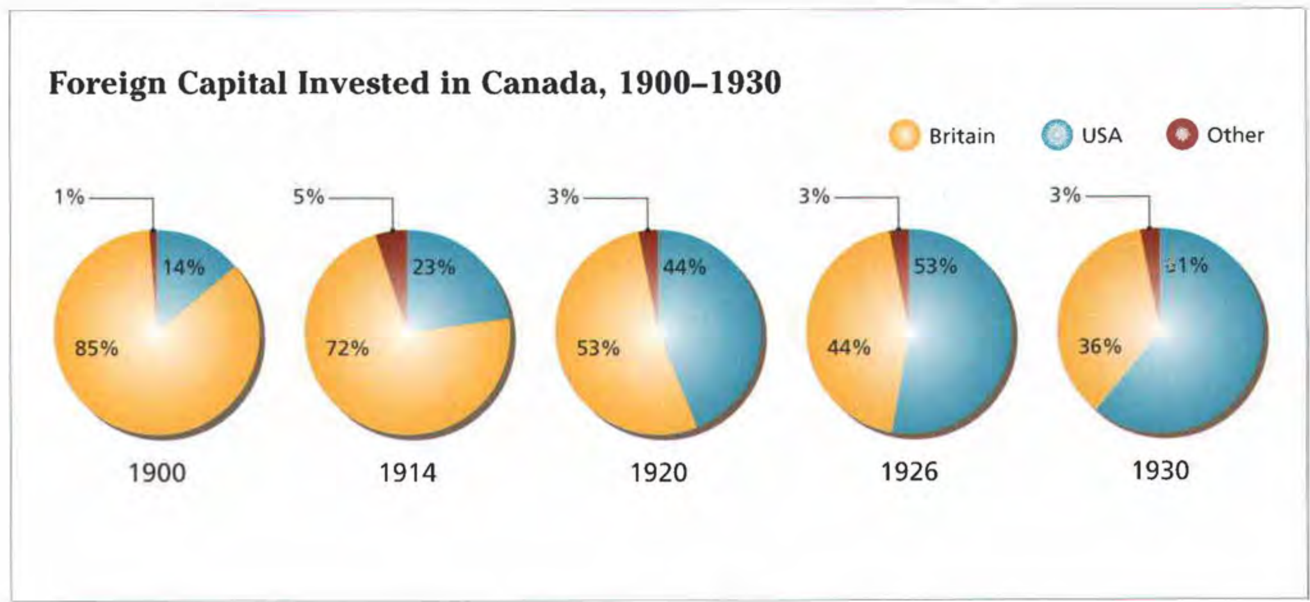
Canada. They felt American capital could develop Canada into an economic power.

Other Canadians were deeply concerned about the increasing Americanization of the Canadian economy. They argued that many important decisions concerning Canadian branches were made in the United States. Top management jobs frequently were held by Americans. Profits earned by the Canadian branch plants were often sent back to the United States. Some people feared a complete economic takeover of Canada by the United States. Some Canadians felt the government should be seriously looking for ways to curb American control of the economy.

Branch Plants in Canada



Foreign Capital Invested in Canada, 1900–1930



Historical Inquiry

Developing Skills: Decision-Making

You have probably come up against some tough decisions in your life and have more ahead of you. Can you join a club or sports team and still keep up your grades? What do you do if you can't find a summer job? What occupation or career do you want to pursue? Often, these decisions can be easier to work through if you follow a careful reasoning process.

Let's take an example. Suppose you have a friend who you know has been shoplifting. You want to help her.

Step 1

First, state the problem as a question. Remember it should begin with something like, "In what ways might ...?", or "How might ...", or "How should ...?" Try out a few problem statements and choose the one that is most relevant and meaningful.

Sample question: "How should we help our friend with her shoplifting problem?"

Step 2

Brainstorm alternative solutions to the problem. Try to generate as many ideas as you can.

Alternatives:

- Tell a teacher whom you trust and ask for advice
- Persuade your friend to see a counsellor
- Tell your friend's parents
- Talk with your friend about her problem
- Go with your friend to her parents or a counsellor
- Don't do anything

Step 3

You have no doubt produced more alternative solutions than you can deal with. You need some basis for making your decision, some way of working out what is important to you in this situation. In other words, you need criteria to judge by. List criteria that you think are important in evaluating your alternative solutions.

Criteria:

- The friendship is maintained
- Your friend gets help
- As few people as possible know about the problem

	Alternatives				
Criteria	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
	Get advice from a teacher	Talk with your friend	Tell her parents	Persuade her to see a counsellor	Go with her to a counsellor
Friendship is maintained	4	1	5	3	2
Friend gets help					
Friend feels supported					
Friend stays out of trouble					
As few people as possible know					

- Your friend stays out of trouble
- Your friend is not suspended from school
- Your friend feels supported
- The solution does not cost too much
- The solution is practical
- Your friend maintains her dignity

Step 4

Choose five of your most promising solutions and your five most important criteria. Now you need to evaluate your alternative solutions according to your criteria. Write your criteria and your alternatives in a matrix like the one on the previous page.

Step 5

Rank each of your alternatives from 1 through 5 on the first criterion. Score 5 for the best and 1 for the poorest solution. Next, rank each alternative on the second criterion in the same way. Continue until you have ranked all your alternative ideas according to your criteria. Make sure all the numbers from 1 to 5 are used in each column. Now total the numbers for each alternative. Which alternative scores highest?

Step 6

State your decision and make a plan for how you would carry it out.

Step 7

Evaluate your decision. If your plan was carried out, what would be the desired results.

Apply It!

Now you can use this model to help you decide what you would do about the Americanization of the Canadian economy. In groups, follow the steps in the decision-making process. Come to a group decision on this issue and present it to the class. Discuss the usefulness of the decision-making model.

Canada's Growing Autonomy

During the 1920s, Canada took some major steps toward full autonomy (complete control over its own affairs). Canada's path to autonomy was different from the one the United States had taken. In 1776, the United States gained its independence from Britain after a bloody revolution. Canada gained autonomy in a series of peaceful steps during and after World War I.

World War I had been a turning point. The country's major contribution in war supplies and soldiers, as well as its role in Allied victories, had given Canadians a new sense of national maturity. After the war, Canada had gained the right to sign the Treaty of Versailles on its own. Canada also joined the League of Nations as a separate nation from Britain, despite protests from the United States that British colonies would win extra votes for Britain. But Canada was still a Dominion within the British Empire. Britain still had the final say in Canada's foreign affairs. When Mackenzie King became prime minister in 1921, he was determined to push for Canadian autonomy. A number of events over the next 10 years provided him with the opportunities he needed.

1922 The Chanak Affair

Britain became embroiled in a dispute with Turkey at Chanak. Chanak was a small town on the strait that links the Aegean and Black seas. Turkey, which had been on the losing side in World War I, threatened to take control of the area. Britain sent in troops and ships, and asked Canada for military support if war developed.

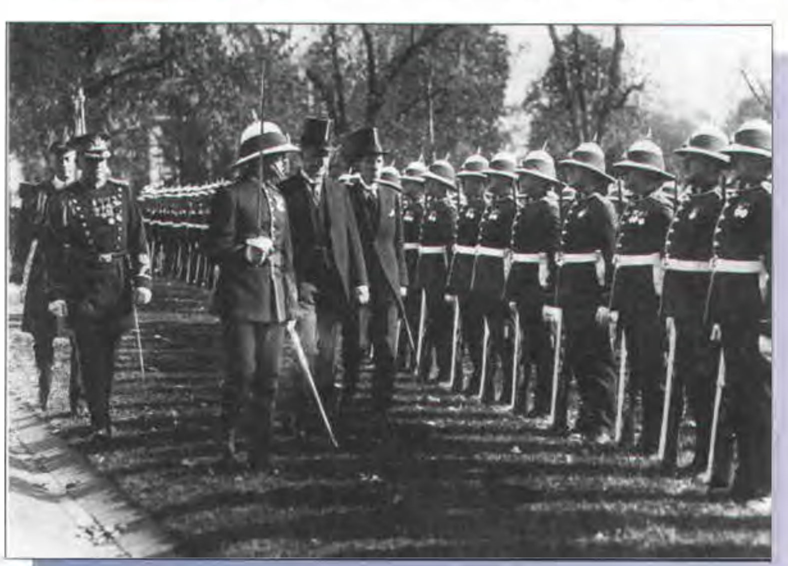
King was convinced that most Canadians did not want to get involved in another faraway European war.

Canadians, like the Americans in the 1920s and 1930s, were becoming more **isolationist**. They did not wish to become entangled in foreign conflicts. When Britain asked for military help at Chanak, King replied that only the Canadian Parliament could decide whether or not to send troops. This was a change from the situation in 1914 when World War I broke out. In 1914 when Britain declared war, Canada stood beside Britain without question and automatically joined the war. This time King made it clear that Canada would make its own foreign policy. Canada would not be dragged along on Britain's coattails. Britain's interests and Canada's interests in foreign policy were not always the same.

1923 The Halibut Treaty

Canada and the United States worked out an agreement on the fishing season for halibut in the north Pacific. The matter was of no direct concern to Britain. In the past, Britain always signed treaties on Canada's behalf. This time, King insisted that only representatives from Canada and the United States should sign the treaty. Eventually, Britain agreed. Canada won the right to sign treaties with a foreign country on its own.

Canada's first foreign diplomat, Vincent Massey, at a dedication of a war monument in Washington with American president Coolidge in 1927.



1926 The King-Byng Crisis

In 1926, Governor General Julian Byng refused to dissolve Parliament and call an election when King requested it. King accused Byng of ignoring the advice of the elected government. The Prime Minister argued that this was a breach of the principle of responsible government. At the next Imperial Conference, King was determined to clarify the role of the governor general.

1926 The Balfour Report

At the next Imperial Conference, King insisted that the delegates talk about the powers of the Dominions and the nature of their relationship to each other and to Britain. King was determined that Canadians should make their own decisions about foreign policy without British interference. At the conference, a new relationship was hammered out and summarized in the Balfour Report. Canada and the other Dominions were declared self-governing and independent nations. They would no longer be called "Dominions of the British Empire." However, they agreed to remain part of a new **Commonwealth of Nations**. Commonwealth nations were equal in status and united by their common allegiance to the British monarch. The Commonwealth would be a voluntary family of nations from around the world.

On the issue of the governor general's powers, Canada also won concessions. The governor general would be the representative of the Crown in Canada, not the agent of the British government. King demanded that, as a sovereign nation, the Canadian government should communicate directly with the British government. Canada would no longer talk to Britain through the governor general.

1927/28 New Foreign Embassies
In 1927, Canada opened its own embassy in the United States. Vincent Massey became Canada's first foreign diplomat. The following year, Canadian embassies were opened in France and Belgium.

1931 The Statute of Westminster
On 11 December 1931, the British Parliament passed the Statute of Westminster. The Statute made the recommendations of the Balfour Report law. Canada was made completely self-governing, bound by no laws other than its own. Britain could no longer make any laws for Canada.

In two areas Canada did not claim full independence. There was still one court higher than the Supreme Court of Canada —the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council in Britain. Also, because the provinces and the federal government could not agree on a method for amending the British North America Act, that power remained the responsibility of the British government. However, it was understood that this power would end when Canadians agreed on the powers to be held by the provincial and federal governments. Except for these two details, Canada had achieved complete autonomy by 1931.

Activities

Understand Facts and Concepts

1. Add these new terms to your *Factfile*.

Prohibition	xenophobia
One Big Union	Chinese Exclusion Act 1923
Winnipeg General Strike	Group of Seven
Bloody Saturday	branch plants
National Progressives party	isolationist
Pension Act 1927	Commonwealth of Nations
League of Indians	Statute of Westminster

2. a) Why was Prohibition introduced in Canada?
   b) What were its effects?
   c) Why was total Prohibition abandoned?

3. Choose one of the following. Outline the problems this group faced in the early 1920s. Then state three ways the group tried to deal with these problems. Share your answers.
   a) returning soldiers
   b) workers
   c) western farmers
   d) people in the Maritime provinces
   e) Aboriginal nations

4. Which immigrants did Canada encourage in the 1920s? Name one group that was shut out and explain why.

5. a) Give reasons why Americans invested in Canada in the 1920s.
   b) Correctly use the following terms in a sentence: branch plant, tariff barrier, parent company.

6. a) How did the Statute of Westminster grant Canada fuller autonomy?
   b) What ties did Canada still have with Britain?

Think and Communicate

7. Create a map entitled "The Economic Development of Canada in the 1920s." Devise symbols to represent the major industries that developed in the 1920s and place them in the appropriate regions on the map. Include short notes explaining how and why the industries developed in these regions.

8. On cue cards, write one or two sentences describing the importance of the following people in the 1920s. Using the cards, challenge a partner to correctly identify the people.

Frederick Banting	Emily Carr
Frederick Loft	Vincent Massey
J. S. Woodsworth	W. L. Mackenzie King
Lawren Harris	Julian Byng
Arthur Meighen	J. E. H. MacDonald

9. When the Winnipeg General Strike ended, both sides described the events in different ways. Work with a partner. One of you writes a news report describing the reasons and events of the strike from a striker's point of view. The other writes the report from the point of view of a member of the Citizens' Committee of One Thousand. Compare your reports. What are the differences? Explain.

10. Working with a partner, role play a dialogue between a supporter and an opponent of Canada's immigration policy in the 1920s. Prepare by outlining arguments you will use. Take a class survey to determine who had the stronger arguments. Discuss why.

11. There were several other famous strikes in Canada during the first half of the twentieth century: the Stratford Strike of 1933 in Ontario; the Oshawa Strike of 1937; the Asbestos Workers' Strike of 1949 in Quebec; the Ford-Windsor Strike of 1945 in Ontario; the Cape Breton Miners Strikes in the 1920s, to name just a few. Investigate one of these strikes. Answer the following questions in your report.
    a) Why were the workers striking?
    b) What were the major events of the strike?
    c) What position did the management or factory owners take?
    d) What was the attitude of the press and the public toward the strike?
    e) What was the outcome of the strike?
    f) What advances were made by the strike?

12. The historian A. M. Lower reviewed Canada's advance toward autonomy during the 1920s and 1930s. He wrote: "There is good ground for holding December 11, 1931, as Canada's Independence Day, for on that day she became a sovereign state." (Lower, *Colony to Nation*, p. 485). Explain why Professor Lower thought that the Statute of Westminster was so important for Canada.

Apply Your Knowledge

13. Research some important traditions of particular Aboriginal nations, such as the potlatch of West Coast peoples or the Sun Dance of the Siksika (Blackfoot) nation. Find out how these traditions are celebrated today. What effects would the banning of these traditions have had on the people in the 1920s? Think of an important tradition or celebration in your culture and imagine it were banned to help you understand the effects.

14. George Meany was one of the most powerful leaders in North America's labour movement. He once said that "strikes no longer make any sense and we should eliminate them." Debate Meany's statement.

Get to the Source

15. Students in the Kamloops Indian Residential School in British Columbia described their experiences.

Before I left [home], I was full of confidence; I could do everything that was needed to be done at home .... But when I arrived here all that left me. I felt so helpless. The Shuswap language was no use to me ... the supervisors couldn't understand.

I was punished quite a bit because I spoke my language ... I was put in a corner and punished and sometimes, I was just given bread and water ....

Source: Celia Haig-Brown, *Resistance and Renewal: Surviving the Indian Residential School* (Vancouver: Tillacum Library, 1988).

a) How did this student in the residential school feel? Why?
b) What effects do these quotations suggest the residential schools had on the children?