

# 5

## Canada and the Second World War

### GUIDING QUESTIONS

#### Society & Identity

- What effect did the war have on the role of women?
- What impact did conscription have on Canadian unity?
- What effect did the War Measures Act have on the legal rights of Canadians?

#### Politics & Government

- Why were totalitarian leaders able to gain power in Europe and Asia?

#### Autonomy & World Presence

- How did the war raise awareness of human rights issues?
- How did Canada get involved in the Second World War?
- What was the war's impact on the home front?
- Describe Canada's military role in the Second World War.
- What factors contributed to Canada's emerging autonomy?



### TIMELINE

1939

Germany invades Poland  
Britain and France  
declare war on Germany  
Canada declares war on  
Germany

1940

Germany invades Denmark and Norway  
Germany invades the Netherlands,  
Belgium, Luxembourg, and France  
Evacuation of Dunkirk  
National Resources Mobilization Act  
France surrenders to Germany  
The Battle of Britain

1940–1943

North African Campaign

1940–1944

Battle of the Atlantic

1941

Germany invades the Soviet Union  
Japan bombs Pearl Harbor  
U.S. declares war on Japan  
Battle of Hong Kong  
China officially declares war on  
Japan

## CHAPTER FOCUS QUESTION

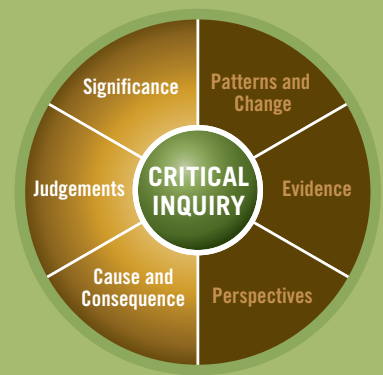
How did the Second World War impact Canada socially, politically, and economically?

On the Sunday of Labour Day weekend in 1939, Canadians gathered around their radios to hear King George VI address the rumours of war that had been heard across the country.

*For the second time in the lives of most of us we are at war. Over and over again we have tried to find a peaceful way out of the differences between ourselves and those who are now our enemies. But it has been in vain. We have been forced into a conflict. For we are called, with our allies, to meet the challenge of a principle which, if it were to prevail, would be fatal to any civilised order in the world.*

*—Historical Royal Speeches and Writings*

Once again, the world was at war. What would war mean to Canadians? How was this war different from the First World War? How was Canada different as a nation at the beginning of the Second World War? In this chapter, you will learn about the events of the Second World War and the contributions made by hundreds of thousands of Canadians during its course.



### KEY TERMS

totalitarian state  
Nazis  
Holocaust  
policy of appeasement  
British Commonwealth Air Training Plan (BCATP)  
total war  
Allies  
Axis  
Dunkirk  
Battle of Britain  
Pearl Harbor  
Battle of Hong Kong  
Battle of the Atlantic  
Bomber Command  
Dieppe Raid  
Italian Campaign  
D-Day  
Liberation of the Netherlands  
genocide  
enemy aliens  
arsenal of democracy

1942

Internment of Japanese Canadians  
Canadians vote in support of conscription  
Allied raid on French port of Dieppe

1943

Allies begin bombing German cities  
Sicily and mainland Italy invaded  
Canadians win Battle of Ortona, Italy  
Axis forces defeated in Stalingrad

1944

D-Day

1945

The Netherlands liberated  
Germany surrenders  
Bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan  
Japan surrenders; war ends

- Why were totalitarian leaders able to gain power in Europe and Asia?

## KEY TERMS

**dictator** a ruler with unrestricted power, without any democratic restrictions

**totalitarian state** a dictatorship in which the government uses intimidation, violence, and propaganda to rule all aspects of the social and political life of its citizens

**five-year plans** Stalin's plans for economic development in the Soviet Union over five years

**fascist** a form of authoritarian government that is totalitarian and nationalistic

**Weimar Republic** the democratic government in Germany after the First World War

**Nazis** members of the National Socialist German Workers' Party; the Nazis were extreme nationalists who took power in 1933 and controlled every aspect of German life through a police state

## The Rise of Totalitarianism

As you learned in Chapter 4, the economic crisis of the 1930s led to social and political upheaval in countries around the world. During the Depression era, several charismatic leaders promised solutions to their citizens' woes, but soon emerged as powerful **dictators**.

The term *totalitarian* describes political philosophies that put the state above all else, including the rights of the individual. In a **totalitarian state**, the government has total control over all aspects of politics and society. It uses violence and intimidation to gain power, and then relies on its police force to maintain its control. Usually, the ruling party bans other political parties and does not tolerate any opposing ideologies. Propaganda and censorship reinforce the party message and control society. The government controls the economy and all the resources of the state, and uses these to further its goals. The state has one leader who has absolute power. In the 1930s, different forms of totalitarian states arose in Germany, Italy, Spain, the Soviet Union and, in a different way, Japan.

### Stalin's Soviet Union

By 1917, the Communists had taken control of Russia. In 1924, Joseph Stalin became the leader of the Communist Party in what was now the Soviet Union. By 1928, he had gained total control of the Soviet Union and began

to implement a series of **five-year plans** to industrialize the country and give the government complete control of the economy. The first step of Stalin's plan was to collectivize agriculture, which meant seizing all privately owned land. Next he created industrial projects, including building coal and steel mills, roads, and railways. Stalin focused on building industry and the military, practically ignoring the needs of the people. The government controlled all media and imposed strict censorship and travel restrictions on everyone. The secret police arrested anyone deemed to be a threat, and the government controlled the courts. During the Great Purge of the late 1930s, Stalin eliminated anyone he believed opposed the communist government or his power. Millions of people were convicted of crimes against the state and hundreds of thousands were executed. Many more Soviet people died of exhaustion or starvation in Gulags, labour camps that Stalin established in Siberia.



**FIGURE 5-1** This statue of Joseph Stalin was unveiled in 1955 in Prague, Czech Republic. The monument was later destroyed by the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia in an effort to eliminate Stalin's influence and political system.

**Gathering Evidence** What does Stalin's statue reveal about his personality and his views on leadership?

## Mussolini's Italy

After the First World War, Italy suffered from chaotic economic and political conditions. Benito Mussolini took advantage of the situation. He established the **Fascist Party**, which emphasized nationalism and challenged Italy's democratic government. His new political movement found support in the government and with the middle class. Mussolini created the Blackshirts, gangs of fascists who intimidated their opponents by attacking communists and socialists in the streets. Their favourite tactic was forcing bottles of castor oil, a laxative, down a victim's throat. Promising to revitalize Italy and to restore Italian pride, the increasingly militaristic National Fascist Party won 35 seats in the election of 1921. Although the Fascists were anti-communist, Mussolini used the totalitarian model of the Soviet Union as a blueprint for his own plans to rule Italy. In 1922, Mussolini led the March on Rome: he gathered 26 000 Blackshirts outside the city and demanded that the government be turned over to him. Soon after taking power, Mussolini—who was called *Il Duce* (“the leader”)—brought all communications, industry, agriculture, and labour under fascist control and turned Italy into a totalitarian state.



**FIGURE 5–2** Fascist leader Mussolini (seen on left) and his Blackshirts march in Rome

## Fascist Germany

Like Italy, Germany was politically and economically unstable at the end of the First World War. The kaiser had abdicated and a democratic government, the **Weimar Republic**, was set up. But the German people distrusted the government since it had signed the Treaty of Versailles, which had added to the country's economic struggles after the war. Many Germans wanted a leader who could solve the country's problems.

### *Hitler Comes to Power*

In 1920, Adolf Hitler joined the National Socialist German Workers' Party, also known as the **Nazis**, and by 1921 he was the leader of the party. The Nazis gathered support throughout the 1920s by criticizing the Weimar Republic and the humiliating terms of the Treaty of Versailles. Hitler persuaded Germans that he could save the country from the Depression and make it a great nation again. In 1932, the Nazis became the largest party in the *Reichstag*, the German parliament, and in 1933 Hitler became chancellor of Germany.

Once in power, Hitler—called *Führer* (“the leader”)—ruled his country through intimidation and fear. He banned all political parties other than the Nazis and used the Gestapo, a secret police, to enforce his rule. Hitler's government defied the terms of the Treaty of Versailles by stopping all reparation payments and rebuilding Germany's military. It also subsidized farmers and poured money into public projects. To the delight of the German people, unemployment went down and the economy improved.

## KEY TERMS

**Kristallnacht** a coordinated attack against Jewish people and their property carried out by Nazis in Germany on November 9, 1938

**persecution** to oppress or ill-treat because of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or beliefs

**Holocaust** the Nazi imprisonment and murder of 6 million Jewish people and 5 million other peoples during the Second World War



**FIGURE 5-3** Under the Nazi regime, the Jewish Star of David was to be worn by all Jewish people for easy identification.

## The “Master Race”

The Nazi Party believed that the German people were a “master race” of Aryans, a supposedly “pure” race of northern Europeans. Non-Aryans, including Jewish people, Roma (“Gypsies”), and Slavs, were considered inferior. People with mental or physical disabilities were despised because they destroyed the image of the master race. Communists and homosexuals were also targeted as undesirables. The Nazis banned non-Aryans and undesirables from teaching or attending schools and universities, holding government office, or writing books. As early as 1933, the Nazis set up concentration camps to isolate these people from German society.

Hitler’s regime of hatred targeted Jewish people in particular. During his rule, he passed the Nuremberg Laws, which forced Jewish people to wear the Star of David at all times, banned marriages between Jews and Aryans, and made it illegal for Jewish people to be lawyers or doctors. The Nazi government also encouraged violence against Jewish people. On the night of November 9, 1938, Nazi mobs attacked Jewish homes, businesses, and synagogues across Germany. Many Jewish people were terrorized, beaten, and imprisoned for no reason. The attack was called *Kristallnacht* or “Crystal Night” because sidewalks in many parts of the country were covered with broken glass from windows. Their **persecution** escalated even more after that night. More laws were introduced which made it illegal for them to own businesses and restricted their travel. Eventually, Hitler and Heinrich Himmler, the head of Hitler’s elite police unit, instituted the “Final Solution” and the **Holocaust**, which you will learn about later in this chapter.



**FIGURE 5-4** The Nazis were brilliant propagandists, presenting selected information and using symbolism and pageantry to appeal to the emotions of the public.

## Fascism in Spain

As in Germany and Italy, Spain struggled with economic and political strife after the First World War. During the Depression, Spain's democratic government was unable to prevent widespread poverty, and people became more and more dissatisfied. Led by General Francisco Franco, fascist rebels—called Nationalists—tried to overthrow the elected socialist government in 1936. This rebellion resulted in a brutal civil war that lasted three years. Although democratic governments around the world chose not to get involved in the conflict, socialist supporters from several countries went to Spain to join in the fight against Franco and fascism. More than 1200 Canadian volunteers, called the Mackenzie-Papineau Battalion (the Mac Paps), fought in the Spanish Civil War. They went to Spain even though the Canadian government passed a law that made it illegal for them to fight in foreign wars. One of the volunteers was Dr. Norman Bethune, a Canadian surgeon and political activist (see Chapter 4).

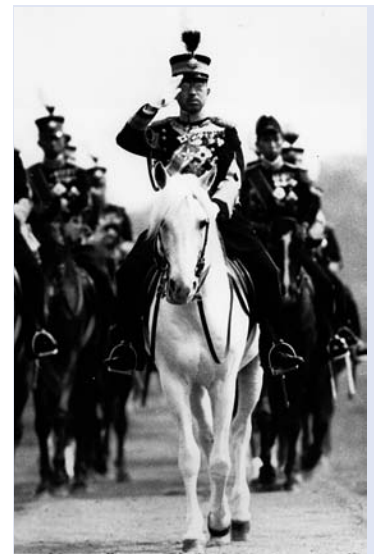
Despite their efforts, Franco—with military support from Hitler and Mussolini—won the war and became the ruler of Spain in 1939. Once in control, Franco proved to be a brutal totalitarian dictator who ruled by intimidation and violence. Thousands of people were imprisoned in concentration camps or executed, and many others were used as forced labour to build railways and dig canals. Franco ruled Spain until he died in 1975.

## Totalitarianism in Japan

Japan also became a totalitarian state in the 1930s, but there were important differences between Japan and the fascist states in Europe. Japan had all the elements of a totalitarian state. Many people had strong nationalist sentiments and notions of racial superiority. Japan had a government loyal to a single leader, the emperor. The country's parliament, called the Diet, had little power because government ministers answered only to the emperor. Much of the power rested with the military and the *Zaibatsu*, large family-run corporations, such as Mitsubishi. These groups took advantage of the political and economic problems of the Depression to gain control of the country. Influenced by European fascism, Japan took on many of its characteristics, including a Gestapo-like police force, the *Kempeitai*, which had the power to arrest, torture, or kill anyone thought to be an enemy of the state. Militarists took control of Japan in the 1930s and began strengthening the empire by conquering other countries and seizing their resources.



**FIGURE 5-5** Francisco Franco ruled Spain for 36 years.



**FIGURE 5-6** Hirohito, the 124th emperor of Japan, reigned from 1926 until his death in 1989.

### PRACTICE QUESTIONS

1. In your own words, explain the term *totalitarian*.
2. **Cause and Consequence** What common conditions led to totalitarianism in Italy, Germany, and Spain?
3. List the ways in which Stalin, Mussolini, and Hitler each made his country a totalitarian dictatorship.
4. How did the Nazis try to accomplish their goal of a “master race” in Europe?
5. What was Canada's involvement in the Spanish Civil War?
6. How were totalitarian leaders able to gain power in Europe and Asia?

## KEY TERMS

**policy of appeasement** giving in to an aggressor's demands in the hopes that no more demands will be made

**non-aggression pact** an agreement between two countries not to attack each other

# Causes of the Second World War

As you have read, different forms of totalitarianism took hold in Europe, the Soviet Union, and Japan during the 1930s. Like the colonialist leaders of pre-First World War empires, the totalitarian leaders of these states had nationalistic ambitions to expand their territory and resources. Germany and Italy felt that they had been cheated by treaties at the end of the First World War and wanted to right these wrongs. Japan wanted access to more resources to help support its industries. In other countries, leaders were conscious of the sacrifices their citizens had made during the last war and wanted to avoid another conflict at all costs. All these factors contributed to the Second World War.

## Hitler's Imperialistic Ambitions

When Hitler came to power in 1933, he intended to make Germany a powerful nation again. Part of his plan involved uniting the “master race” of Germanic people and taking back territory that he believed belonged to Germany. In the years leading up to the Second World War, Hitler put his plan into action.

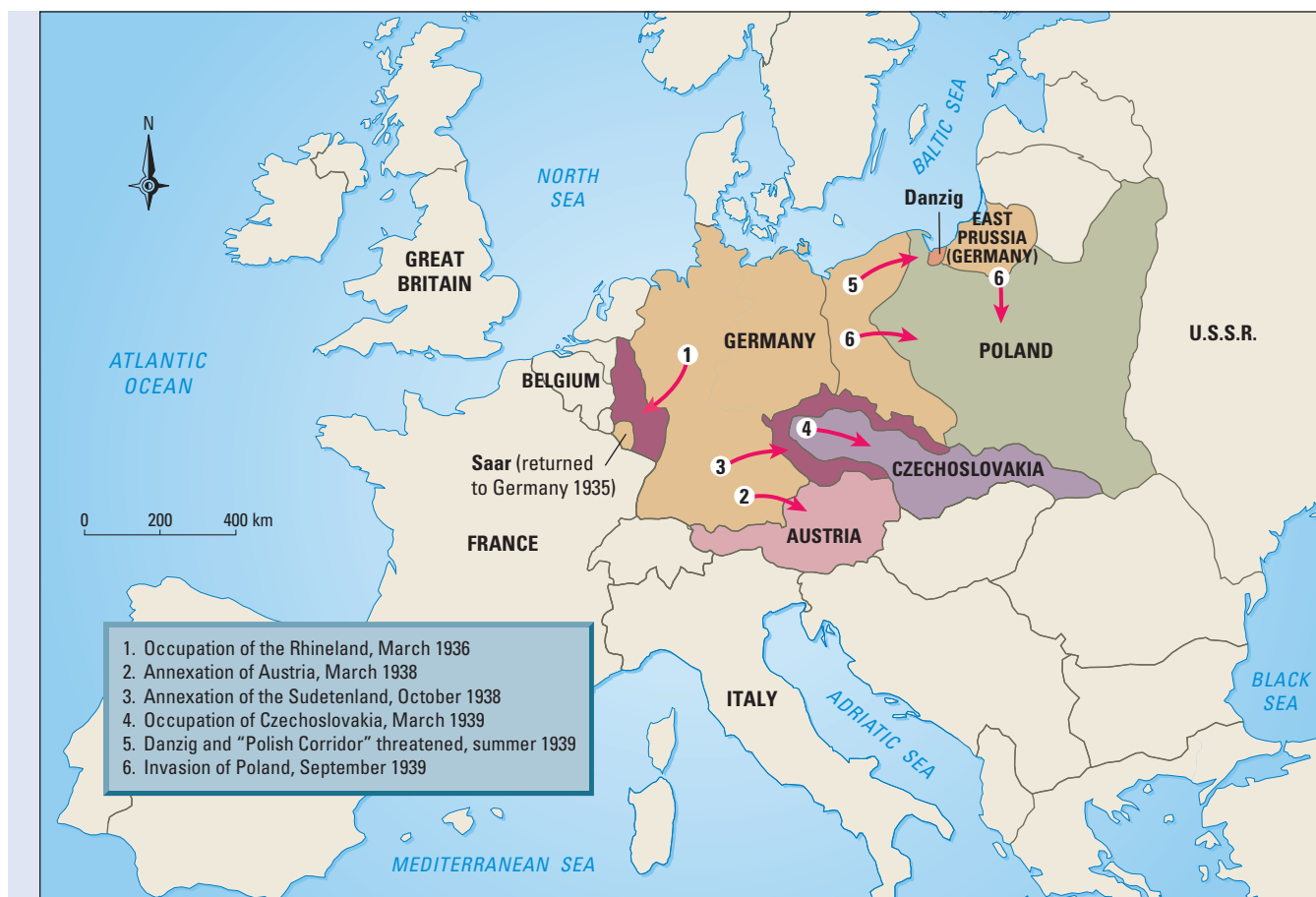


FIGURE 5-7 Hitler's aggression in Europe, 1936–1939

**Thinking Critically** Which countries might have felt threatened by Germany's actions? Why? Italy, also ruled by a fascist government at the time, was Germany's ally. What difference might this alliance have made to the countries of Europe?

## *Appeasing Hitler*

In 1936, Hitler ordered his troops into the Rhineland, an area along Germany's western border that had been demilitarized and put under French protection by the Treaty of Versailles. Although this was a violation of the treaty, Britain and France chose not to act at the time. Two years later, Germany annexed, or took over, Austria. Again, this was another breach of the treaty, but Britain and France chose not to act. They were willing to make concessions to maintain peace. However, their weakness made Hitler bolder.

Next, Hitler set his sights on the Sudetenland, a territory populated by ethnic Germans given to Czechoslovakia at the Paris Peace Conference. When Hitler threatened to invade this territory, British and French leaders met with him in Munich to try to negotiate. In exchange for the Sudetenland, Hitler promised not to invade the rest of Czechoslovakia. British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain announced to the world that the Munich Agreement and their **policy of appeasement** would secure “peace for our time.” Only six months later, in March 1939, Hitler broke his promise and Germany invaded Czechoslovakia. Hitler's actions made it clear that the policy of appeasement had failed. Another war in Europe was looming.

## *The Nazi–Soviet Non-aggression Pact*

After taking over Czechoslovakia, Hitler planned to unite East Prussia with the rest of Germany. This territory had been separated from Germany when the map of Europe was redrawn at the Paris Peace Conference, giving Poland a strip of land so it had access to the Baltic Sea and making Danzig an independent state under the protection of the League of Nations. Before Hitler could act, he had a problem to solve. If Germany invaded Poland, the Soviet Union would likely regard Germany's actions as a threat to its own security. In August 1939, Hitler stunned the world by signing a **non-aggression pact** with Joseph Stalin, leader of the Soviet Union, even though the Nazis hated communists and vice versa. Both countries pledged not to fight each other if one of them went to war, and they agreed to divide Poland between them. Germany was now free to make its move.

On September 1, 1939, German troops invaded Poland, and bitter fighting followed. This time, Britain and France responded immediately. They ordered Germany out of Poland by September 3, 1939. When Germany ignored this deadline, Britain and France declared war.

## **Failure of the League of Nations**

While the policy of appeasement failed to prevent German aggression, the League of Nations was not effective in preventing nationalistic aggression in other parts of the world. The League was supposed to help maintain world peace, but it was too weak and did not have a military to enforce its decisions. The League's ineffectiveness in the following two military conflicts helped pave the road to war.



## Japan Invades Manchuria

As part of its plans to expand its territory and influence, Japan invaded the Chinese province of Manchuria in 1931. The Chinese government appealed to the League of Nations to take action against Japan. The League condemned Japan's action and tried to negotiate. Japan merely withdrew from the League and continued with its policy of aggression. In 1937, it expanded its invasion of China and the two countries were at war.

## Italy Invades Abyssinia

Like Hitler in Germany, Mussolini wanted to expand Italy's territory and power. Still bitter that Italy had not received more land in Europe after the First World War, Mussolini wanted to expand Italy's resources by adding to its African colonies. In the spring of 1935, Italy attacked Abyssinia (now Ethiopia). Abyssinia had never been colonized and was one of the few independent African nations. It fought hard against the Italian invasion and won support around the world. The League of Nations immediately voted to impose trade sanctions against Italy. But this action was not very effective because oil, a crucial import for Italy, was not included in the sanctions. At this point, the League still hoped for Italy's support if there was a new war with Germany.

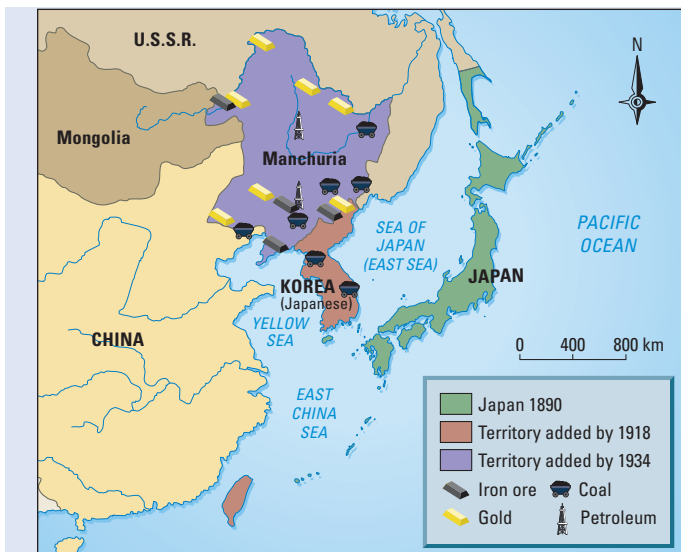


FIGURE 5-8 Japan's aggression by 1934

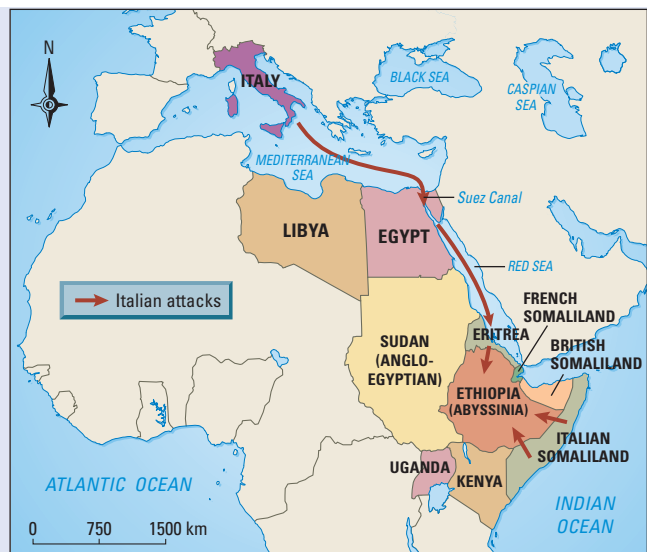


FIGURE 5-9 Route of Italians invading Ethiopia (Abyssinia), 1935

## PRACTICE QUESTIONS

- Cause and Consequence** Use a graphic organizer to show the causes of the Second World War (similar to the one on page 82 in Chapter 3). Explain the effect and result for each cause of the war.
- Explain why appeasement was used by Britain and France toward Germany.
- Why was the non-aggression pact important to both Germany and the U.S.S.R.?
- Why was the League of Nations unable to stop the aggression of Japan and Italy? How did this failure encourage Hitler?

# Canada's Response to the Threat of War

As events escalated in Europe, with Hitler's aggressive policies and the civil war in Spain, many Canadians asked why lives should be risked in another European war when Canada itself was not threatened.

## Canada's Policy of Isolationism

Throughout the events of the 1930s, Canada practised **isolationism**, keeping out of affairs outside its borders. Prime Minister William Lyon Mackenzie King did not want Canada to become involved in another world conflict and had hoped that Britain's policy of appeasement toward Hitler would be successful. The First World War had deeply divided Canada on the issue of conscription, and Canadians had made many sacrifices in that overseas conflict. King knew that if he imposed conscription in this war, he and the Liberal Party would lose support in Québec. Besides, Canada was just starting to come out of the dark years of the Depression. The economy was slowly improving and King did not want the country plunged back into debt.

## Canada's Response to Jewish Refugees

While King knew that the Nazis were tyrannizing people, he maintained Canada's isolationist policy. Like King, many Canadians believed that what was happening in Germany was a domestic issue that should not affect them. This attitude influenced Canada's immigration policies and attitudes toward Jewish **refugees** fleeing persecution in Europe.

### KEY TERMS

**isolationism** the policy of remaining apart from the affairs of other countries

**refugee** a person displaced from his or her home and territory by war and other acts of aggression

*[N]othing is to be gained by creating an internal problem in an effort to meet an international one.... We... must seek to keep this part of the Continent free from unrest.*

*—Diary of Mackenzie King,  
Tuesday, March 29, 1938*



**FIGURE 5–10** After meeting Hitler in Germany, Mackenzie King (centre) wrote the following in his diary on June 29, 1937: “[Hitler] smiled very pleasantly and indeed had a sort of appealing and affectionate look in his eyes. My sizing up of the man as I sat and talked with him was that he is really one who truly loves his fellow-men....”

### WEB LINK

Read more from King's diary on the Pearson Web site.

## KEY TERMS

**anti-Semitism** discrimination or hostility toward Jewish people

**deportation** the act of sending someone back to his or her native land

## Anti-Semitism in Canada

Some Canadians supported the dictators who had seized power in Europe or approved of Hitler's policies and hatred of Jewish people. In Québec, some nationalists called for an independent Québec with a pure French-Canadian population. **Anti-Semitism** in Canada during the 1930s was not restricted to extremists. It was shared by many in mainstream society, and was reflected in newspapers and in general conversation.

Anti-Semitism and isolationism influenced Canada's immigration policies in the 1930s. After *Kristallnacht* in November 1938, Liberal Cabinet Minister Thomas Crerar recommended that 10 000 Jewish people be allowed to immigrate to Canada, but the Cabinet refused his suggestion.

Jewish refugees were seen as a burden on the state. As you read in Chapter 4, due to rising unemployment, Canada was reluctant to accept immigrants other than those from Britain or the United States who could support themselves. The government restricted immigration in the 1930s. As a result, the number of immigrants to Canada fell from 166 783 in 1928 to 14 382 in 1933. The number of **deportations** also increased to nearly 30 000 by 1936.

## The SS St. Louis

Canada's immigration policy and refusal to accept Jewish refugees had tragic consequences in 1939. The S.S. *St. Louis* left Hamburg, Germany, in May with 907 Jewish passengers desperately trying to escape persecution. The *St. Louis* was denied entry in Cuba, South America, and the United States. Canada was the passengers' last hope. The Canadian government refused to let the *St. Louis* dock in any port because the passengers did not qualify for entry as immigrants. The ship was forced to return to Europe. Tragically, many of the people aboard later died in concentration camps during the Holocaust.



**FIGURE 5-11** Passengers aboard the S.S. *St. Louis* looked to the Canadian government to accept them as refugees.

**Using Evidence** At what stage of the journey was this photograph probably taken? Explain.

## Canadians Speak Out

Many Canadians did not share the government's anti-Semitic views. Cairine Wilson, Canada's first female Senator and chair of the Canadian National Committee on Refugees, spoke out against the banning of Jewish refugees from Canada. Prime Minister Mackenzie King was urged to offer the Jewish refugees sanctuary. In 1938, there were more than 150 000 Jewish people living in Canada. Rallies were held in many parts of the country in support of a more humane immigration policy. When the S.S. *St. Louis* was turned away and its passengers sent back to Nazi Germany, newspaper editorials also lashed out at the government:

*This country still has the bars up and the refugee who gets into Canada has to pass some mighty stiff obstacles—deliberately placed there by the government.... Immigration bars... are undesirable.... We are deliberately keeping out of this country [people] and money who would greatly add to our productive revenues. We are cutting off our nose to spite our face.*

—Winnipeg Free Press, July 19, 1939

Despite these objections, Canada still admitted only about 5000 Jewish refugees between 1933 and 1945.

- How did the war raise awareness of human rights issues?



**FIGURE 5-12** This sign in Québec reflects the anti-Semitism found in many parts of Canada during this time. Discrimination took many forms, including restricting admittance to certain faculties at universities and membership in clubs.

## FAST FORWARD

### Changing Attitudes

The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, enacted in 1982, guarantees that every Canadian has the right to live “without discrimination based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex,

age, or mental or physical disability.” Due in large part to the Charter, discrimination of any form is unacceptable in Canada today. You will read more about the Charter in Chapter 10.

## PRACTICE QUESTIONS

1. Why were many Canadians isolationist in the 1930s?
2. What reasons were given for Canada's admitting so few Jewish refugees fleeing persecution in Europe? Do you think that official reasons were the real reasons? Explain.
3. How do you think Prime Minister Mackenzie King could form such a misguided opinion of Adolf Hitler?
4. Why were the Jewish refugees so desperate to leave Germany? Provide specific information from this chapter.
5. Why do you think discrimination like this was considered acceptable by many people in the 1930s and is not acceptable today?
6. **Judgements** To what extent should Canadians be responsible for trying to stop human rights abuses in other countries?

- How did Canada get involved in the Second World War?

## KEY TERM

**British Commonwealth Air Training Plan (BCATP)** a program to train pilots and aircrew during the Second World War; it produced half of all Commonwealth aircrew and is the largest air training program in history

# Canada Declares War

On September 1, 1939, Germany invaded Poland. Two days later, Britain and France declared war on Germany. In the First World War, when Britain declared war on Germany, Canada was automatically at war. But, in 1939, Canada was an autonomous country with no such obligation. Prime Minister Mackenzie King knew that once Britain became involved in such a major conflict, Canada would almost certainly support it, but the decision to join the war had to be a Canadian one, decided by Canada's Parliament.

## Parliament Votes for War

On September 8, King called a special session of Parliament to decide whether Canada would join the war. He gave a strong speech in favour of declaring war. His Minister of Justice, Ernest Lapointe from Québec, also spoke in favour of the war. But Lapointe spoke bluntly about what conscription would do to Liberal supporters in Québec: "I am authorized by my colleagues in the Cabinet from Québec, to say that we will never agree to conscription and will never be members or supporters of a government that will try to enforce it." This statement helped win support for the war in Québec and convinced voters that Canada's involvement in the war was necessary. Conscious of how conscription had divided the country during the First World War, King assured Parliament, and Québec, that "So long as this government may be in power, no such measure [conscription] shall be enacted."

King's position on joining the war was supported by the opposition Conservative Party. Only J.S. Woodsworth, leader of the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation (CCF), argued against going to war. He believed that nothing could be settled by war and tried to convince the government that Canada should remain neutral. But Woodsworth did not find support for his pacifist position, and Parliament voted in favour of going to war. On September 10, 1939, Canada declared war on Germany.



**FIGURE 5-13** Troops departing from Winnipeg

**Using Evidence** Carefully examine this photograph. How do you think most Canadians felt about going to war? Consider the feelings of those who were staying home as well as those who were going to fight.

## Mobilizing Canada's Resources

Despite its willingness to join the war, Canada was not prepared for it. Its armed forces were small and unfit for combat. The Canadian army had only 4300 troops, a few light tanks, and no modern artillery. The air force and the navy were small with outdated equipment.

Unlike the First World War, there were no crowds cheering on the streets when Canada declared war in 1939. Many Canadians vividly remembered the horrors of the last world conflict. Still, Canada had no trouble finding volunteers. In September 1939, more than 58 000 people volunteered for service. The Canadian army initially rejected African-Canadian volunteers because of racist attitudes. As the war continued, however, African Canadians were encouraged to join the regular army and the officer corps. As in the First World War, Aboriginal peoples volunteered at a higher percentage of their population than any other group in Canada. Among them was Thomas Prince, a Brokenhead Ojibway from Manitoba. Prince became a sergeant and served in Italy and France as part of an elite unit. One of Canada's most decorated soldiers, he received ten medals, including the Military Medal for bravery given to him by King George VI.

Many people still felt strong ties to Britain and volunteered from a sense of duty. Others were driven by a sense of new-found national pride. After years of economic hardship, some Canadians were attracted by the lure of a steady income. The first Canadian troops sailed from Halifax on December 10, 1939.

## The British Commonwealth Air Training Plan

Mackenzie King hoped that Canada's contribution to the war effort would be mostly supplies and training, rather than troops, so that he could avoid the issue of conscription. In December 1939, Canada agreed to host and run the **British Commonwealth Air Training Plan (BCATP)**. Pilots and other flight personnel from all over the Commonwealth came to Canada to train with British instructors. Airfields were built on the Prairies and in other locations near small towns and villages. Old aircraft were refitted and returned to service for training purposes. The program was a major Canadian contribution to the war effort. The BCATP trained more than 130 000 pilots, navigators, flight engineers, and ground crew. The total cost was more than \$2.2 billion, of which Canada paid more than 70 percent. Contrary to King's hopes, however, Canada's role in the war went far beyond its involvement in the BCATP.

- What was the war's impact on the home front?



FIGURE 5-14 This Vancouver Board of Trade poster encouraged forest workers to contribute to the war effort.

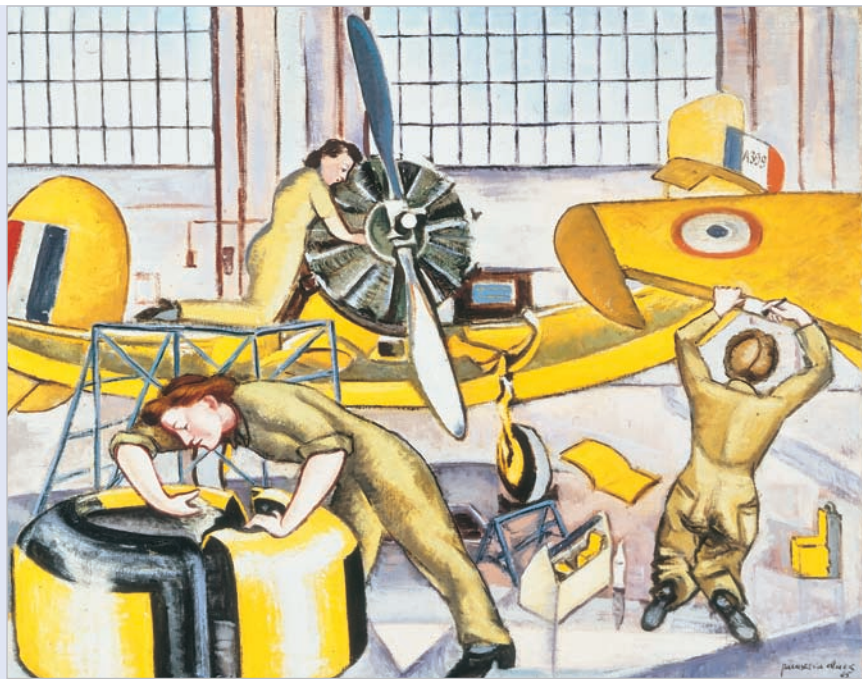


**FIGURE 5–15** A propaganda poster commissioned by the **Wartime Information Board**

**Analyzing Images** What three sectors of the workforce are represented here? How would this poster encourage the policy of total war?

## Total War

The demands of **total war** meant that the federal government became more involved in planning and controlling the economy. In April 1940, the Department of Munitions and Supply was created and industrialist C.D. Howe was put in charge. Howe, whom you will learn more about in Chapter 6, was given extraordinary authority to do whatever it took to gear up the economy to meet wartime demands. He told industries what to produce and how to produce it. He convinced business leaders to manufacture goods they had never made before. Soon, Vancouver was building ships for the navy, Montréal was constructing new planes and bombers, such as the Lancaster, and Canada’s car industries were producing military vehicles and tanks. Munitions factories opened in Ontario and Québec. If the private sector could not produce what Howe wanted, he created **Crown corporations** to do the job. Even farmers were told to produce more wheat, beef, dairy products, and other foods. Under Howe’s leadership, the government ran telephone companies, refined fuel, stockpiled silk for parachutes, mined uranium, and controlled food production. Some called him the “Minister of Everything.”



**FIGURE 5–16** *Maintenance Jobs in the Hangar* by Paraskeva Clark (1898–1986)

**Analyzing Images** Paraskeva Clark was a feminist whose painting conveyed a strong social message. How do this painting and the poster above it illustrate Canada’s commitment to total war? What social message do they convey? How do you think more traditional artists and critics might have reacted to this type of painting in the 1940s?

## PRACTICE QUESTIONS

1. What assurance did Mackenzie King give Canadians during the debate on Canada’s involvement in the war? Why did he do this?
2. What was the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan? Why was Canada chosen to host it? Why did King support the plan?
3. Compare Canadians’ reaction to the announcement of the First World War with that of the Second World War. Why did many people still volunteer?
4. How did Canada’s policy of total war change the economy? Why was the policy necessary?

## Axis Advances

With the declaration of war in September 1939, the **Allies** (Britain, France, and Commonwealth countries including Canada, Australia, and New Zealand) raced to get their forces organized. The alliance of Germany, Italy (1939), and Japan (1940) became known as the **Axis**. Allied troops were quickly stationed along France's border with Germany, where they waited for Germany's next move. But for seven months, from October 1939 to April 1940, nothing happened. This period became known as the "phony war," and many people started to believe there might not be a war.

These illusions were shattered when Germany renewed its **blitzkrieg** ("lightning war"), attacking Denmark and Norway in April 1940. The **blitzkrieg** was an extremely successful war tactic that used surprise, speed, and massive power to quickly overwhelm the enemy. War planes would often lead the attack, knocking out key enemy positions and supply lines. With lightning speed, German panzers (tanks) would crash through enemy lines, driving forward as far as they could. Soldiers would also parachute into enemy territory, destroying vital communication and transportation links. The attacks left the defending army confused and, eventually, surrounded.

Using these tactics, Germany quickly conquered Denmark and Norway. Germany then attacked the Netherlands, Luxembourg, and Belgium. Within weeks, all three countries were overrun. Hitler then set his sights on France.

## Evacuation at Dunkirk

Within days of launching an attack on France through Belgium, German panzers reached the English Channel and surrounded Allied forces in the French port of **Dunkirk**. If the Allied troops surrendered, Britain would lose the bulk of its army. They had to escape before the Germans captured the town. In an act of desperation, the British navy rounded up every boat capable of navigating the English Channel. Hundreds of fishing boats, pleasure crafts, and ferries joined navy and merchant ships as they headed across the Channel for Dunkirk. The evacuation began on May 26. Two days later, the German **Luftwaffe** bombed the port of Dunkirk. The evacuation was finally completed on June 4, 1940.

It was a dramatic rescue. Nearly 340 000 Allied soldiers, thousands more than originally anticipated, were brought to safety in Britain. This could have been a disastrous loss for the Allies. Instead, the evacuation of Dunkirk was seen as a "miracle" and helped boost morale.

After the evacuation at Dunkirk, the German army continued to sweep through France. The French army proved to be no match for the German troops, and on June 22, 1940, France surrendered. Britain and the Commonwealth now stood alone against Germany.

## KEY TERMS

**Wartime Information Board** board established in 1942 to coordinate wartime propaganda in Canada

**total war** the mobilization of the entire resources of a nation for war

**Crown corporations** businesses and industries owned by the Canadian government

**Allies** countries fighting against Germany during the Second World War, including Britain, France, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and after 1941, the United States and the U.S.S.R.

**Axis** alliance between Germany, Italy, and Japan

**blitzkrieg** German war tactic of surprise attacks by tanks and fighter planes

**Dunkirk** port town in France from which a massive Allied evacuation took place in May 1940, when German forces conquered France

**Luftwaffe** the German air force

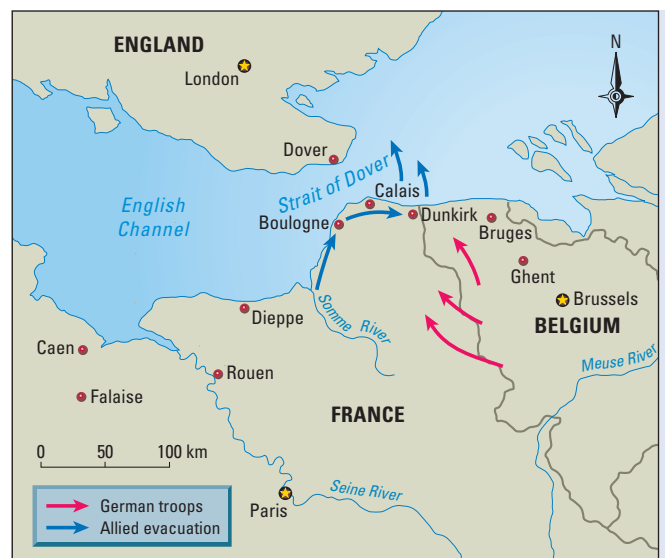


FIGURE 5-17 The Allied evacuation at Dunkirk



## KEY TERMS

**the Blitz** the heavy, frequent bombing attacks on London and other British cities by Nazi Germany

**Battle of Britain** an air campaign launched in 1940 by the Royal Air Force to stop the Germans from achieving air superiority

**Operation Barbarossa** Germany's unsuccessful invasion of the Soviet Union in 1941–1942, which broke the non-aggression pact and ultimately led to the Soviet Union joining the Allies



**FIGURE 5–18** For almost two months, the German Luftwaffe bombed London day and night.

**Developing Understanding** What is the likely target in this photograph? Where could people find protection from such attacks?

## Battle of Britain

Once France fell, Hitler launched “Operation Sea Lion,” his plan to invade Britain. For this scheme to succeed, the Royal Air Force (RAF) had to be defeated so that German forces could cross the English Channel and land in Britain. In July 1940, the Luftwaffe started a massive bombing campaign, aimed at destroying harbours and shipping facilities in southern England. In August, the Germans targeted airfields and aircraft factories. On August 24, German planes bombed several areas of London (some historians believe that this was accidental, while others claim it was a deliberate attack). In retaliation, the RAF bombed the German city of Berlin. This attack enraged Hitler. He ordered the Luftwaffe to bomb London and other British cities. These raids, which become known as “**the Blitz**,” took place over many weeks, destroying buildings and terrifying and killing civilians.

Although the Germans had more aircraft than the British, they were unable to defeat the RAF. One reason was that the British had a very advanced radar system that warned them of German air raids. The British also used Spitfires and Hurricanes, two extremely effective fighter planes. In addition, the RAF was reinforced with pilots, planes, and supplies from Canada and other Commonwealth countries. In September 1940, as the RAF shot down more and more German bombers, Hitler finally gave up on his plans to invade Britain. During the **Battle of Britain**, more than 23 000 people, mostly civilians, were killed.

## North-African Campaign

Once Hitler was certain of victory in France, and days before the German Luftwaffe attack on Britain, Axis forces began what would become a three-year campaign in the deserts of North Africa. This campaign, known as the Desert War, was a struggle for the control of valuable resources and strategic positions.

As you read earlier, Italy wanted to increase its territories in Africa. Its first move had been to invade Abyssinia in 1935. Once Italy formally entered the war on the side of the Axis in June 1940, British cavalry and tank regiments immediately invaded Libya (an Italian colony). Italy, in turn, invaded Egypt with its sights on the Suez Canal, a major strategic point.

To have any hope of victory, the Axis had to dominate the Mediterranean by controlling its two access points: the Strait of Gibraltar and the Suez Canal (see map on page 135). Holding these waterways would give the Axis armies access to the oil-rich Middle East.

By December 1940, the British Commonwealth forces had all but destroyed the Italian army. German forces were dispatched to the area to support the Italians and to prevent an Allied victory in North Africa. Germany had hoped their Italian allies would quickly overrun Allied forces in the region. Instead, it now found its forces engaged on a second front.

Over the next three years, neither side won decisive victories. The tide turned in 1942 with a final Allied victory in North Africa in May 1943. The Allied forces could now focus on their next objective: the invasion of Sicily and the liberation of Italy, which you will read about later in this chapter.

## Operation Barbarossa

After Germany's defeat in the Battle of Britain, Hitler launched "Operation Barbarossa" ("red beard") on June 22, 1941. This massive attack on the Soviet Union broke the non-aggression pact that Hitler had signed with Stalin in 1939. Hitler saw the Soviet Union as a source of raw materials, agricultural land, and labour for the German army, and conquering the Soviet Union was part of his long-term plans for a new German Empire.

The Soviets were unprepared for the attack, enabling the German army to strike deep into Russian territory. By autumn, they had reached the outskirts of Moscow and Leningrad (now St. Petersburg). But the Germans were ill-equipped for the long and bitterly cold Soviet winter and soon lost their advantage. In 1942, Germany launched another offensive in the Soviet Union, this time focused on the rich oil fields in the south. The German troops got as far as Stalingrad, but were stopped once again by the severe winter. The Germans could not turn back. Nor could they hope for reinforcements, since the Axis powers were also engaged in North Africa. After suffering more than 300 000 casualties, the German army surrendered in early 1943.

After the German surrender, the Soviet army went on the offensive, retaking much of the territory it had lost. Hitler's aggression also assured that the Soviets joined the war on the Allies' side.



FIGURE 5-19 Extent of Axis control in Europe and North Africa, 1942

**Reading a Map** Use this map and the text in this section to understand the scope of Axis control in Europe and North Africa.

## KEY TERMS

**Pearl Harbor** the Japanese bombing of the U.S. naval base in Hawaii

**Battle of Hong Kong** Japan's attack on the British colony of Hong Kong in which there were heavy Canadian losses

**Black Christmas** December 25, 1941, the date Hong Kong fell to the Japanese

## The War in the Pacific

As you read earlier, Japan began a campaign to expand its territory in the 1930s. By 1941, it was prepared to invade American and European colonies in Southeast Asia to gain control of valuable resources such as oil, rubber, and tin. Japan knew such action would almost certainly involve the United States, which had thus far remained neutral in the war.

Japanese strategy depended on a quick and decisive strike against the United States. In a surprise attack on December 7, 1941, Japanese planes bombed the U.S. naval base in **Pearl Harbor**, on the island of Hawaii. More than 2400 people were killed and much of the American fleet was destroyed. Japan then bombed the U.S. territory of the Philippines. The surprise bombings stunned the Americans. On December 8, the U.S. joined the Allies and declared war on Japan. Japan's allies—Germany and Italy—then declared war on the United States. The whole world was now at war.



FIGURE 5–20 Control of the Pacific area in 1939

## Battle of Hong Kong

Only hours after bombing Pearl Harbor, Japan attacked Hong Kong, a British colony. Weeks earlier, Canada had sent two battalions, from Winnipeg and Québec, to reinforce the British and Commonwealth forces in Hong Kong. The Canadians were inexperienced and the 20 000 Allied soldiers were no match for the skilled Japanese soldiers. After 18 days of bitter fighting, Hong Kong fell to the Japanese on what would be known as “**Black Christmas**,” December 25, 1941. Every Canadian was either killed or taken prisoner.

Nearly 1700 Canadian prisoners of war (POWs) faced brutal conditions and were later used as slave labour. More than 260 of these POWs died during three and a half years of imprisonment. Canadians at home were horrified to learn the fate of the soldiers and angry that troops had been sent to Hong Kong. The Japanese treatment of Allied troops may have encouraged the anti-Japanese sentiment that culminated in the internment of Japanese Canadians. You will read about this later in the chapter.

- Describe Canada's military role in the Second World War.



**FIGURE 5–21** A recruitment poster issued after Canadian forces were defeated at Hong Kong

**Expressing Ideas** What is this poster's message?

## PRACTICE QUESTIONS

1. Explain why German forces needed to invade Britain if they were to hold Western Europe. What efforts did they make to do this?
2. How did Canada contribute to the Allied victory in the Battle of Britain?
3. What strategic benefit was there to controlling the Mediterranean? Why would the Axis have needed to control this area?
4. Do you think it was an error on Germany's part to invade the U.S.S.R.? Explain.
5. Using the information about each of the major battles in this section, explain the strategic advantages of the Axis forces as well as how these eventually led to the major turning point that occurred in Stalingrad.
6. Why did the Japanese attack the U.S. navy at Pearl Harbor? How did this attack change the course of the war?
7. Why would Canada send troops to Hong Kong? Why were Canadians angry when they learned the fate of troops in Hong Kong?

- Describe Canada's military role in the Second World War.

*The Battle of the Atlantic was the dominating factor all through the war. Never for one moment could we forget that everything happening elsewhere—on land, at sea or in the air—depended ultimately on its outcome, and amid all other cares we viewed its changing fortunes day by day with hope or apprehension.*

—Winston Churchill

## Canada's Contribution to the War Effort

Canadians contributed to the war effort on all fronts. Over the course of the war, Canada expanded its navy and air force to help reinforce the Allies.

### Battle of the Atlantic

When war broke out, the Royal Canadian Navy (RCN) had only 13 ships and 1819 sailors. Desperately short of equipment and personnel, Canada embarked on a massive building and training program so that by the end of the war, the RCN had grown to 400 vessels and more than 100 000 sailors. By 1941, the **Battle of the Atlantic** was in full swing and Canada's contribution was much needed. As in the First World War, Britain was almost completely dependent on food and military supplies from Canada and the United States. But the Allied supply ships bound for England were being attacked by "wolf packs" of German U-boats patrolling the Atlantic. Germany was trying to starve Britain by cutting off vital shipping routes.

### The Allies Gain Momentum

For the first three years of the war, it seemed that the Allies would lose the Battle of the Atlantic. German submarines pounded convoys, sinking hundreds of ships. Some German submarines even sailed into the Gulf of St. Lawrence and up the St. Lawrence River to attack ships there. Gradually, the situation started to turn around. The British had cracked the German naval code, allowing the Allies to track German submarine movements more easily. As well, the Allies were building more ships than were being destroyed.

### Canada's War at Sea

Canada also helped turn the tide. The RCN is credited with providing about half the escorts across the Atlantic. Better training of Canadian navy personnel and more sophisticated equipment contributed to the Allies' success. The

Women's Royal Canadian Naval Service was created in 1942. Most "WRENS" were limited to shore-based jobs, and worked as wireless operators, coders, drivers, and operational plotters.

To protect supply ships from German torpedoes, the Allies sailed in convoys so warships could help to protect vessels carrying vital supplies. But even convoys did not stop the attacks. German U-boats destroyed hundreds of supply ships, sinking millions of tonnes of cargo. In response, Canada started building small warships, called **corvettes**, to escort convoys across the ocean. The corvette was quick and manoeuvred well, but it was not a very stable vessel. Nevertheless, the corvette was the best ship that could be built in such a short time. The corvettes were helped by long-range Liberator bombers, which could fly from bases in Britain and Canada to protect much of the convoy's route. By May 1943, the Allies believed they had won the Battle of the Atlantic.



**FIGURE 5-22** This convoy, assembled in Bedford Basin, Nova Scotia, was transporting war supplies to Europe.

**Thinking Critically** Identify the smaller ships in the photograph. What might be the nature and function of these vessels?

## War in the Air

Like the RCN, the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) grew quickly once the war began. More than 215 000 people enlisted in the RCAF and, at one point, 35 Canadian squadrons were posted overseas. Canadian aircrews participated in bombing raids in North Africa, Italy, Northwest Europe, and Southeast Asia.

The Women's Division (WD) of the RCAF was created in 1941. Women trained as clerks, cooks, hospital assistants, drivers, telephone operators, welders, instrument mechanics, and engine mechanics. The RCAF refused to let licensed female pilots fly until later in the war. Women ferried bombers to Britain, but they never took part in combat.

### *Bomber Command*

The RCAF also participated in one of the most controversial missions of the war: night bombings over Germany. As part of Britain's **Bomber Command**, Canada's Bomber Group pounded German cities, including Dresden and Cologne, night after night. These cities were targeted for a number of reasons: to retaliate for the German air raids on English cities, to diminish German morale, and to destabilize German industrial centres. Tens of thousands of civilians were killed by these air raids. One of the worst attacks was on the city of Hamburg in July 1943. Relentless bombing by the Allies created a firestorm and the city was engulfed in flames. The city was practically destroyed and more than 40 000 civilians were killed.

The casualty rate for the RCAF aircrew was as high as seven out of ten. Nearly 10 000 Canadian Bomber Group members lost their lives during the war.

## KEY TERMS

**Battle of the Atlantic** the struggle between the Allies and the Axis powers to control the Allies' shipping route across the Atlantic Ocean

**corvettes** small, fast, warships built in Canada to help protect convoys in the Atlantic Ocean

**Bomber Command** the section of the RAF that directed the strategic bombing of Germany



**FIGURE 5-23** Bombing raids on German cities, like Hamburg, killed thousands of civilians.

**Making Generalizations** What would you say was the effect of bombing raids on Germany, based on this photograph?

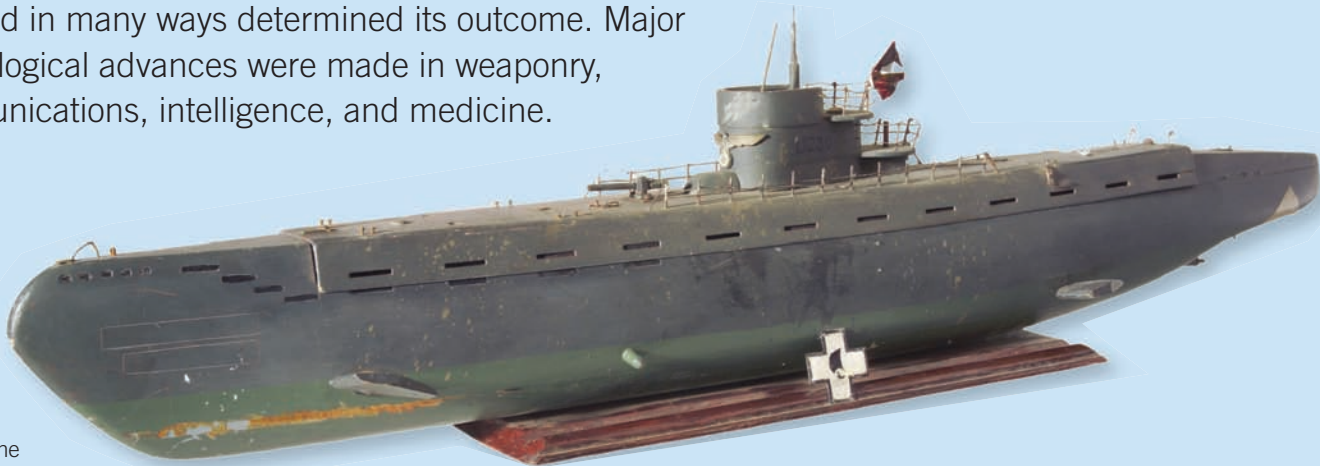
## PRACTICE QUESTIONS

1. How did Canadian sea and air forces change over the course of the war?
2. Explain why the corvette and the convoy system were so important to the Allied war effort.
3. What did Winston Churchill mean when he said everything in the war depended on the outcome of the Battle of the Atlantic?
4. Describe the contributions of women in the navy and air force.
5. Why do you think the casualty rate for the RCAF was so high?
6. Is the bombing of civilian targets ever justified? Explain your position.

# Innovations

## Advances in War Technology

Technology played an important role in the Second World War and in many ways determined its outcome. Major technological advances were made in weaponry, communications, intelligence, and medicine.



### Peril of the seas

Both the Allies and the Axis powers used submarines, which were much more efficient than in the First World War. The Germans invented a snorkel that made it possible for U-boats to recharge batteries underwater, reducing the time on the surface, where it was vulnerable to attack.



**A new type of terror weapon** The German V-2 rocket had a range of 350 kilometres. V-2s were used with deadly effect against London in the closing days of the war. Wernher von Braun, the designer of the V-2, moved to the United States after the war. After becoming a U.S. citizen, he designed the *Gemini* and *Apollo* rockets that eventually led to the U.S. moon landing in 1969.



**Finding the enemy** Radar (radio detection and ranging) is an electronic system that uses radio waves to detect objects beyond the range of vision. It gives information about the distance, position, size, shape, direction, and speed of approaching aircraft. Radar was a deciding factor in the Battle of Britain.



**The deadliest weapon** The United States developed the atomic bomb, which permanently changed warfare. In this weapon, a sphere of concentrated radioactive material about the size of a baseball could easily destroy a city.



**Technology in the air** The first jet-propelled airplanes were used in the Second World War. Because jets could fly higher and faster than propeller-driven planes, both the Axis powers and the Allies worked around the clock to produce as many jets as they could. However, jets were not perfected until after 1945. Not enough were produced to affect the outcome of the war.

**Treating the wounded** Great advances were made in medical technology as doctors tried to repair the hideous wounds of war. Penicillin, an antibiotic, was first isolated in 1929 by British scientist Alexander Fleming and was used to treat infections in humans in 1941. Recovery rates for wounded soldiers increased significantly due to penicillin. Below, a Canadian doctor treats a German soldier in 1944.

**Secret codes** The Germans developed a coding machine, known as “Enigma,” which converted radio messages into code. This machine spurred the development of an early computer that could decode German signals.





- Describe Canada's military role in the Second World War.

## KEY TERM

**Dieppe Raid** the 1942 trial raid by Canadian troops against Germany's occupation of Dieppe; Canada suffered heavy losses

*We were sacrificial lambs... They were there waiting for us—they knew it was just a matter of time. In fact, one German at Dieppe actually asked us: “What took you so long?”*

—Thomas Hunter

# The Tide Turns

In 1942, the tide of the war finally began to turn. The Allied forces became stronger when the United States entered the conflict in December 1941. With the Americans' help, the Allies started to gain ground in North Africa. They were more and more successful against U-boats in the Atlantic and made important advances in the Pacific.

## The Dieppe Raid

By the middle of 1942, the Soviet Union, now one of the Allied powers, had lost close to a million soldiers in its desperate fight against invading German troops. Stalin demanded that the Allies invade Europe from the west to weaken Germany by forcing it to fight the war on two fronts.

The Allies had hoped to postpone the full invasion of Europe, but they felt ready for a trial run. A smaller raid would allow them to test new techniques and equipment, and serve as a scouting mission for a future invasion. The 2nd Canadian Division was chosen to be the main attack force in a raid on the French port of Dieppe. The plan was to launch four pre-dawn attacks along the coast, followed by the main attack on Dieppe. Air force bombers and tanks brought in by ship would support the troops.

On the morning of August 19, 1942, one of the ships carrying Canadian soldiers to Dieppe met a small German convoy. The two sides engaged in a brief sea battle, and the noise alerted German troops on shore. To make

matters worse, the ships were delayed and the troops landed in daylight. They were easily machine-gunned by waiting German soldiers. Allied tanks were ineffective because they could not get enough traction to move on the steep, pebbled beach. Communication between the ships and troops on land was poor. Believing the first wave of soldiers had reached the town, commanders sent reinforcements ashore. These troops, too, became trapped on the beaches. Unable to retreat or advance, they were easy targets for the German soldiers on the cliffs along the coastline.



**FIGURE 5–24** Dead Canadian soldiers and tanks on Dieppe beach, August 19, 1942

**Using Evidence** Canadian troops were supported by tanks that arrived in transport ships, but most never advanced far from the shoreline. Find evidence in this photograph to suggest why tanks were useless in this attack.

## TIMELINE

### Major Canadian Battles, 1939–1945

● September 1939–May 1943  
Battle of the Atlantic

● May 26–June 4, 1940  
Battle of Dunkirk

● August–October, 1940  
Battle of Britain

● December 7–25, 1941  
Battle of Hong Kong

## Disaster or Learning Experience?

The Dieppe Raid was a terrible failure. Casualties were high. Of the nearly 5000 Canadian soldiers involved in the nine-hour battle, 907 were killed. Almost 600 were wounded and another 1946 were taken prisoner. Ross Munro, the Canadian war correspondent who accompanied the troops to Dieppe, described the raid and its devastating results:

*For eight hours, under intense Nazi fire from dawn into a sweltering afternoon, I watched Canadian troops fight the blazing, bloody battle of Dieppe. I saw them go through the biggest of the war's raiding operations in wild scenes that crowded helter skelter one upon another in crazy sequence. There was a furious attack by German E-boats while the Canadians moved in on Dieppe's beaches, landing by dawn's half-light. When the Canadian battalions stormed through the flashing inferno of Nazi defences, belching guns of huge tanks rolling into the fight, I spent the grimmest 20 minutes of my life with one unit when a rain of German machine-gun fire wounded half the men in our boat and only a miracle saved us from annihilation.*

—Ross Munro, *The Windsor Daily Star*, 1942



**FIGURE 5–25** Ross Munro, Second World War correspondent for the *Canadian Press*

Opinion is divided as to whether Dieppe was a valuable learning experience or a complete disaster. Some historians claim that the Allies were later able to launch a successful invasion based on what they had learned at Dieppe. Others maintain that the raid was poorly planned and taught the Germans more than it taught the Allies.

## FAST FORWARD

CRITICAL INQUIRY Judgements

### Reporting War

Today, news reports make it possible for us to see what is happening on a battlefield almost instantly. Many have argued, however, that what we see on the news is not always an accurate report of what is happening in a war zone. Several factors can influence what is reported on the news. For example, reporters “embedded” with combat units are often sympathetic to the young soldiers they live and work with. Back home, newspaper editors and television directors choose stories that will attract viewers so they can sell advertising. The government may also censor news

reports to prevent security risks or to put their own slant on events. Some people argue that improved coverage of war is positive because it keeps us informed of what is happening in distant parts of the world. Others maintain that this coverage is negative because it hardens us to images of war so that we are no longer shocked by what we see.

1. Can a news broadcast ever completely avoid bias and show viewers the “truth”?
2. Should reporters tell us everything they see on the front lines?

● August 19, 1942  
Dieppe Raid

● July 1943–  
February 1945  
The Italian Campaign

● June 6, 1944  
D-Day

● September–November,  
1944  
Battle of the Scheldt

● February 8–  
March 10, 1945  
Battle of the Rhineland

## KEY TERMS

**Italian Campaign** 1943 Allied battles to recapture Europe from the south, through Sicily and Italy

## The Italian Campaign

After the failure at Dieppe, British Prime Minister Winston Churchill felt that the best way for the Allies to recapture Europe was through what he called the “soft underbelly” of Europe: Sicily and Italy. The Allied victory in North Africa made it possible for forces to launch their attack from the south. The invasion ended up lasting almost two years and cost thousands of lives. The “underbelly” proved anything but soft.

### *Battle of Sicily*

On July 10, 1943, Allied forces invaded Sicily. Once again, the Canadians proved themselves to be fierce opponents. They fought Italian and German soldiers through 240 kilometres of mountainous terrain, losing 562 soldiers in the battle. The Allies captured the island after 38 days.

This victory quickly led to Mussolini’s downfall. He was overthrown and the new Italian government surrendered. The Germans, however, continued to defend their Italian territory.

### *Battle of Ortona*

The Allies followed the Germans as they retreated to mainland Italy. Canadians were given the task of capturing the medieval town of Ortona on the Adriatic Sea. Before they could reach the heavily fortified Ortona, the Canadians had to capture several smaller villages, cross the river Moro, and fight across several kilometres of German-occupied territory. The regiment describes the battle:

*Throughout the night of December 8th–9th the RCR [Royal Canadian Regiment] maintained its position on the feature which came to be known... as “Slaughterhouse Hill.” The fighting was most confused, the enemy appearing on several sides of the perimeter as well as within it... the incessant shellfire from both sides turned the night into pandemonium.*

—A Regiment at War, 1979

Once they reached Ortona, advances were slow and battles were often fought house by house on the town’s steep, rubble-filled streets. Canadians captured the town on December 28, 1943, but lost 1372 soldiers before the Germans withdrew. After capturing Ortona, Canadian troops advanced through Italy until they were sent to join the campaign in France. Nearly 6000 Canadians were killed in Italy.



**FIGURE 5–26** Ortona after the Canadian advance

## PRACTICE QUESTIONS

1. Why was the Dieppe Raid unsuccessful? Do you think it was a disaster or a learning experience? Support your opinion.
2. Explain why the Italian Campaign was strategically important to the Allies.
3. In your own words, describe the Battle of Ortona.

# Building Your Skills

## Reading a Map

Historical maps are useful documents that give specific information. They are a visual way of conveying facts as well as concepts. As with other historical documents, the information included in these types of maps is selective, so you must examine them carefully.

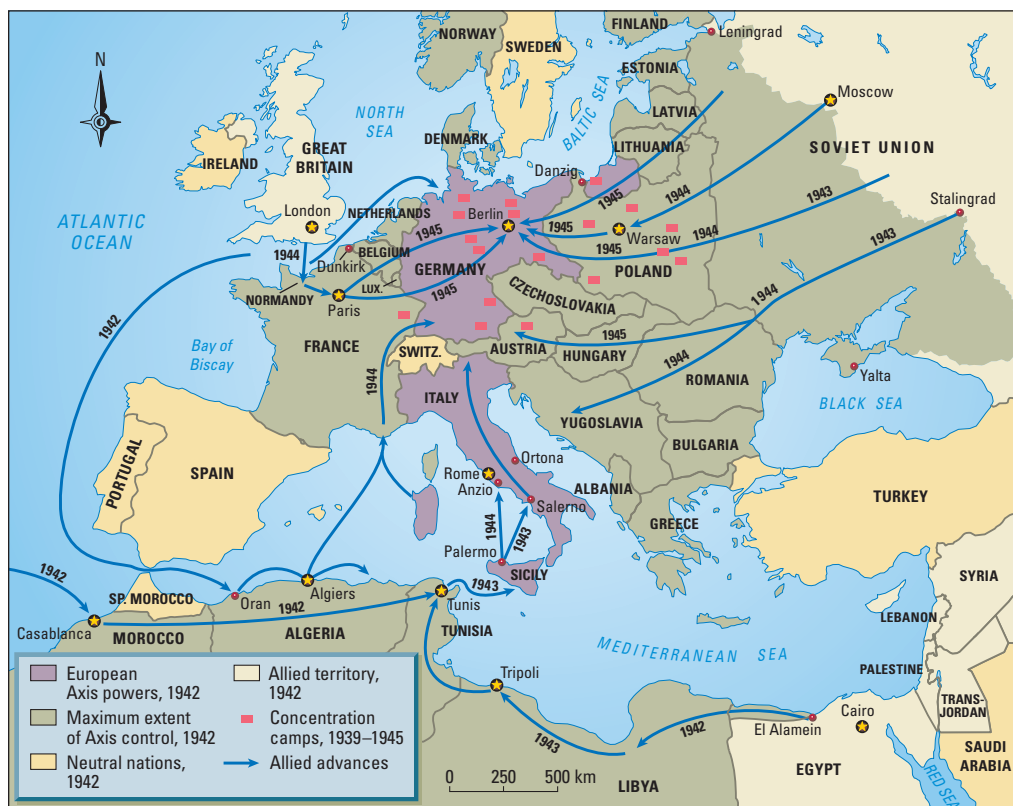
### Steps to Reading a Map

1. Look at the title and legend of the map below. These should tell you the historical period of the map, its main purpose, and the other kinds of information that the map is meant to convey.
2. Examine the names (or symbols) closely. Look for patterns in the information. Why, for example, are some names bigger or bolder than others? Certain colours may be used to illustrate similarities in or differences between regions.
3. Now read the map by analyzing the information. Ask yourself: What is this map about? How is the information being communicated? What conclusions can be drawn from this map?

### Applying the Skill

As you read about the events that occurred in Europe between 1942 and 1945, refer to Figure 5–27. Go through the three steps in reading a historical map, and answer the questions below.

1. What is the map about? What are the six pieces of information given in the legend?
2. The cartographer (map-maker) has shown a limited number of cities. How would you explain the choice of Dunkirk, Stalingrad, and Palermo?
3. What ideas does this map convey about
  - a) the importance of the success of the North African campaign to the Allies?
  - b) the role of the U.S.S.R. in defeating Germany?
  - c) the importance of supremacy in naval forces for the Allies?
  - d) the importance of an effective air force?



**FIGURE 5–27** Allied advances on Germany, 1942–1945

- Describe Canada's military role in the Second World War.

## D-Day: The Normandy Invasion

The Allies immediately followed their success in Italy with the biggest Allied invasion of the war. On **D-Day**, June 6, 1944, the Allies launched a full-scale invasion of Europe called “Operation Overlord.” To avoid a disaster like Dieppe, the Allies planned and rehearsed the invasion down to the smallest detail.

The Allies launched their attack by landing their troops on five beaches along an 80-kilometre stretch of the Normandy coast in northern France. The beaches were code-named Sword, Juno, Gold, Omaha, and Utah. The soldiers on the beaches had massive air and naval support. The Allies were able to disrupt transportation and communication lines before the attack by dropping **paratroopers** behind enemy lines and bombing targets on the beaches. Their naval support also allowed the Allies to bring in more than a million troops, along with military vehicles and supplies, after the initial landing.

The D-Day invasions were also successful because the Allies had managed to keep the details of the attack a secret from the Germans. Although the Germans had anticipated an attack, they thought it would come from the north. The weather also helped the Allies. A storm delayed the initial attack and the Germans believed that the Allies would not attempt a landing in bad weather. As a result, the German defence was poorly coordinated.

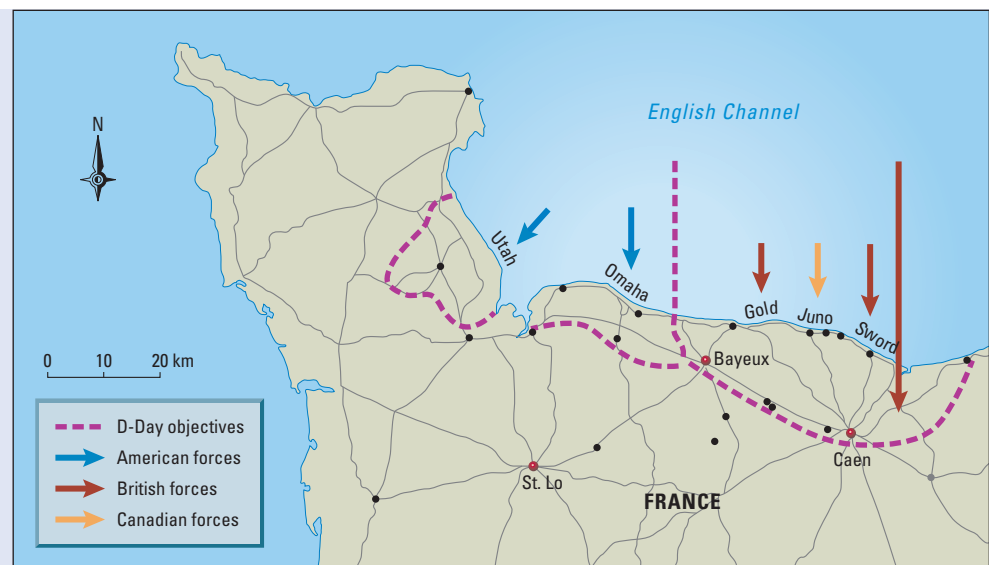


FIGURE 5–28 Allied invasion of Normandy on D-Day, June 6, 1944

### Juno Beach

On the morning of June 6, 1944, 14 000 Canadian soldiers arrived at Juno Beach (see Figure 5–28) as part of the first wave of the attack. They had to make their way past the German defences, including concrete barriers, barbed wire, and land mines, to take the beach. By the end of the day, the Canadians had fought their way inland by about nine kilometres. Although they were successful, casualties from the day were high—359 Canadians died and 715 were wounded.

## Battle of the Scheldt

It took the Allies weeks of constant fighting to expand their territory before they could begin an advance through France and Belgium toward Germany. The 11-month campaign was exhausting and there were several moving moments in which the Allies were welcomed as the liberators of Europe. In September 1944, for example, Canadians marched triumphantly through Dieppe where only two years earlier they had suffered a terrible defeat.

In October, Canadians were given the task of clearing enemy troops from the Scheldt River in Belgium. This river was important because it connected Antwerp to the North Sea. Although the Allies had already liberated Antwerp, German forces controlled the river and access to the sea. The Canadians achieved their goal after a month of bitter fighting, allowing the Allies to bring in supplies for their final advance into Germany.

## Battle of the Rhineland

On February 8, 1945, the Allies—including approximately 175 000 Canadians—began their attack to drive the Germans back over the Rhine River and out of the Netherlands. The fighting was slow as soldiers struggled through mud and flooded fields against fierce German resistance. Nearly 23 000 Allied soldiers were killed, including more than 5300 Canadians. The Germans lost about 90 000 men, including 52 000 who were taken prisoner. On March 10, the German army withdrew to the east bank of the Rhine River, allowing the Canadians to continue north to liberate Holland.

## Liberating the Netherlands

Once the Allied forces had reached the Rhine River and Germany, the Canadians were given a separate task: liberating the Netherlands. This was a difficult job. An earlier Allied attempt to free Holland had failed and German troops had practically destroyed the port cities of Amsterdam and Rotterdam and flooded much of the countryside. By the end of 1944, food and fuel supplies to the Dutch had been cut off and many were starving to death. The bitter winter of 1944–1945 made difficult conditions even worse.

## KEY TERMS

**D-Day** June 6, 1944; the day Allied armies, including Canada, invaded France; the biggest Allied invasion of the Second World War

**paratroopers** soldiers trained to parachute from airplanes onto combat areas

**Juno Beach** the nine-kilometre stretch of beach in France where Canadian troops landed on D-Day



**FIGURE 5–29** Allied liberation of France, Belgium, and the Netherlands, and invasion of Germany  
**Reading a Map** Use the text and the map to determine what route the Canadians used in their attack in the Netherlands.



**FIGURE 5–30** Celebrating the liberation of Utrecht, in the Netherlands, by the Canadian Army, May 7, 1945

**Analyzing Evidence** Use the quotation and image to understand why Canadian troops were hailed as heroes in Holland.

## Lasting Gratitude

After reaching the Rhine, it took another month of fighting to drive the Germans out of the Netherlands. On April 28, 1945, the Allies negotiated a truce with Germany, allowing them to bring much needed supplies to the Dutch people. Convoys of trucks carrying food and fuel eventually delivered thousands of tonnes of supplies to civilians.

As they liberated towns and cities throughout the Netherlands, Canadians were hailed as heroes in victory parades. Percy Loosemore, who travelled with Canadian soldiers, wrote:

*When we entered Holland from Belgium, the Dutch people seemed overwhelmed with joy at their deliverance and the end of the war; for while the Belgians had been liberated for some time, the Dutch were celebrating both the end of the war in Europe and their own immediate liberation. Bunting hung everywhere; people cheered as we drove by... Once, when I stopped my car, children gathered around and proceeded to decorate our vehicle with flowers and coloured streamers. To witness the enthusiastic joy and happy faces of these people was a [great] pleasure to me... I was deeply moved.*

–Quoted in *A Soldier’s View*, 2005

### WEB LINK

To this day, the Dutch continue to show their appreciation to Canada for liberating the Netherlands. Visit the Pearson Web site to find out more.

## Victory in Europe

While the Allies invaded Germany from the north and west, the Soviet Union attacked from the east. Facing certain defeat, Germany surrendered to the Allies on May 7, 1945. Hitler committed suicide in a bunker in Berlin before he could be captured. The war in Europe was over and the Allies declared May 8 as Victory in Europe (VE) Day.

**FIGURE 5–31** At the Yalta Conference in February 1945, with an Allied victory only months away, Winston Churchill, Franklin D. Roosevelt, and Joseph Stalin (front row, from left to right) discussed the reorganization of post-war Europe, including occupation zones and new borders.



## Japan Surrenders

After the Allied victory in Europe, the war in the Pacific intensified. By mid-1945, most of the Japanese air force and navy had been destroyed, but the army was still strong. In March 1945, the Americans, the main Allied force in the Pacific, had begun fire-bombing Japanese cities trying to force them to surrender. Although these bombing raids destroyed cities and killed thousands of people, the Japanese declared that they would “fight to the last person” and not surrender.

### *The Atomic Bomb*

For some time, American and British scientists had been working on the **Manhattan Project**, a top-secret plan to develop an **atomic bomb**. In 1942, Canada was notified of the project and asked to contribute uranium, an important component of the bomb. The Canadian government agreed, and secretly bought the Eldorado mine at Great Bear Lake, Northwest Territories, to produce the uranium.

On August 6, 1945, an American bomber plane (named “Enola Gay” after the pilot’s mother) dropped an atomic bomb over the Japanese city of Hiroshima. The destruction unleashed by the bomb had never been experienced before. Three days after the bombing of Hiroshima, a second atomic bomb was dropped on the city of Nagasaki. While precise casualty numbers are not available, it is estimated that the two bombings killed approximately 100 000 people and wounded another 100 000. Long-term effects, such as cancer, affected many more Japanese citizens.

## The War Ends

The Japanese, realizing that they could not withstand the awesome power of the new U.S. weapon, surrendered on August 14, 1945. Finally, after six long years and the loss of millions of lives, the Second World War was over.

## KEY TERMS

**Manhattan Project** the code name during the Second World War for the American plan to develop the first atomic bomb

**atomic bomb** a bomb containing radioactive material, capable of destroying an entire city or region



**FIGURE 5–32** The nuclear detonation at Nagasaki on August 9, 1945, created a mushroom cloud that rose many kilometres into the air.

## PRACTICE QUESTIONS

1. What was D-Day? Why was it necessary? In what ways did the D-Day invasion differ from the raid on Dieppe? What role did Canadian troops play in both of these invasions?
2. In your own words, describe the situation in the Netherlands in the spring of 1945. Why were Canadian troops considered heroes in the Netherlands?
3. Compare and contrast how the war ended in Europe and Asia.



## Are weapons of mass destruction ever justified?

On July 16, 1945, a group of American scientists tested the first atomic bomb—the most powerful weapon ever built until that time. The scientists who witnessed the test were awestruck by the power of what they had created.

*We knew the world would not be the same. A few people laughed. A few people cried. Most people were silent. I remembered the line from the Hindu scripture—the Bhagavad-gita. Vishnu is trying to persuade the prince that he should do his duty and to impress him, takes on his multi-armed form and says, “Now I am become Death, the destroyer of worlds.” I suppose we all felt that, one way or another.*

**—Robert Oppenheimer,  
scientific director of the Manhattan Project**

*Personally I recoiled at the idea and said to Roosevelt: “Mr. President, this would violate every Christian ethic I have ever heard of and all known laws of war. It would be an attack on the non-combatant population of the enemy...”*

*It was my opinion that the use of this barbarous weapon at Hiroshima and Nagasaki was of no material assistance in our war.... The Japanese were already defeated and ready to surrender.... My own feeling was that in being the first to use it, we had adopted an ethical standard common to the barbarians of the Dark Ages. I was not taught to make war in that fashion, and wars cannot be won by destroying women and children....*

**—I Was There, 1950**

Two atomic bombs, dropped on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, ended the war, but controversy regarding their use continues to this day. Was it necessary to use such a deadly weapon? Even before the atomic bomb was dropped, there were those who believed its use could never be justified. Admiral William Leahy, an advisor to U.S. President Harry Truman, opposed the bomb. In 1944, he advised Truman’s predecessor, Franklin Roosevelt, not to use the bomb.



**FIGURE 5–33** Hiroshima before the bombing

Colonel Paul Tibbets, commander of the air force squadron that dropped the bombs on Japan and pilot of the plane that dropped the bomb on Hiroshima, rejected such criticism because he felt it failed to take into consideration the “context of the times”:

*As for the missions flown against Japan on the 6th and 9th of August, 1945, I would remind you, we were at war. Our job was to win. Once the targets were named and presidential approval received, we were to deliver the weapons as expeditiously as possible, consistent with good tactics. The objective was to stop the fighting, thereby saving further loss of life on both sides. The urgency of the situation demanded that we use the weapons first—before the technology could be used against us.*

*—Quoted in news release by Airmen Memorial Museum, 1994*

For almost 200 years, war strategists have been influenced by the writings of Carl von Clausewitz, a Prussian general and military theorist. In his book *On War*, he writes about his theory of absolute war:

*To introduce into a philosophy of war a principle of moderation would be an absurdity. War is an act of violence pushed to its utmost bounds.*

*—Quoted in Gwynne Dyer, War, 1985*

Weapons now exist that have the potential to destroy all life on Earth. Nations have stockpiled thousands of warheads hundreds of times more powerful than the first atomic bombs. Arsenals and laboratories store biological weapons designed to spread diseases. Governments maintain stores of deadly chemical weapons. Von Clausewitz could never have envisioned destruction on such a scale.

Thankfully, some nations have agreed to treaties that limit the testing of nuclear weapons and that reduce the arsenal of nuclear weapons. Still, both the United States and Russia have the capability to destroy the world several times over. Many other nations also have nuclear arms and large quantities of chemical and biological weapons.



**FIGURE 5–34** Hiroshima after the bombing

### Analyzing the Issue

1. What reasons did Admiral William Leahy give against using the atomic bomb?
2. What three arguments did Colonel Paul Tibbets give to support the use of the atomic bomb on Japan?
3. What do you think Robert Oppenheimer meant by “We knew the world would not be the same”?
4. Do you think there are any circumstances in which weapons of mass destruction can ever be justified? Explain your answer.

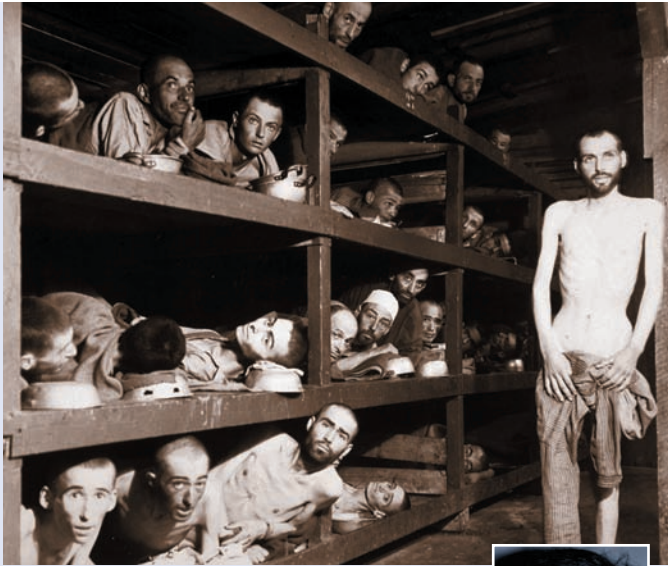
- How did the war raise awareness of human rights issues?

## Crimes Against Humanity

Atrocities inflicted upon civilians and POWs during the Second World War brought the issue of human rights to the world's attention, and ultimately led to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (see Chapter 10).

### The Holocaust

The anti-Semitic and racist views of Hitler and the Nazi government were well-known in the 1930s. By 1941, the Nazi government adopted the “**Final Solution**”—a horrifying plan of **genocide**. Hitler ordered all Jewish people and “undesirables” to be shipped to concentration camps, such as Bergen-Belsen and Buchenwald in Germany, and Auschwitz and Treblinka in Poland. Upon arrival, guards stripped them of their clothes and valuables, shaved their heads, and separated families. The weak, the old, and the young were immediately killed in gas chambers. Healthy people worked as slave labourers. When overwork, starvation, and disease weakened them, they too were murdered. By 1945, the Germans had killed more than 6 million Jewish people and another 5 million Roma, Slavs, and other “undesirables.” Though the Allies had known about German concentration camps, they did not realize the full extent of the horrors of the Holocaust until they pressed closer to Germany and saw the Nazi atrocities.



**FIGURE 5–35** Survivors from the Buchenwald concentration camp. Elie Wiesel wrote about his experiences during the Holocaust in his book *Night*. Wiesel (inset and the farthest face on the right, second bunk from bottom) was later awarded the Nobel Peace Prize



A Canadian soldier at Bergen-Belsen wrote:

*Tonight I am a different man. I have spent the last two days in Belsen concentration camp, the most horrible festering scab there has ever been on the face of humanity....*

*You have seen pictures in the paper but they cannot tell the story. You have to smell it and feel it and keep a stern look on your face while your heart tears itself into pieces and the tears of compassion drench your soul...*

—*King Whyte, Letters Home, 1944–1946, 2007*

### The Nuremberg Trials

In 1945, the Allies established an International Military **Tribunal** in Nuremberg, Germany, to prosecute prominent Nazi leaders and many others for atrocities committed during the war. Twelve defendants were sentenced to death and others were imprisoned. This is the first time in history that leaders of a country were charged for immoral acts during wartime. The Nuremberg Trials became a model for prosecuting war criminals in Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia (see Chapter 10).

### Atrocities in Asia

Liberators of Japanese POW camps also encountered terrible **war crimes** committed during the war. Mass killings, human experimentation, famine, torture, and forced labour were a few of the hardships suffered by POWs and civilians alike. Since many of Japan's wartime acts violated international law, the alleged crimes were subject to trial in international courts of justice, similar to the Nuremberg Trials. The Tokyo Trials heard these cases and passed sentence on military personnel found guilty of war crimes and **crimes against humanity**.

## The War at Home

Canadians at home made enormous contributions to the war. Under the policy of total war, many Canadian factories were dedicated to producing supplies and war materials. In 1944, Canada produced 14 000 tanks and personnel carriers, more than 4000 aircraft, and 16 000 artillery pieces. Factories operated non-stop, and Canadians worked long hours to run them.

### Women and the War Effort

As in the First World War, women joined war industries in roles that were unusual for them at the time. They worked as welders, drillers, and punch-press or machine operators. “Rosie the Riveter” became a popular nickname for these working women. Women were in high demand as factory workers and many moved from rural areas to industrial centres. With government funding, some companies built dormitories close to their factories to house workers.

### Canada’s Wartime Economy

With so much increased production and employment, people suddenly had more money to spend. At the same time, there were fewer goods to buy as most of what was produced was shipped to Britain. Prime Minister Mackenzie King wanted to avoid soaring inflation and hoped to prevent the massive debt that had burdened Canada after the First World War so the government took the following steps:

- As Minister of Finance, James Ilesley enthusiastically encouraged Canadians to buy Victory Bonds. The government used the money to help finance the war, and people cashed in the bonds for profit after the war.
- Ilesley increased income taxes for added revenue.
- In 1941, the Wartime Prices and Trade Board, which had been set up in 1939, froze all wages and prices to try to prevent inflation.
- In 1942, King introduced food rationing, limiting the amounts of certain goods that Canadians were allowed per week. Each Canadian adult was limited to about 1 kilogram of meat, 220 grams of sugar, 250 grams of butter, and about 225 grams of coffee. Canadian rations were generous compared with those in England and the United States.

- What was the war’s impact on the home front?

#### KEY TERMS

**crimes against humanity** widespread attacks against civilians, including murder, enslavement, deportation, and torture

**Final Solution** the Nazis’ plan to systematically kill all European Jews

**genocide** the systematic extermination of a religious or ethnic group

**tribunal** court of justice

**war crimes** the killing, torture, and hostage-taking of civilian populations, or the deliberate and extensive destruction of their property



**FIGURE 5–36** Women were employed in non-traditional roles during the Second World War.

● What effect did the war have on the role of women?

## Women and the War Machine

The Second World War changed Canadian society. Most young men joined the military and many went overseas. At the same time, industrial production greatly increased, meaning that more workers were needed. Although women in poorer families and on farms had always worked, the middle-class ideal was that women looked after the home and men went out to work. This pattern was so engrained that middle-class men resisted even the idea that their wives would go to work, believing that it would indicate, among other things, that the men could not provide for their families. During the Depression, governments wanted women to stay at home to keep more men employed. When the war changed everything, attitudes had to change too.

### The National Selective Service Program

During the war, the National Selective Service program registered women for work in factories and established daycare centres in Ontario and Québec, where industry was concentrated. Women also joined the Canadian Women's Army Corps (CWAC), serving mostly as clerks, drivers, and nurses. By 1945, almost one-third of all Canadian women were employed in the war effort.

### Ronnie, the Bren Gun Girl

Governments used propaganda and created stereotypes to mobilize the home front and to change the public's mind about women in the workforce. Working in the war effort had to seem glamorous, exciting, and patriotic. The Americans created Rosie the Riveter to idealize the working woman. Her posters show her with sleeves rolled up, ready to pitch in and help her country. Canada's stereotypical working woman was Ronnie, the Bren Gun Girl, who was, as opposed to Rosie, a real person working in a munitions factory.

### Looking Further

1. In your own words, describe how the role of Canadian women changed from the Depression to the end of the Second World War.
2. Examine, describe, and compare the images of Rosie the Riveter and Ronnie, the Bren Gun Girl. What do they tell us about the societies they represent?
3. Describe social controls that might be used against a woman who chose to live independently rather than participate in the war effort.



**FIGURE 5-37** Ronnie, the Bren Gun Girl—a real Canadian woman named Veronica Foster



**FIGURE 5-38** Rosie the Riveter represented the idealized American woman contributing to the war effort.

## The Growing Demand for Social Change

The federal government's Wartime Prices and Trade Board was also established to help reduce social unrest. It limited the power of trade unions by controlling wages so that striking would be less effective. The shortage of labour, however, often worked to the unions' advantage, and many ignored restrictions on the right to strike. Workers wanted higher wages but they also demanded the right to bargain. The board was unable to prevent steel workers in Nova Scotia and coal miners in Alberta and British Columbia from going on strike in 1943. In 1944, the federal government softened its policy, allowing workers the right to join a union and forcing employers to recognize their workers' unions.

The war also brought changes to the role of government. The wartime government had been involved in almost every aspect of Canadians' lives, and many Canadians wanted some of this involvement to continue. The Co-operative Commonwealth Federation party and its platform of social reform was becoming increasingly popular at both the national and provincial levels, a fact that was not lost on Prime Minister Mackenzie King. In 1943, the CCF made up the Opposition in Ontario. In 1944, it formed the government in Saskatchewan under T.C. "Tommy" Douglas. Mackenzie King had already brought in an unemployment insurance program in 1940. In 1945, he expanded Canada's social assistance by bringing in the Family Allowance program, which helped families cover the cost of child maintenance. Canada's policy of "cradle to grave" social security had begun.

## The Conscription Crisis

Prime Minister Mackenzie King had promised there would be no conscription when Canada declared war in 1939. But the speed with which the Germans occupied Europe in 1940 stunned Canadians and made it clear that thousands of soldiers would be needed to fight against the Nazis. Canadians, including the opposition Conservative Party, demanded that their government do more for the war effort. In response to these demands, King's government quickly brought in the **National Resources Mobilization Act** (NRMA). This Act gave the government special emergency powers to take over the nation's resources. Most significantly, the NRMA allowed for conscription, although only for home defence.

## KEY TERMS

**"cradle to grave" social security** social assistance provided by the government, from birth to death

**National Resources Mobilization Act** an Act passed in 1940 enabling the government to do whatever was necessary for the war effort; it was amended in 1942 to allow conscription



**FIGURE 5-39** The government reminded Canadians that everyone was involved in the war effort—and to be aware of possible spies in their midst.

**Identifying Viewpoints** How serious does the danger of spying and sabotage appear to be from this poster? What course of action does it suggest citizens take? What techniques does it use to create an impact on the viewer?



● What effect did the War Measures Act have on the legal rights of Canadians?

## Racism and Japanese Canadians

When war broke out, more than 22 000 Japanese Canadians were living in British Columbia. No evidence indicated that they supported Japan in the war, nor did the government consider these **enemy aliens** a security risk. But anti-Japanese sentiment grew in Canada after the bombing of Pearl Harbor and the invasion of Hong Kong in 1941. In early 1942, the Canadian government caved in to public pressure. For the second time in its history (see Chapter 2), the War Measures Act was invoked. All Japanese Canadians living near the British Columbia coast were “invited” to move to the Okanagan Valley. They would be settled in temporary “relocation centres.” In the wake of anti-Japanese marches in Vancouver, about 750 people moved voluntarily. Soon, the government forced all Japanese Canadians, regardless of how long they had lived in Canada, to leave the coast.

Government officials separated families, sending members to different internment camps in the interior of British Columbia where they were held until the end of the war. David Suzuki, a famous Canadian environmentalist and broadcaster, was interned with his sisters and mother when he was six years old, while his father worked at a labour camp. Some families chose to go to Alberta or Manitoba. These locations were farther away, but at least families were allowed to stay together.

The situation worsened in January 1943. Federal government officials, called Custodians of Enemy Property, were given the power to confiscate and sell Japanese Canadians’ property. People who had been relocated inland lost everything. Possessions were auctioned off and the owners received almost nothing.

In 1945, the federal government offered Japanese Canadians a choice: they could apply to be sent to Japan, which had been devastated by war, or they could agree to permanently settle east of the Rocky Mountains. Some people challenged Canada’s right to deport innocent citizens, but the Supreme Court upheld the government’s position. In all, 3964 Japanese Canadians were deported—2000 were Canadian citizens. Thousands of other Japanese Canadians were relocated to other parts of Canada.

In 1947, the government finally cancelled the policy. It was not until 1988 that the federal government apologized for its actions. As compensation, it agreed to pay the people still living who were affected by the policy \$21 000 each. It also agreed to restore Canadian citizenship to any person who had been deported to Japan.

### Looking Further

1. Why were Japanese Canadians relocated and detained during the Second World War?
2. How would posters like Remember Hong Kong (on page 137) contribute to these attitudes?
3. In your opinion, what would be just compensation for Japanese Canadians interned during the war?
4. Canadian veterans who were POWs in Asia were not compensated for being starved or used as slave labour in Japanese factories, even though their mistreatment violated the rules of war. People often cite the compensation given to Japanese Canadians as a reason why the Canadian government should negotiate with the Japanese for compensation for these veterans. Do you agree with this reasoning? Explain your thinking.



**FIGURE 5–42** A Japanese Canadian family awaits relocation from Vancouver, 1942. Many families were separated, with men being interned separately.

**Thinking Critically** Why do you think the men were interned separately?

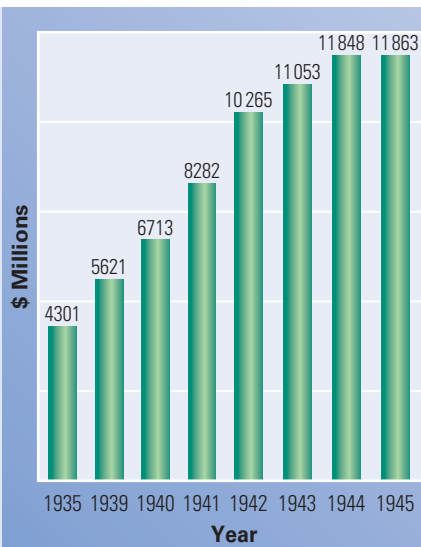


- What was the war's impact on the home front?

## KEY TERMS

**arsenal of democracy** a slogan coined by President Franklin D. Roosevelt in December 1940 promising to help the Allies fight the Germans by providing military supplies while staying out of the actual fighting

**war brides** foreign women who married Canadian troops serving overseas and then immigrated to Canada after the war



**FIGURE 5-43** Value of Canada's gross national product (GNP), 1935–1945. GNP is a measure of the value of all goods and services produced by a nation.

**Gathering Evidence** Why did Canada's GNP increase significantly during the war?

## What the War Meant to Canada

The Second World War had many long-lasting economic, social, and political effects on Canada. As you will read in the next chapter, these effects ushered in tremendous changes in post-war Canadian society.

### Economic Growth

Arsenals supply armies with weapons. In 1940, before the United States entered the war, President Roosevelt called the United States the “**arsenal of democracy**.” Roosevelt promised to arm and support the Allies, while staying out of the actual fighting. Canada, as part of the Empire, supplied both soldiers and an arsenal, providing Britain with the weapons and resources it needed to resist Germany from 1939 onwards.

Under its policy of total war, Canada provided major military and economic support to the Allies. The value of goods it produced rose from \$5.6 billion in 1939 to \$11.8 billion in 1945. During the war, Canada gave the Allies billions of dollars in financial aid.

Virtually every sector of the Canadian economy boomed. There was a rapid increase in the production of aluminum, which was used in the manufacture of aircraft. Wood and paper production rose, as did mining and smelting. There was also a great increase in the demand for petroleum to fuel tanks, trucks, and airplanes. A wave of exploration led to discoveries of new oil fields in Alberta. Many jobs were created in production, transportation, processing, and providing services for the new industries.

The wartime boom brought another important change to the Canadian economy. Agriculture, once the most important sector of Canada's economy, was overtaken by manufacturing. Canadian cities and the industrial areas around them became much more important contributors to the economy after the war. During the period from 1939 to 1949, Canada had transformed itself from a rural economy to a modern industrial nation.

### Societal Changes

The Second World War changed Canadian society in several ways. Women were employed in great numbers during the war. Their contribution helped to raise their profile in society and promote their rights as workers. There was a significant wave of immigration as about 48 000 **war brides**—along with approximately 21 000 children—arrived from Europe to join their soldier-husbands after the war. The government encouraged war brides to come to Canada by paying for their trip. Once they arrived, many faced a difficult adjustment as they became members of a new culture and society.

In addition to war brides, thousands of people displaced by the war came to Canada to start a new life. After the war, Canada eventually loosened some of its immigration restrictions to allow more people to come to Canada to meet the growing demand for labour. But, for the most part, Canadian immigration policy remained unchanged. It allowed mainly immigrants from preferred countries in Europe to enter Canada.

## Building an Identity

Canada's enormous contribution to the war, in both human and economic terms, gave it a new role on the world stage. Just two decades earlier, Canada had been a colony in the British Empire. By the end of the Second World War, Canada had emerged as a major player in a global conflict, with one of the world's largest navies and fourth-largest Allied air force. Once again, Canadian troops proved themselves on the battlefields, and were recognized for their contribution to the Allied victory. In addition, the efforts of Aboriginal, Asian, and black soldiers—along with those from other minority groups—during the war helped further civil rights for all Canadians. Although many Canadians were killed, wounded, and captured, the Second World War became a defining event in the development of Canada's identity.

*But it was a good war for Canada too, because it made us a great nation. I mean... it showed us what we could do. We just weren't a bunch of wheat farmers and Nova Scotia fishermen and lumbermen in B.C. We were a nation. A big and tough and strong nation.*

—Quoted in Barry Broadfoot, *Six War Years*, 1974



**FIGURE 5-45** In May 1946, more than 100 black veterans attended a welcome home banquet in their honour.

● What factors contributed to Canada's emerging autonomy?

Country	Casualties
Canada	42 000
Britain	326 000
France	340 000
Germany	325 000
Soviet Union	8 668 000
Japan	1 506 000
United States	295 000

**FIGURE 5-44** Allied and Axis military casualties

**Thinking Critically** Casualty numbers for the Second World War vary widely depending upon their source. Give some possible explanations.

## PRACTICE QUESTIONS

- a) How did the war end the Depression?

b) What were the major changes in Canada's economy during this period?
- In what ways did the war change the social make-up of Canada? In what ways was it unchanged?
- In your opinion, which branch of the armed forces had the greatest impact on the outcome of the war? Provide evidence from the chapter.
- Do you agree that "it was a good war"? Explain.
- Significance** What were the three most significant ways that the Second World War changed Canada?

**CHAPTER FOCUS QUESTION** How did the Second World War impact Canada socially, politically, and economically?

Unlike in the First World War, Canada entered the Second World War as a recognized and independent nation. Even so, ties to Britain were still very strong. After Britain declared war on Germany in September of 1939, Canada almost immediately followed suit. The war put the development of Canadian industry into overdrive. On the home front, women took over many of the jobs formerly done only by men and everyone had to adjust to rationing and the rigours of a war economy. Canadians fought in Hong Kong, Dieppe, Italy, Normandy, and

Holland. The Canadian navy grew enormously during the war, protecting the sea lanes over which the products of Canadian forests, farms, and factories travelled to Britain and Russia to help the war effort. Canadian pilots and crews fought in the Battle of Britain and flew thousands of missions over Europe. The need for more personnel brought back conscription, which again threatened to split the nation. Canada's participation was critical to the war effort and won the nation increased status in the post-war world.

1. Complete the following organizer to show the impact of the Second World War on Canada.

Event	Description	Significance of the Event	Long-lasting Effects

**Vocabulary Focus**

2. Review Key Terms on page 119. Then go to the Pearson Web site and match the terms with their definitions.

**Knowledge and Understanding**

3. Continue the annotated timeline showing steps to Canadian autonomy that you started in Chapter 2. Review the events that are covered in this chapter. Write the name and date of each event on the timeline and explain how the event contributed to Canadian independence.
4. Outline the causes of the Second World War.
5. Describe how the war changed women's roles and how you think this may have changed Canadian society.

6. Explain the significance of each of the following to Canada:

- a) Battle of Hong Kong
- b) Dieppe Raid
- c) Battle of Britain
- d) Battle of Ortona
- e) Battle of the Scheldt
- f) Battle of the Atlantic
- g) Liberating the Netherlands
- h) D-Day

7. The Nazis killed millions of Jewish people in the Holocaust during the Second World War, but their anti-Semitism became official government policy in the 1930s. What position do you think the Canadian government should have taken toward Germany before the war? Might the war have been prevented if other countries had protested? Explain.
8. Find examples in the textbook of divisions within the country that were exacerbated by the war.

## Critical Thinking

### Significance

9. Use the organizer you created in Question 1. Which three events had the greatest impact on Canada? Provide evidence to support your opinion.

### Cause and Consequence

10. Could war have been avoided if Britain, France, and their allies had stood up to Hitler's demands earlier than they did? Why do you think politicians were so ready to appease Germany in 1939? Prepare reasoned arguments for both sides of these questions.
11. During the Second World War, Canada and its allies practised "total war." Explain how this contributed to the Allied victory. How successful would Canada have been if it had participated in the war on a limited basis, such as with the war in Afghanistan?
12. Discuss with a partner how the following countries and groups might have viewed Canada at the end of the Second World War. Be prepared to discuss your ideas with the class.
- Britain
  - the Netherlands
  - United States
  - Japanese Canadians
  - Canadian women

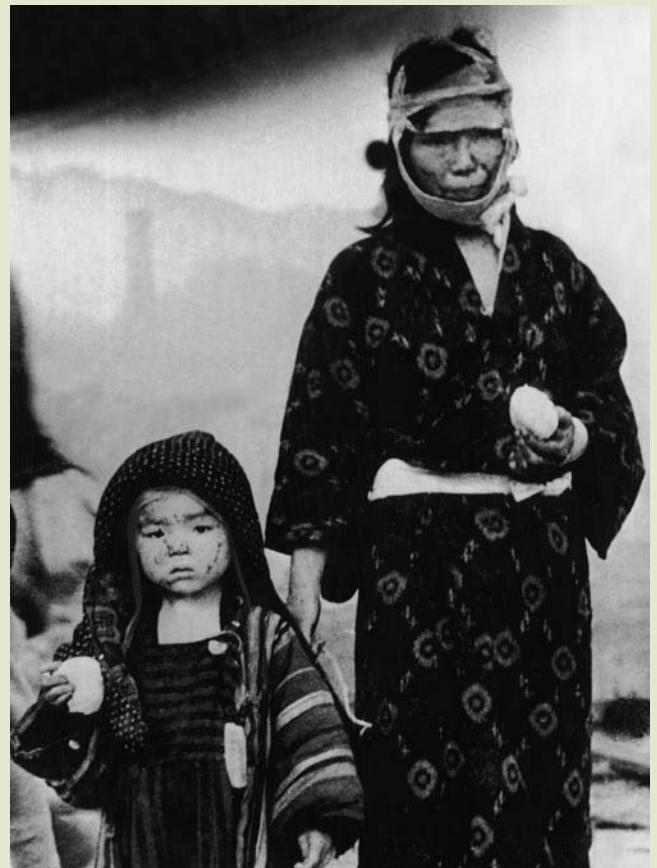
## Document Analysis

13. Read the quotations on the bombing of Hiroshima on pages 150–151, keeping in mind that quotations must always be understood in context.
- What moral question is raised here?
  - Briefly summarize the arguments presented and rank them by how strong you think they are.
  - Do you think photos of the bombing victims have influenced the use of nuclear weapons? Explain.
  - In your opinion, where does the responsibility for the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki chiefly lie? Explain.

- e) Faced with the same factual information as Truman, would you have decided to use the atomic bomb?

*Having found the bomb we have used it. We have used it against those who attacked us without warning at Pearl Harbor, against those who have starved and beaten and executed American prisoners of war, against those who have abandoned all pretense of obeying international laws of warfare. We have used it in order to shorten the agony of war, in order to save the lives of thousands and thousands of young Americans.*

*—Harry S. Truman, 1945*



**FIGURE 5-46** A woman and child who survived the atomic bomb dropped on Nagasaki, Japan, on August 9, 1945. Their faces are burned from the heat of the explosion.