

**WAR AND SOCIETY IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY:  
CANADA AND THE GREAT POWERS IN  
WORLD WAR I AND WORLD WAR II**

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Late in June 1914, a young Bosnian nationalist in the then obscure Balkan town of Sarajevo shot and killed Archduke Franz Ferdinand, heir to the throne of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. This violent but seemingly isolated act set in motion a series of policies that were to culminate in the outbreak, in August 1914, of the greatest and most destructive war up to that time. The legacies of this conflict contributed significantly to an even more destructive war a little more than twenty years later. The initial struggle, called by contemporaries “the Great War”, only ended in November 1918, after nearly four and a half years of fighting. The Second World War lasted even longer, from September 1939 until August 1945.

The results of both wars were calamitous in many ways. The first war provided the conditions for the successful rise of the totalitarian ideologies of Fascism and Communism and their manifestations in Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia. The second conflict led directly to the emergence of the Cold War between the two superpowers of militantly capitalist America and her empire against the Soviets and their captive empire. In that sense the twentieth century can be said to have begun not in 1900 but in 1914 and to have ended not in 2000 but in 1991 with the collapse of the Soviet experiment. Today we live with the uncertainties of the American empire, an Imperium whose coming and nature were accelerated and fashioned by the legacies of the two world wars. Finally, these wars were disasters not least because the fighting left over 8,500,000 soldiers dead by the end of 1918, some 8,000,000 civilians killed and another 2,000,000 people dead in the Russian Civil War of 1919-20. Conservative estimates reveal that nearly 17,500,000 soldiers and approximately 38,00,000 civilians died in the Second World War as well as 6,000,000 Jews murdered in the Holocaust and another 4,000,000 non-Jews liquidated in the German death camps. In addition, millions of soldiers and civilians were permanently injured, both physically and emotionally. Such carnage deeply eroded, perhaps forever, optimism about the progress of the human race towards an era of enlightenment, peace and tolerance.

While never facing civilian casualties, nor any bombing or occupation, Canada was deeply affected. It suffered over 60,000 dead in the First World War and over 42,000 in the Second, while 173,000 men were wounded. In what came to be called “The Great War” and another 54,000 in World War II. These wars, especially the second conflict, transformed Canada’s status from a country in many ways still dependent upon Britain to a state within the “informal empire” of the United States.

## II. WORLD WAR II

How did these catastrophes come about? Europe had long been too small for the ambitions of its Great Powers. Some states, notably Britain, Russia and France, had developed world-wide empires, causing in the process bitter rivalries. After 1870, with the creation of the German Empire by Otto von Bismarck, the tensions became explosive, as Germany had become the mightiest military power in the world. Until his dismissal in 1890, Bismarck sought peace to consolidate the Empire. Germans called this new state the Second Reich, the First Reich having been that of Charlemagne, the first Holy Roman Emperor who ruled over most of the Christian West and had been crowned by the Pope in 800 A. D.

Bismarck’s successors, however, especially Kaiser Wilhelm, or Emperor-William II, and the burgeoning industrial magnates, wanted an empire like the other Great Powers. They planned to expand overseas and perhaps in Europe by building not only a bigger army but also a large navy, the strength of which at that time was measured by the numbers and qualities of battleships called “Dreadnoughts”. While the army threatened France and Russia, the navy with its modern battleships posed a special danger to Britain which had deployed sea-power throughout the nineteenth century to police the world and protect her empire. A dangerous arms race began, not unlike the later nuclear rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union.

Anxious to contain German ambitions, Britain, France and Russia had by 1907 concluded an informal set of agreements to face the eventuality of war with Germany. These agreements intensified fears among many Germans that they were “encircled” and led to much official discussion concerning the possibility of a preemptive strike. Bismarck had as early as 1879 allied with Austria-Hungary, convinced that the venerable Habsburg Empire was the only dominant state Germany could rely upon in the event of a European crisis. Austria-Hungary, however, was a rather unstable ally by 1914. It was a multinational empire which, while dominated by Germans and Hungarians, contained many Slavs, especially Serbs, who increasingly in the early twentieth century looked to Russia as their protector and actively sought to undermine the Habsburg state. Hence, when the Austrian Archduke was assassinated in Sarajevo, Vienna believed, rightly as was the case, that the Balkan Serb state had armed and encouraged the assassin, a teenager named Gavrilo Princip. Determined to punish Serbia and remove her as a force which could appeal to Slavs and eventually destroy the Habsburg monarchy, the Austrian Government in Vienna sent an ultimatum which the Serbs could only accept if they were prepared to become a client state of Austria-Hungary.

With this ultimatum the real antagonists began to emerge. Russia determined to defend “little Serbia”. Germany refused to see her one ally humiliated by Russia. France was determined to stand by Russia, her one main defense against German aggression. While reluctant to enter a war, British leaders saw no realistic alternative but to align themselves with France and Russia, fearing that a German military victory would make that Empire dominant in Europe and render Britain subordinate to Berlin. This view was contested by an influential minority in Britain which was hostile to any agreement which would lead their country to fight alongside despotic Russia and against the Germans who, for all their tradition of bowing to “Prussian Militarism”, represented a highly civilized culture in the arts and in sciences. In 1914, Canada, despite her status as the senior Dominion in the Empire, was still a colony and hence automatically would become a belligerent if Britain felt compelled to declare war. This dependency relationship had been recognized by Sir Wilfrid Laurier when, as the Liberal Prime Minister, he had stated in 1910 that “When Britain is at war, Canada is at war. There is no distinction.”

Diplomacy broke down when Germany determined that she had no advantageous choice but war, for both her military and civilian leaders believed that Russian power was increasing every year. If there had to be war, then Germany was in an optimum position in 1914. Berlin’s decision to go to war distressed the British Foreign Secretary, Sir Edward Grey, leading him to prophesy that “the lamps are going out all over Europe; we shall not see them lit in our lifetime.” He had tried, belatedly, to keep the opposing powers from going to war by urging a diplomatic conference in London. Germany and the other continental Great Powers, however, were in no mood to listen. An unstable combination of paranoia and expansionist dreams drove their foreign policies. Early in August 1914 Germany, along with Austria- Hungary, began hostilities against France and Russia. Thereafter Germany together with Austria-Hungary were described as the Central Powers. Britain and her Empire, France and her Empire and Russia and her Empire composed the Allies. Lacking the overall manpower and other resources of the Allies, Germany sought a swift victory by relying on rapid mobilization.

The Germans were not alone in believing that a war had to be short; all belligerents were convinced that European and world capitalism could not survive a prolonged struggle. How wrong such prophets were! In any event, the war lasted more than four years, from August 1914 to November 1918. Europe had had no major war for over forty years and, whipped to feverish excitement by the often hysterical patriotic propaganda, young men in all the warring powers, including tens of thousands of enthusiastic Canadians and others from the far-flung British Empire, flocked to the colours, fearing that the conflict might well be over before they had their opportunity for glory. Another, less publicized, motive for signing up in 1914, both in Canada and in other countries without conscription, was the prospect for many of steady if dangerous employment.

To fight a two front struggle the German generals pursued the strategy dictated by the *Schlieffen* Plan, whereby almost their entire armed forces attacked France through neutral Belgium, using Germany’s superior railways in an attempt to crush the French in less than seven weeks. By invading neutral Belgium, Germany violated international law and provided Britain with both moral and expedient reasons for entering the conflict. The

German invasion discredited those in Britain who were opposed to war and allowed the Prime Minister, H. H. Asquith, to unite the Liberal Cabinet and rally most of the country against the “Huns”, as many Germans had been increasingly characterized in the pre-war culture of “Germanophobia.”. Ironically, before the German attack, Belgium had been condemned throughout the Western world for the murder and pillage carried out in the Congo by her notorious King Leopold II. Now she was praised in the West as “gallant little Belgium”.

As the German forces smashed through Belgium and into France their High Command was already arranging to shift these armies to the East to destroy the slowly mobilizing forces of the inefficient Empire of Tsar Nicholas II. Although this “Plan” had been well-known to all the General Staffs of Europe since 1905, neither they nor the German High Command had any clear sense of how, in practice, the strategy actually would work. Hence, like most military plans which come to be perceived as dogma, the German one failed. Stopped before Paris in the famous “Battle of the Marne”, German forces sought a renewed war of movement by marching to the north, attempting to outflank the French army and the small British Expeditionary Force that had landed on the Continent. Simultaneously, the Western Allies, France and Britain, tried to outflank the Germans in the same way. In this manner both sides eventually had to stop when they reached the English Channel.

The conflict, which almost everyone had thought would be over by Christmas 1914, became bogged down in relentless, virtually immobile trench warfare, in which the defense, deploying machine guns and artillery, was dominant. In the East there was some movement and the Germans inflicted terrible casualties on the poorly armed Russian troops. Yet, like soldiers in all the belligerent countries, the Russians were prepared to suffer ghastly losses and still keep fighting, at least until 1917. The generals in this war believed slavishly in the “Cult of the Offensive”. Few of them had any clear understanding of modern military technology. Army after army was hurled at the enemy lines with the intent of opening up gaps through which cavalry would then pour and race ahead to seize their opponents’ headquarters. Unfortunately for the soldiers the generals failed to grasp the defensive capacities of machine guns, quick-firing artillery and barbed wire. Offensive after offensive failed as men in the hundreds of thousands on each side were cut down by machine guns before they even reached the lines of barbed wire which ensnared them in the killing ground. Because men were packed so closely together, the deployment of huge numbers of artillery weapons also killed many and left others with terrible shrapnel wounds, so evident in the postwar prevalence of large numbers of crippled men in every belligerent country, often found begging on street corners. The use of poison gas, first employed by the Germans in 1915 and then adopted by the Allies, also meant that many of those poisoned by such chemicals spent the rest of their all-too-shortened lives hardly able to work after 1918, as their digestive systems were often badly damaged or they died slow deaths owing to respiratory failure. Many thousands of soldiers also suffered from what was loosely labeled as “shell shock”, a description of diverse mental disorders resulting from stress in combat. Pinned in trenches, soldiers felt utterly helpless under the strain of the systematic shelling. Many officers wanted to shoot such soldiers for cowardice, little realizing that they were suffering from what today is called “post traumatic stress”. There were 65,000 British soldiers after the war drawing government disability pensions from these emotional maladies. Many never recovered since only a few psychiatrists and psychologists notably Britain’s W. H. R. Rivers knew anything about ameliorative therapy, or what is called psycho therapy. The often-administered “electric shock treatment”, cold baths or moral exhortation were of little use.

The war in the West, and to some extent in the East, now settled into one of immobility and attrition, with each side, in turn, trying unsuccessfully to break the enemy lines by sending masses of troops straight at the trenches. At Verdun in 1916, for example, the German offensive was designed simply to “outkill” their French opponents, with the objective of compelling France to quit the war. The results of such offensives were mutually catastrophic in terms of deaths and casualties. On 1 July 1916, the first day of the “Battle of the Somme”, the British had 19,000 killed and 38,000 wounded in what was the worst single day military disaster in British history. That battle also demonstrated what was the case throughout almost the entire conflict, at least until the summer of 1918, namely, the leadership superiority of the German officers and the preeminent warrior skills of the German soldiers. These soldiers consistently killed more of the Allied soldiers than the Allied troops were able to kill German soldiers. Partly this was because the Germans had deeper, better drained and more methodically fortified

trenches. The primacy of pre- attack artillery barrages and then infantry charges characterized the campaigns throughout almost the entire war. By 1917, and to a greater extent in 1918, the combatants, the British in particular, had successfully developed new tactics, integrating rudimentary tanks and fighter planes and bombers with the infantry, thereby anticipating the technology of future conflicts.

To increase the armies and replace the dead and wounded, all belligerents constantly called up new recruits. Secretary of State for War, Lord Kitchener, one of the few to predict a long war, called for Britain to raise “New Armies” to fight an extended struggle on the Continent. Soon 2,500,000 men had volunteered and many more came later. Their morale and that of the Home Fronts was maintained both by innocent patriotism and flagrant propaganda, with each side depicting the other as brutal and even satanic. Each coalition stated categorically that God supported its side. In this propaganda campaign, in addition to newsreels the relatively new medium of the “movies” or the “cinema” became an important tool for sustaining morale. Songs also were a major way in which morale was maintained both at “Home” and at the Front where soldiers often sang “It’s a Long Way to Tipperary” out of a sense of comradeship. The sentimental words of “Roses of Picardy” and “Keep the Home Fires Burning” resonated widely domestically.

A deep rift in experience developed, however, between soldiers in battle and civilians who, with a few exceptions, did not come under attack. Many soldiers came to view civilians antagonistically, believing that they could never understand the horrors of the trenches. War poems, notably by Siegfried Sassoon and Wilfred Owen, captured in a savage manner the alienation of many of those in the trenches from those at home. While such “anti war” poets have been much quoted after the war as evidence of widespread opposition to combat, they capture primarily the aspect of the soldiers’ hostility towards the Home Front. Many soldiers from all armies revealed an alarming willingness to kill their enemies without compunction.

Propaganda was also intended to encourage neutral states to support the respective coalitions. America, especially, was courted as by far the most significant neutral. In this competition the Allies had a significant advantage. The British were far more skilled at presenting their case and vilifying their enemies than were the Germans. The Germans were often blunderers, foolishly alienating the Americans and others. A notorious example was the legal decision to shoot the English nurse Edith Cavell for aiding British prisoners in Belgium to escape. It was “correct” in German military law but was profoundly detrimental internationally because her death appeared to validate British allegations that the Germans behaved like “Huns.” Her “martyrdom” is remembered today in Canada at Jasper National Park which is overlooked by a mountain named in honour of Edith Cavell. Britain and her Allies also had significant economic advantages in the contest for America’s support. Because of British naval supremacy, the Central Powers and their new ally, Turkey, were blockaded. This meant that America could effectively sell goods and instruments of war only to the Allies. The Germans, by contrast, were forced to resort to submarine warfare as their prime means of attempting to cause the collapse of Britain, thereby arresting her war effort by hunger at home and by preventing the transference of American supplies to the Allies. The British Government also financed much of her Allies war effort and acted as the banker for her partners by distributing American loans. Despite widespread neutralist sentiments in America, especially promoted by the large German and Irish minorities, the United States was slowly drawn directly into the conflict directly. By April 1917, German sinkings of American merchant ships destined to Britain and the enormous investments Americans had afforded the Allies, led President Wilson to call upon Congress to declare war on the Central Powers.

On the Home Fronts, something close to “Total War” was achieved with women, particularly by 1915, entering in great numbers the hitherto male occupations to work in burgeoning munitions factories and as bus conductors, policewomen and volunteer nurses. To make women workers more efficient, Governments installed canteens, provided separate lavatories and insisted that factory “girls” wear loose clothing and cut their long hair to minimize the risk of accidents. Still there were hazards, especially for women in shell manufacturing where the use of phosphorous caused many to be poisoned and their skin to turn yellow. They were called “canaries”. Women were also crucial in the work of the numerous “volunteer” societies which sprang up to assist soldiers’ wives, to provide canteens for soldiers on leave and to take part in recruiting drives. Western societies, however, were divided

about so many women working with conservatives and eugenics advocates alleging that the females' main role of becoming mothers to continue the "race" was being seriously jeopardized. Women also played a dominant role in national campaigns warning soldiers and girls of the dangers of the venereal diseases which flourished in the relaxed sexual revolution brought about by the war. Governments often identified venereal diseases, which they perceived as deadly both to the soldiers and to the "race", as spread by "frivolous girls" as opposed to the "useful girls". Thus, it developed that female carriers of the diseases, whether prostitutes or "amateurs", often tainted the public roles of women in general since for men were seldom blamed. So hostile were the Anglo-Saxon governments to the idea of birth control methods and so hesitant to inform soldiers about human sexuality, that in Britain, for example, knowledge about the use of condoms was suppressed. The result was that throughout the war at least one British division, about 12,000 men, was incapacitated at all times with venereal diseases. While war work provided many women with unprecedented self confidence, other women often were used by governments to coerce men into uniform by such devices as waving white feathers at those shirking enlistment. Overall, however, the diverse mobilization of women was to have permanent transformative effects on Western societies, leading inadvertently to some achievements in the progress of women's rights, notably the grant of the vote in most Western countries after 1918.

To fight this unexpectedly long conflict Governments were therefore obliged to assume unprecedented powers to organize the resources of their respective states. Controls over trade, finance, food and mineral resources were imposed along with censorship. Sweeping legislation, such as the *Defense of the Realm Act* in Britain, allowed belligerent governments to interpret "treasonable" behaviour very broadly. The unprecedented range of these controls meant that they were often implemented in a haphazard fashion, especially through pacts with trade unions and labour parties which guaranteed workers who enlisted the first claim to their jobs after the conflict in return for staunch support of the war effort. Such bargains did not bode well for women in war work who hoped to keep their jobs when peace came. Another cause of social discontent arose because Governments, in desperation over the inadequacy of state armament facilities, had to turn to private industry for arms and munitions. This allowed many industrialists to find themselves in the enviable position of being both patriotic and increasingly wealthy, for excess profits taxes hardly existed or, if in place, were seldom enforced. Since the war meant sacrifice for so many, "profiteering" led to considerable ill-feeling during and after the war. Stanley Baldwin, soon to be a Conservative Prime Minister, voiced this bitterness when he remarked that the postwar House of Commons in Britain was filled with "hard- faced men who looked as if they had done well out of the war."

Governments had to make difficult choices about allocating manpower. While ever more numerous legions were required in the trenches, there had to be a balance between the men needed to do battle and the skilled manpower required to maintain and expand war production in the domestic economies. In Canada the war economy was primarily geared to producing munitions. Both in Britain and Canada women supplemented the workforce, but they still had to tend children and care for the wounded. Nor were they yet skilled in sufficient numbers such that they could take over entire domestic economies, even had male-dominated societies been prepared to countenance such a revolution! All governments had to comb out the ranks of shirkers and older men in countries where conscription was already a way of life, notably in the huge prewar continental armies of the Central Powers and France and Russia. In English-speaking combatant countries there had not been the need for such large armies, for none had contiguous land frontiers with the continental Great Powers. Moreover, partly because of this relative security from rapid and massive invasions, civil liberties were a good deal more rooted in Britain and the Dominions and in America. Widespread belief in a citizen's right to choose whether or not to take up arms flourished before 1914.

Throughout the British Empire voluntary recruitment was falling well behind military need by late 1915. By early 1916 the British Coalition Government of Liberals and Conservatives haltingly imposed conscription which was accepted by the vast majority of the citizens, although not by a small minority, including the distinguished philosopher Bertrand Russell. In Canada, however, the Borden Government's 1917 conscription legislation created dangerous divisions, for it was bitterly opposed in Quebec. The conscription legislation that Britain, the Dominions and the United States legislated did not entirely curtail the idea of voluntarism, in that

Conscientious Objector or CO status was permitted under severely and precariously limited conditions, generally relating to religious convictions against taking up arms. Britain also recognized some COs who objected to the war on political grounds. Nevertheless, COs often faced imprisonment under harsh conditions and long term social and economic discrimination.

Governments were also compelled to offer their citizens hope for a better future after the struggle, for that was the major reason why so many were prepared to persevere. That is why one of the most popular slogans among the Allies was the rallying cry of H. G. Wells that “this was the war to end all wars.” After America’s entry, that country became enthusiastically militant. President Woodrow Wilson gave a further moral imperative to the conflict by asserting that this struggle was to make the “world safe for democracy.” At a practical level, Allied Administrations promised “Reconstruction” after the war. There would be better employment, economic benefits and, particularly, new “homes fit for heroes.”

Canadians suffered many of these traumatic experiences, despite being so far removed from the actual fighting. Anti-German propaganda was intense and immigrants of German background as well as those coming from the lands of the Austro-Hungarian Empire were often accused of being subversives. Indeed, in 1917 the Borden Coalition Government passed legislation disenfranchising all Canadians whose country of origin was one of the Central Powers. (In Saskatchewan in 1919 the Provincial Government was so incensed at many German Canadians, such as the pacifist Old Colony Mennonites, that they changed the names of a few of their village schools to commemorate battles in which English-speaking soldiers had fought. A notable example was Hochfeld school which was renamed Passchendaele after the battle there in 1917). Most of the volunteers who rushed to recruiting stations were of British background. French Canadians felt less enthusiasm at the prospect of fighting on behalf of the British Empire or even in defense of their original homeland. After all, Quebec culture at the time was deeply clerical and somewhat authoritarian politically as opposed to the secular, democratic society of Third Republic France. Moreover, English-speaking recruiting officers often treated French Canadian men of military age in a remarkably callous manner. Nevertheless, many French Canadians volunteered and the Quebec Van Doos Regiment developed a distinguished fighting reputation in both wars.

Reminders are still evident of the manner in which Canadians tried to confront the unprecedented losses and transform the conflict into a heroic struggle. All combatant nations attempted to give meaning to the Great War by military cemeteries that were and continue to be regarded as shrines to the individual fallen soldiers. They expressed national attempts to escape from the horror of war by appealing to the glory and sacrifice of the dead. Historians have described how Christian motifs and pastoral environments characterized all these national cemeteries. The uniformity of each nation’s graves symbolized the comradeship that was seen to have prevailed on the battlefield. In previous wars, except for the American precedent of the Civil War, the dead were generally buried in mass graves. The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, a Cenotaph, also was a symbol of the “Cult of the War Experience.” There are Memorials to the Fallen in the centre of almost every city and town in Canada. In Saskatoon the Memorial in Kinsmen Park to Hugh Cairns V. C. standing with one foot on a soccer ball exemplifies the steadfastness, courage and, especially, the “manliness” of the individual war hero. The Memorial Gates at the University of Saskatchewan commemorate the collective sacrifice of those students who gave their lives. Such Memorials reflected in the West an unprecedented cultural development in ways of coping with bereavement and erecting sites for mourning. The novelist and poet Rudyard Kipling captured the mythic significance of these graves and sites by his words “Their name liveth for evermore.”

In 1917 the Canadian Corps of four divisions in northern France captured Vimy Ridge, which the Germans had used to inflict heavy casualties on Allied troops. Historians have seen this victory as a defining event in Canada’s progress towards becoming a mature nation state. That year also saw a number of armies mutiny, notably in France, and even disintegrate, as was the case in Russia. The exceptions to this collapse of military morale were Britain and her Imperial allies and Germany as well as the fresh, newly arrived Americans. 1917 also saw the final collapse of the Russian Imperial Government and its eventual replacement by a Bolshevik regime under Lenin

dedicated to world revolution. Lenin had been able to reach Russia only because the German Military, anxious to promote further disorder in that country, had sent him in a sealed boxcar from Switzerland to Petrograd.

Lenin's Communist ideology was a severe critique of Western liberalism and European imperialism which he argued had arisen inexorably from capitalism. His ideas had strong appeal to many colonial peoples, intellectuals and workers who believed that they were imprisoned in "wage slavery". In a sense, President Wilson's "Fourteen Points", proclaimed in January 1918, represented a counter ideology of liberal internationalism, with his emphasis on "open", or "democratic" diplomacy, as opposed to the "secret" diplomacy of Britain and France, and his advocacy of the principle of national self-determination. His "Fourteen Points" gave an idealism and a credibility to Allied war aims which went far beyond earlier Anglo-French war aims of merely liberating Belgium and Serbia while secretly planning to carve up German and Turkish possessions. German war aims, and those of the former Russian Empire before its collapse, were also narrowly expansionist. The new war leaders of Britain and France, David Lloyd George and Georges Clemenceau, remained uncomfortable with some of these lofty goals which they considered unrealistic. Yet they dared not oppose them publicly while the war was still being waged.

By 1918 the German Government was under the control of its Military leaders, notably General Ludendorff. With Russia out of the war and burdened by the punitive Treaty of Brest-Litovsk imposed by Ludendorff, he could shift almost the entire German army to the Western Front for one last offensive early in March 1918. He hoped to destroy the British and Commonwealth armies and the mutiny-weakened French forces before American power could be decisively mobilized. This was a serious miscalculation, for Ludendorff had under-estimated the speed and power of American mobilization and the resolve of the British and Imperial troops. The Germans also failed not only because Germany was running out of men but also soldiers and civilians alike were running out of hope, especially as their leader, Ludendorff, had lost his nerve when he failed to meet his objective. The army was exhausted and hunger prevailed at home as a result of the Allied blockade. This plight was not obvious to most Allied leaders who still believed that the war would continue into 1919 and perhaps end only in 1920. In despair, however, Ludendorff called upon civilian German politicians to make peace, even though no German territory had been invaded and despite the fact that his soldiers continued to fight resolutely, particularly as the Allied forces neared the German homeland.

### **III. THE FLAWED PEACE**

The victorious Allies, now under the moral leadership of President Wilson, insisted that they would only make peace with a democratic Germany, not one ruled by the German Emperor. Kaiser William hastily abdicated in early November 1918 and German politicians proclaimed the Weimar Republic in hopes of receiving benevolent treatment from the victors. Alas, for all of the widespread popularity of Wilson when he arrived in France, vengeful passions soon replaced the gusts of goodwill towards him personally. The European Allied statesmen who assembled at Versailles early in 1919 to establish peace after such a bitterly fought war were in no mood to be charitable. They were, it must be remembered, also driven to harshness by their respective citizens who had been conditioned to hate their former enemies.

Reflecting Canadian pride in her wartime achievements, Sir Robert Borden, the Prime Minister, insisted successfully on Canada being represented independently of Britain both at Versailles and as a member of the soon-to-be formed League of Nations. In this manner Borden played a significant role in transforming Canada's status from that of a colony to that of a nation.

Led by Wilson but in fact increasingly dominated by Lloyd George of Britain and Clemenceau of France who advanced traditional national security interests, the Allies attempted to create a stable, enduring peace settlement. They faced a Europe in which hunger and even starvation were widespread, small national groups clamoured for new states to be carved out of the remains of the fallen Austro-Hungarian Empire and Russia was in

the midst of a savage civil war between defenders of the old monarchy and the soon-to-be-victorious Bolsheviks. Two noted humanitarians who played a dominant role in alleviating the postwar starvation crisis were Herbert Hoover, later President of the United States, and the Danish explorer, Fridtjof Nansen, who was awarded the Nobel Prize for peace because of his relief work in Russia. Compounding these enormous difficulties was the fact that the French and British leaders were determined to condemn Germany as solely responsible for the coming of the war. These vindictive attitudes were embodied in the peace settlement, the Treaty of Versailles, that also stripped Germany of about a fifth of her prewar territories while burdening her with heavy reparations to the victors. The Treaty of Versailles was criticized at the time by Allied opinion leaders. No one had greater impact than the British economist John Maynard Keynes in *The Economic Consequences of the Peace* (1919). His arguments against the settlement were many, but he focused on the folly of trying to make Germany pay huge reparations which, he charged, would disrupt the recovery of international trade and deepen German bitterness.

Wilson opposed some of these harsh measures but compromised in order to gain acceptance of his main goal which was to form a League of Nations to mediate or arbitrate future disputes among countries with the aim of abolishing war. The League was created but it was largely ineffectual since the American Senate, by rejecting the Treaty of Versailles, refused to involve the United States in the League. In addition, the most potentially powerful European states, defeated Germany and the pariah Bolshevik Russia, were deliberately excluded. Indeed, fear of Bolshevism was so great that the Allies intervened militarily in war-torn Russia in a futile attempt to crush the Communist regime. At the same time, alarmed Allied Governments acted harshly against domestic postwar Radicalism as manifested in strikes and workers' demands for a more equitable economic order. In a panic over the "Red Scare", American authorities brutally crushed protesters suspected of being Bolshevik-inspired while in 1919 the Borden Government in Canada ruthlessly suppressed the Winnipeg General Strike.

#### **IV. UNSTABLE PEACE: THE INTERWAR YEARS – 1919-1939**

The failure of the Allies to create a fair and stable European peace was paralleled by the collapse of "Reconstruction" schemes domestically. Instead of "homes for heroes", returning soldiers often faced unemployment, disillusionment for many of the wounded and social isolation for the disabled. Allied governments attempted to return to "normalcy", by which they meant a return to the pre-1914 economic world of limited governments and unrestricted capitalism. After the destruction of war and the heightened self-consciousness of organized labour movements, this was politically impossible. Moreover, many countries frantically tried to strengthen their economies by misguided tariff policies that stifled attempts to resurrect a healthy international trading system.

Further complicating the postwar scene was the fact that many in the West were alienated from liberal democratic ideals and capitalism, both of which had not only failed to prevent war but, in the latter case, may have been a determining cause. Others who thought that the "Great War" would usher in an era of liberal democracies informed by the Wilsonian doctrine of national self-determination were profoundly disappointed, especially as nationalism generally manifested itself in xenophobia. During the interwar period the disillusioned tended to seek one of two new creeds. Some, especially intellectuals and workers, looked to the Communist experiment in Russia as offering hope for a free and classless society, while others chose Fascism with its rejection of parliamentary processes in favour of elevating both the cult of the irrational and the all-powerful leader. George Bernard Shaw, the noted Anglo-Irish dramatist and social thinker, and Jean Paul Sartre, the French philosopher, came to see the Soviet Union as leading the way to the "new Jerusalem", while the famous American aviator, Charles Lindbergh, in 1941 accepted a medal from the Nazis and urged America to keep out of a war advocated "by the British, the Roosevelt Administration and the Jews."

Although France, Italy and Germany developed large Communist parties, all of which deferred slavishly to Moscow, Fascist dictatorships tended to become entrenched throughout the 1920s and 1930s in a number of the

states, notably Italy by 1922 under Mussolini. Many Italians believed that their country had been cheated of territorial acquisitions at the Paris Peace Conference and were prepared to accept the leadership of the demagogue Mussolini, who promised to bring Italy imperial glory while making the Mediterranean “an Italian sea”. Other Italians were ready to welcome Fascism since liberal values had shallow roots in a country of widespread illiteracy and notoriously corrupt politicians. Other countries which arose because of the war, especially those which had either been recreated, notably Poland and Hungary, or newly formed Yugoslavia in particular, looked to dictators rather than to liberal democratic types of government. Of the new post 1918 states, only Czechoslovakia proved able and willing to develop liberal democratic institutions.

In the Far East the warrior elite ruling Japan took advantage of European absorption in the war to demand concessions from China, a country then in the throes of strife from competing warlords, a small and precariously based Nationalist Party and an emerging Communist Party. The key event in China’s attempt to modernize and become a unified nation state was the student rising in Beijing on 4 May 1919. Bitterly disappointed that the Allied leaders at Versailles had awarded Japan the prewar German territory of Shandong, the students initiated the “May Fourth Movement” which revitalized the weak nationalist party, the Guomindang, soon to be led by Chiang Kai shek, and created the Chinese Communist Party.

Japan also was determined to create an empire in South East Asia. Although more feared than trusted throughout Far and South East Asia, Japan by her modernization and military power demonstrated to many emerging colonial nationalists that the Western Empires rested merely on superior technology and political organization, not on any innate “racial” superiority. Mahatma Gandhi, the Indian Nationalist leader, Mao Zedong, founder and leader of the Chinese Communist Party, and Ho Chi Minh, founder and leader of the Indochinese Communist Party were all motivated by anti-colonial ideas arising to some extent from the Great War. The horrendous casualties of the Great War also undermined a good deal of the awe and even respect colonial peoples had felt for Western Civilization.

Japan’s ambitions aroused apprehension in America since Japanese expansionist aims conflicted with American aspirations for paramouncy in the Pacific. Moreover many American missionaries and politicians felt that their country, which they saw as untainted by the imperial policies of the European major powers, had a moral destiny to bring enlightenment and freedom to war-torn China. Henry Luce, the owner of *Time* and *Life*, and Pearl Buck, the Nobel-Prize winning novelist, were among the influential Americans from missionary families who fostered Chinese nationalism of a non-communist persuasion. By contrast, a number of Canadians from missionary backgrounds saw the emerging Communist Party as the vanguard in China’s path to unity and freedom. Among them were Dr. Charles Endicott, a Methodist minister, peace activist and Communist “fellow traveller”, and Herbert Norman, son of a Methodist Minister in Japan, a noted diplomat, Japanese scholar, Communist Party member in his younger days and secretary of a pro-Chinese Communist Party group in the 1930s. Norman committed suicide in 1957 in the wake of American right-wing allegations that he was a Soviet spy. Then there was Norman Bethune, the distinguished physician who gave his life for the Chinese Communist cause. In summary, although America withdrew into isolation from European affairs after 1918, the stage was being set in the East for a major confrontation with Japan.

The German problem, however, was the dominant international political issue after 1918, for all that Japan and Italy also were determined to transform the post- 1918 European and Pacific balance of power. Although weakened by defeat and the subsequent provisions of the Treaty of Versailles, Germany still had the resources and latent power to be the dominant state in Europe. Almost all Germans were determined one way or another to reverse the terms of the Versailles Treaty. Their anger was intensified by the fact that, since their country had not been invaded in the Great War, many accepted the myth of German right wing agitators who charged that their country had not been defeated on the battlefield but had lost only because the army had been “stabbed in the back” by civilian traitors, allegedly the Jews and Bolsheviks. Exacerbating these grievances was the fact that the democratic Weimar Republic had been imposed upon Germany. Many Germans therefore were prepared to listen to the wildly nationalistic and racist ideology of Adolf Hitler and his Nazi Party, particularly after the ravages of inflation which

swept the country in 1923, the American stock market “crash” of 1929 and the subsequent “Great Depression”. These economic travails had further discredited the Weimar Republic, which had been powerless to cope with the crisis. Within Germany, the Marxist Social Democratic Party waged bloody street wars against the Moscow-dominated Communist Party, allowing Hitler and his followers to pose as the guarantors of order and state economic initiatives. These claims appealed to people of all classes, especially industrialists, the military High Command, and those who had seen their savings evaporate in two major inflations. Hitler and his National Socialist Party came to power legally in 1933 and proclaimed the beginning of the *Third Reich*. He then proceeded through fashioning a “totalitarian” state, to rebuild the shattered economy, commence rearmament and kill or incarcerate all those whom he thought to be his enemies

Of all of Hitler’s ideas for rebuilding Germany as a powerful world state, none had as much resonance with his fellow citizens as anti-Semitism. Anti-Semitism has had a long and terrible history in the Christian West, particularly in Eastern Europe - Poland, Ukraine, Russia - where Jews settled after being evicted from Western European countries in the late Middle Ages. Anti-Semitism had its origins in the Christian belief that it was the Jews who killed Christ, a prejudice reinforced by late nineteenth century Social Darwinist doctrines which held that “science” had demonstrated that the Jews were an inferior race and even a virus which polluted “Aryan” peoples. Prestigious Germans such as Richard Wagner had popularized this notion even though Germany had very few Jews in the late nineteenth century. By 1939 they composed merely one-half of one per cent of the eighty million Germans, and some had been Nobel prize winners and musicians and writers of distinction. But Hitler and those who followed him saw the Jew as a “virus”, a genetically inferior being infecting and undermining German society. They had to be exterminated for there to be racially “pure” society both in Germany and in territories the Nazis were to conquer. From 1933 on Hitler systematically restricted and eventually killed some six million Jews. He also boldly broke the Treaty of Versailles after 1933, rearming and occupying the Rhineland, and in 1936 joined Mussolini in an anti-Western statement creating “the Rome-Berlin Axis” which was converted in 1939 into a pact of mutual assistance in a event of a war. This pact was extended to include Japan in 1940, thereby establishing the “Axis” coalition against which Britain and her allies were to fight until 1945. Before that global tripartite pact came into existence, Hitler expanded in Europe without war, annexing Austria and taking parts of Czechoslovakia in 1938, notably the German populated Sudetenland. Western leaders, led by Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain of Britain, were prepared to make many concessions, accepting, for example, at the Munich Conference of October 1938 Hitler’s demands for the German-speaking part of the Czech state. Appeasement was a policy designed to maintain peace by a permanent settlement with Germany. It was a policy of limited concessions; not “peace at any price.” In their search for European peace, however, Britain and France permitted the growth of German power to the point where if it were to be resisted it could only be embarked upon by a major war. Munich marked the culmination of Appeasement. Thereafter Winston Churchill’s hitherto disregarded charges that Hitler was pathologically incapable of being satisfied with concessions increasingly determined British and French policy.

There were many reasons for this supine foreign policy which went under the sobriquet of “Appeasement”. Western societies still were so traumatized by the losses of the Great War that their leaders and populations were prepared for many concessions to avoid another conflict. Moreover many in Britain and North America harboured a sense of guilt that Germany was merely, under Hitler’s admittedly brutal leadership, claiming her rightful territory after having been too harshly treated by the Treaty of Versailles. The Depression and the massive unemployment which resulted from it in Britain, Canada and the United States focused governments and popular concerns on domestic problems. During the classical period of Appeasement, from 1937 to 1939, both Britain and France were militarily unprepared for war. Finally, many naively perceived Hitler as a reasonable man with whom one could negotiate territorial transfers designed to satisfy him and his followers. Few people in the West were able to anticipate the boundlessness of Nazi ambitions and the depths of their barbarism. In the same fashion numerous intellectuals, workers and politicians failed to grasp that in Soviet Russia Joseph Stalin and his Communist Party leaders liquidated people on a massive scale, exterminating many whom they perceived as enemies of the state. Those not killed were often sent to labour camps, or Gulags, in Siberia. Ukrainian peasants in particular suffered, because Stalin believed many of them stood in the way of his farm collectivization policies. He also was determined to eradicate Ukrainian nationalism by liquidating their intellectuals, teachers and artists whom he saw as hostile

both to Greater Russian interests and to the spread of International Communism through the Comintern. Stalin and his Party supporter killed at least 11,000,000 and possibly 14,500,000 Ukrainians during the 1930s.

The ideologies of Communism and Fascism came into direct conflict during the late 1930s in the Spanish Civil War. In 1936, the pro-Fascist General Franco led an army uprising against the Leftist Spanish Republic. His campaign was assisted decisively by the German Luftwaffe and by German advisors and Italian troops, while the Republic's armies were assisted by Soviet advisors and material support until Franco destroyed the Republic by 1939. For many in the West this struggle symbolized a righteous fight against the forces of Fascism and many young men joined the "International Brigades" to fight for the Republic. Among them was the English writer George Orwell. The savage killings committed by both sides prefigured what was to occur in World War II. The Luftwaffe spread terror by bombing civilians as well as troops, intensifying the already pervasive fear among European populations that in the next major war cities would be laid waste by bombers and civilians killed by the millions. Pablo Picasso's painting abstractly depicting the destruction of Guernica by German bombs captured powerfully this widespread revulsion and terror. The bombing of Guernica and other cities held by Republicans seemed to confirm Baldwin's statement in 1932 in the House of Commons that "the bomber will always get through."

Britain and France stood aloof from the Spanish Civil War, convinced that a policy of "non-intervention" was the best way to prevent that conflict from developing into a general war. Such "Appeasement" was popular in the West, especially in Britain and Canada where large peace movements flourished, notably the Peace Pledge Union in the United Kingdom, and in France where some elites feared domestic Communists more than Hitler's National Socialism. The French, haunted by the losses of the Great War and seeing the population disparity between their country and Germany widen to their disadvantage yearly, sought refuge in a defensive mentality, signified by the series of forts along her border called the Maginot Line. In America a policy of "isolation" from involvement in European affairs had widespread public support. These pacific inclinations extended to the East where nothing was done during the 1930s to curb Japanese expansionist ambitions. Japan was determined to create a large empire in Asia as a source of the raw materials she lacked and as a means to dominate both China and eventually all of South East Asia. Coinciding with Hitler's rising power in Europe, Japanese militarists led an attack on the Chinese northern province of Manchuria in 1931 and launched a full scale invasion of China in 1937. The League of Nations, led only by Britain and France, was both powerless and disinclined to arrest these brutal incursions while America at this time was unwilling to intervene.

## V. THE SECOND WORLD WAR

Britain and France, along with the other countries of the Commonwealth, finally declared war on Germany when Hitler invaded Poland in September 1939. Hitler was surprised, because he thought that the Western states would accept his invasion as they had accepted his earlier annexations. He had not taken seriously the fact that Britain and France had given a guarantee to defend Poland after he had casually broken the Munich Agreement early in 1939 and annexed the non-German parts of Czechoslovakia. Just what his intentions were in 1939 remains a matter of controversy. Did he plan, as he had claimed in *Mein Kampf* (1924), for a massive war to dominate all of Europe, including Russia, or did he plan for more limited expansion? Hitler had not embarked at that time on all-out rearmament, which was not to be implemented until 1943. What he certainly intended and hoped for were short wars.

The British and French, and particularly the Canadians, however, went to war in 1939 without the enthusiasm so evident in 1914. They remained scarred by the horrible losses of the Great War and, in Canada and Britain especially, sapped by the unemployment and other ordeals of the Depression. As evidence of Canada's independence, she did not automatically follow the British declaration. Parliamentarians debated the issue and waited one week after Britain to legislate the country's combatant status. The Allied declaration of war could not

help Poland, which was too far away from France and Britain to receive any help. Moreover, Hitler had secured his position by the Nazi-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact of August 1939 with Stalin's Communist Russia, by which the two countries would become allies and divide up the hapless Polish state. At the time this pact shocked the world; how could International Communism, centred in Moscow, ally with Nazi Germany led by an implacable anti-Bolshevik?

For months afterwards, until April 1940, there was little fighting; commentators labeled this period the "Phoney War". The British and the French agreed that their war policy would be to wear down Germany by a naval blockade and attrition as they had done in World War I. This policy soon lay in ruins. In April Hitler's armies, the *Wehrmacht*, suddenly invaded the Low Countries and Norway and in May German tanks, called panzer columns, smashed into France. By concentrating their armour like a spearhead, German generals were able to break through French lines in a campaign of mobility which both bypassed the Maginot Line and punctured fortresses and trenches which had held armies at bay for over four years during World War I. This German strategy, called "Blitzkrieg", astonished and dismayed the democratic world, especially since France collapsed totally by the end of June 1940. The Germans occupied the northern half of the country and set up a puppet government in the south called "Vichy France" and led by the former great general, Marshall Petain, and the pro-Nazi, Pierre Laval. General Charles de Gaulle, the leader of the "Free French", refused to accept Vichy and eventually set up a government in exile in London. Italy formally became a combatant on the side of Hitler, for Mussolini, ingloriously, invaded France in June when she was already defeated.

The rapid fall of France so shocked and frightened Hitler's Western enemies that they embarked on hasty but massive mobilization policies. In 1939 Canada had a population of only 11,000,000 which limited the number of military personnel available. Moreover Canadians, notably the Prime Minister William Lyon Mackenzie King, were reluctant to send more men into combat such after the terrible experiences in the trenches during the Great War. Nevertheless a division of volunteers was hastily organized with many of the men who had been unemployed and "riding the rails" during the Depression of the 1930s. These soldiers were often dubbed the "breadliners". Canada also provided invaluable training for 132,000 British and other Commonwealth airmen through the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan. In addition, throughout 1940 Canadians provided a haven for British children sent abroad to escape the German bombing of London and other cities. Yet while most combatant countries implemented conscription, even of women in Britain, King was unwilling to pass such sweeping legislation in Canada for fear of dividing the country as bitterly as had been the case in 1917. King felt politically dependent on Quebec where many were outspokenly hostile to fighting for Britain and where some in the elites were sympathetic to Vichy France, admiring its authoritarianism and strong Catholic and anti-Semitic bias. Hence Canada in 1940 essentially created two armies. By a mobilization Act, every male over the age of sixteen was obliged to register for national service but only volunteers were obligated to take part in the war overseas. Those who volunteered or decided to become active were called "General Service" men while those who were enlisted under compulsion could not be sent abroad. Called "Zombies" for their refusal to fight, they became objects of derision and were frequently harassed. Only in 1944, facing dire manpower needs, did King by order-in-council compel about 13,000 "Zombies" to go overseas. In Britain, along with Russia the most fully mobilized societies in the war, women helped solve the need for more workers who could release men for the Battle Fronts. In Canada, also, women in great numbers entered the work force as munitions workers, nurses and auxiliary military. Nazi ideology, with its emphasis on women as the brood mothers of the Aryan "race", mobilized fewer women.

After the collapse of France, Great Britain, although supported by the Commonwealth, was alone in Europe confronting Germany. It says much about Britain's isolation that Canada, with fewer than 50,000 men in its militia in 1939, was its major ally. (In 1940 General Crerar was to insist on changing the name "militia" to "Canadian Army"). With no way to re-enter the European continent and with little prospect of an alliance with America or any other major power, Britain's chances for survival looked bleak. In May 1940, Winston Churchill had become the British Prime Minister after Chamberlain's appeasement policy had failed. Churchill had long opposed Appeasement, but throughout the 1930s his warnings about Hitler had gone unheeded partly because he was considered widely to be politically unstable and a war-monger. Now he was confronted by Nazis determined to

conquer Britain and make it a satellite state. The British Army, while evacuated from the beaches of Dunkirk through heroic measures in June 1940, had almost no equipment. All that stood between Hitler and conquest was the English Channel which his armies would have to cross. If they had succeeded all that would have faced them would have been lightly armed reserve units, one of which was the First Canadian Division. After Dunkirk in May 1940 and especially by August, in what was named the “Battle of Britain”, German bombers systematically began bombing, intending first to destroy the fighter planes which protected the country from invasion and then to send a massive fleet of landing craft to subdue the largely defenseless country. The German air force, called the Luftwaffe, also began bombing London and other British cities in an attempt to weaken morale. However awful the “Blitz” was for those under attack, Hitler’s impulsive decision to switch to cities from fighter bases and radar stations proved a major error, allowing the beleaguered Fighter Command an essential respite. The “Blitz” neither destroyed the economy nor weakened public morale. Churchill immortalized the RAF by his words in the House of Commons: “Never in the field of human conflict has so much been owed by so many to so few.” Britain’s steadfastness was symbolized to the world by the famous night photograph of St. Paul’s Cathedral surrounded by smoke but untouched while bombs rained down around it.

It was during these years of Britain’s “finest hour”, from the summer of 1940 to early 1941, that Churchill, through his courage and rhetoric, inspired his countrymen, however alone, to resist Hitler at all costs for he had nothing to offer them but “blood, sweat, toil and tears.” He banished those important Cabinet Ministers and other politicians who were prepared to negotiate with Hitler. He was also instrumental in fashioning a Coalition Government with the Conservatives and the Labour Party, thereby ensuring a united domestic resolve to withstand and combat Hitler. Churchill’s example fortified the determination of the British fighter pilots of the Royal Air Force, the RAF, and the Canadians of the RCAF, the Royal Canadian Air Force. Making use of radar and Spitfires and Hurricanes, they outfought the German air force in the skies from July to the end of October 1940. That is why Churchill is often referred to as the saviour of his country and, perhaps, of Western Civilization.

Both Churchill and Roosevelt were masters at using the radio as a medium to convey their ideas maintain high morale through well-prepared oratory. Both also had their distinctive and effective “props”. Churchill had his “V for Victory” gesture and his cigar as well as his “bulldog” expression. Roosevelt used his cigarette firmly planted in a cigarette holder and tilted in a jaunty manner to demonstrate his breezy confidence. In addition, Roosevelt had his faithful dog Fala beside him during his radio-delivered fire side chats to the nation. No photographer ever showed him as a cripple in a wheel chair. Hitler generally used Joseph Goebbels for radio propaganda while the theatre of the mass outdoor meeting was a better setting from which the Nazi leader delivered his powerful harangues.

While attempting to deny Hitler crucial overseas resources by blockading Germany and encouraging resistance movements in Nazi-occupied Europe, Churchill’s main strategy was earnestly to seek allies. Hence he cultivated the sympathies of President Franklin D. Roosevelt, who, although constrained by Congress and public opinion from direct military involvement in the war, nevertheless aided the British decisively while bolstering morale.

From 1939 and until December 1941 America moved from neutrality to becoming into a full-fledged non-belligerent ally of Britain and her Empire and France and Nationalist China. Without American assistance during this time Britain could not have survived. For example beginning in 1939 the American navy patrolled the Atlantic as far out as 300 miles. This line was extended in April 1941 to half way across the ocean and Roosevelt instructed the navy to report any sightings of Germans to British convoys. The President in 1940 directed Congress to amend the Selective Service Act to extend the term of draftees. In late December 1940, in one of his radio-delivered “fire side” chats, he described America as “The Great Arsenal of Democracy”. Thereafter Roosevelt directed American naval yards to repair British ships. America also took over the defense of Iceland in mid-1941 because it was crucial to the defense of the north Atlantic. In a “fireside chat” in May 1941, after the Germans had sunk an American freighter, he told the American people that German control of the Atlantic would imperil American security. At that time Nazi submarines were sinking ships twice as fast as British and American ship yards could

build them. The American policy of “Lend Lease” was of central importance. It was enacted by Congress at Roosevelt’s request early in 1941 and provided up to \$7,000,000,000. Since Britain was almost bankrupt by 1941 this policy allowed her to continue fighting actively against the Axis. By this legislation American goods and war material were to be sent to Britain and later to Russia on the pretext that this “loan” could be paid back at some future date. Roosevelt also arranged the transfer of fifty American destroyers in exchange for control of some British bases along the Atlantic coast. In his State of the Union message early in 1941, Roosevelt gave his “Four Freedoms” speech - freedom of speech, of religion, from want and from fear “everywhere in the world”. This speech, outlining his hopes for the world in the future, is considered one of his most famous. The President and many other Americans, however, were most reluctant to assist Britain militarily if that meant preserving her Empire. But many agreed with Roosevelt that if Britain lost the war America might be besieged and beaten. This view contrasted profoundly with the “isolationist” sentiments of many other Americans, particularly Irish and German Americans, who were vehemently opposed to their country risking its young men and resources by coming to the aid of their traditional enemy, Britain. Only when Japan launched a surprise attack on the American fleet on 7 December 1941 could Roosevelt rally an outraged country to enter the war directly as an ally of Britain.

Before America’s direct involvement in the war, Roosevelt and Churchill, in what was to be the first of a number of meetings, sought by their Atlantic Charter of August 1941 to place the struggle against the Nazis on a high moral plane by proclaiming their efforts to be in pursuit of a free, democratic world. Although Canada was the only belligerent in the Western Hemisphere, Roosevelt and Churchill never considered inviting Mackenzie King who was angry and humiliated at this clear indication of Canada’s junior status. The Charter, nevertheless, was to be the clearest expression of what became Allied war aims. Written by Churchill, this Charter proved to be one of the most important propaganda statements of the war, rallying much liberal opinion in the United States and arousing hope among resistance groups in Nazi-occupied Europe. From this Charter and other declarations, the Western leaders made clear their certain belief that they were fighting a “just war” for noble and constructive ends. This perception of the conflict was endorsed resolutely by the people in Western democracies and by the Russians who fought for their “Motherland”, despite the history of the Soviet regime’s brutality towards its own citizens. On a practical level the two statesmen also agreed to give Russia aid on a massive scale. The propaganda campaigns in the Allied countries were remarkably successful in convincing peoples in the West of the heroism, goodness and fortitude of the Russians, however cautiously leaders such as Churchill and Roosevelt viewed the Bolshevik regime. In the Western press, Stalin was often referred to benevolently as “Uncle Joe”, although Western leaders knew that he had killed as many people as Hitler and perhaps more. One of his heinous actions, long denied after the war, was to order the massacre of the Polish officer corps in the Katyn forest in late 1939. Stalin was determined to eliminate potential anti-Soviet opposition in postwar Poland. After 1945, when Western interests clashed with the despotic and expansionist nature of the Soviet Union, Western populations were quickly persuaded by their policy makers that Russia was the new great threat. Defeated, though increasingly democratic, Germany was enlisted in the crusade against Communism.

The American destroyers sent to Britain were critical in confronting the German submarine threat, as Hitler attempted, in what became known as the “Battle of the Atlantic”, to bring about his enemy’s collapse by economic strangulation. From 1940 to mid-1943, it seemed to all the world that Hitler’s forces would succeed. With German submarine bases greatly extended by captured French ports and with British aircraft lacking the range to cover the convoys across the entire Atlantic, Nazi U-boats, often traveling in “Wolfpacks”, and bombers wreaked havoc on the sea lanes. In this decisive campaign, the Canadian merchant marine played a crucial role in delivering war material and arms to Britain while Roosevelt, as we have seen, gave substantial and diverse forms of aid to Britain in the war against German submarines:

By late 1940, his air offensive thwarted, Hitler delayed his plans to invade Britain and turned his attention to attacking Russia, with whom he had cynically allied in the summer of 1939. Hitler’s racism was directed not only against Jews, gypsies and homosexuals; he also saw the Slavic peoples as *Untermenschen*, as sub- humans far below the Aryan races of whom he believed Germans to be the epitome. Moreover, Hitler believed that Germany needed not only the wheat of Ukraine, and especially the oil of the Caucasus, but also “Lebensraum”, vast tracts of

Russia on which to settle German colonists. “Operation Barbarossa”, his invasion of Russia in late June 1941, was to be a fatal decision, eventually instrumental in destroying the Third Reich. Blinded by his easy early successes, his racial contempt for the Russians and Ukrainians and gripped by megalomania, Hitler profoundly underestimated both the resources and courage of the Soviet soldiers.

German tank divisions swept hundreds of miles into Russia, encircling and capturing hundreds of thousands of prisoners, approaching the outskirts of Moscow and nearly surrounding Leningrad. By November 1942, the Germans controlled forty five per cent of the population, half Russia’s grain supplies and over sixty per cent of its iron, coal and steel. In a campaign of pillaging and killing unparalleled in history, Nazi death squads made up of the SS, as well as the common soldiers, eventually killed millions of Russian soldiers and civilians - some 3,300,000 soldiers of 5,000,000 captured, a total of 14,500,000 military personnel altogether and between 7,000,000 to 10,000,000 million civilians. The Soviets were scarcely less brutal, even shooting some thousands of their own men when the Secret Police, the NKVD, believed that they were retreating or otherwise reluctant to fight.

Nevertheless the Nazi armies faced grave difficulties by December 1941. Many Ukrainians and others who had been oppressed by Stalin had initially greeted the Germans with enthusiasm. Nazi racist policy, however, dictated that these Slavs were to be ruthlessly killed or shipped off to labour camps in the Reich. Such policies created powerful resistance movements behind the German lines. Moreover, the Germans, imprisoned in their racial ideology, never believed that the Russians would fight so resolutely for their Motherland. Even less did the Nazis anticipate that the Soviets would possess the best tank in the world, the mass produced T34, as well as efficient industries behind the Ural mountains. Finally, Hitler had been so confident of an easy victory that he and other Germans believed the war would be over before Christmas. Hence German soldiers were ill-equipped to confront the worst Russian winter in decades and the massive Soviet counter-offensive in late December at the gates of Moscow led by General Zhukov.

While Hitler endeavoured to crush Russia, he simultaneously embarked upon the “Final Solution”, enunciated clearly at the Wannsee Conference near Berlin in January 1942. With nearly 6,000,000 million Jews taken in Poland, captured territory in Russia, and from countries seized in Western Europe, Hitler could now carry out the Nazi plan of genocide. Almost all of Poland’s 3,000,000 Jews were exterminated. Hitler, first with Reinhard Heydrich and then Heinrich Himmler and Adolf Eichmann as his primary organizers of the “Final Solution”, could also begin large-scale killings of some 4,000,000 gypsies, political opponents, homosexuals and other “undesirables”. Sadly, many conquered countries were only too pleased to supply Hitler with Jews. Vichy France was particularly obliging in this respect. By contrast Fascist Italy resisted most of the Nazi attempts to seize Italian Jews.

Paradoxically many German military objectives were in conflict with Hitler’s policy of liquidating the Jews. The “Final Solution” entailed building many more concentration camps, of which Auschwitz was the most notorious, rerouting trains to these camps and away from the Front, and sending many soldiers, especially his elite SS troops, doctors and other vital resources to carry out the extermination of the Jews and other perceived “enemies” of the Reich. Thus the “Holocaust”, as it came to be called in the years sometime after the war, actually hindered the Nazi war effort. In addition, Hitler’s anti-Semitism had earlier led many German Jews to flee to Britain and North America where they provided critical scientific knowledge for the British and in 1942, after America had entered the war, support for the Manhattan Project to create an atomic bomb.

The War became world wide on 7 December 1941 when Japan launched a surprise attack on Pearl Harbor in the Hawaiian Islands, crippling the American Pacific fleet. Japanese leaders were determined to create their South East Asian Empire while America was still ill-prepared for war and when the Empires of the British in Malaya, the French in Indochina and the Dutch East Indies, what is now Indonesia. were nearly defenseless. To the astonishment, embarrassment and dismay of Europeans such as Churchill, these empires fell rapidly to the battle-hardened Japanese troops. Japan ended the era of the dominance of the battleship when in mid-December 1941 her torpedo planes sunk two British capital ships, the new battleship the *Prince of Wales* and the battle cruiser *Repulse*, near the British base of Singapore in Malaya. Churchill spoke for many when he commented that he had “never

received a more direct shock.” An even more alarming and surprising event for the West was the ease with which the Japanese captured Singapore in February 1942, thought two months earlier to be virtually impregnable. With the fall of Singapore, the Allies lost a key waterway on the sea route connecting Europe and Asia. These victories also gave Japan access to critical raw materials, such as Malayan rubber and oil of the former Dutch East Indies, which were essential to her imperial requirements. American prestige was further tarnished when Japan seized the Philippine Islands in March 1942. The American Commander, General Douglas MacArthur, escaped, promising the Filipinos that he would “return”.

American resolve to defeat the Japanese and, indeed, the Axis powers as a group, now became steadfast. Roosevelt and Churchill were able to conclude an Anglo-American Alliance linking the United States loosely to the Anglo-Russian Alliance which Churchill and Stalin had warily negotiated in May 1942 in the face of the Nazi invasion. America refused to ally formally with Russia, but at Teheran in November 1943 Roosevelt, Churchill and Stalin agreed to cooperate to defeat Germany, and to assist in doing so by continuing to send the Russians enormous amounts of material in the form of trucks, jeeps, industrial equipment and food. Stalin, for his part, muted propaganda advocating international communism and emphasized to his own people the glories of Russia’s past rather than the dogmas of Marxist-Leninism.

Thus, “the Grand Alliance” of “the Big Three” developed, with Nationalist China under Chiang Kai shek as the token fourth member. This Alliance was fraught with problems, for the link with the Soviets was with a despotic government interested in expanding its frontiers and certainly not at all sympathetic to the principles of the Atlantic Charter. Moreover Churchill and Stalin were deeply antagonistic to each other, because the former had led the British attempt to strangle the Bolshevik experiment in its early stages from 1917 through 1920. Churchill and Roosevelt, despite their “special relationship”, often had different goals. Nevertheless, despite constant abrasions the “Alliance” held together. The countries had joined in a “marriage of convenience” to confront German rapacity. Earlier a start had been made at Casablanca in January 1943 when Roosevelt and Churchill formally proclaimed their policy of seeking the “Unconditional Surrender” of the Axis Powers. There was to be no repeat of 1918, when Germany could claim she had not been defeated since no Allied troops had entered the country. Roosevelt and other Americans outside the South also remembered with approval General Grant’s and General Sherman’s policies of annihilation in the American Civil War, and were hostile to negotiated surrenders with compromises that they feared would erode their over-arching ideals.

Canadians were among the defeated in one of the Japanese early victories, for they composed most of the garrison of the Crown Colony, Hong Kong, which fell in late December 1941. The Canadians were subjected to the harsh treatment and even torture which the Japanese inflicted routinely on prisoners of war. Racial hatred was not an ideology for the Japanese in the way it was for the Nazis. But they aspired to rally Asians to their Japanese “Co-Prosperity Sphere” by capitalizing on widespread anti-colonial and anti-white sentiments. Yet Japanese arrogance and cruelty antagonized even their fellow Asians. Western societies were by no means immune to racist sentiments, as both the American and Canadian Governments, reinforced by widespread popular hysteria, interned their citizens of Japanese background, some 127,000 in the United States and 19,000 in Canada, and expropriated their property. A Gallup poll in 1944 found that thirteen per cent of Americans thought the Japanese should be exterminated after the war. Moreover the American armed forces remained segregated throughout the war. Relations between the races often were tense on the Home Front. For example race riots such as that in Detroit in July 1943 left over thirty dead and seven hundred dead. Nevertheless Negroes made substantial advances throughout the war, gaining employment opportunities, increased influence through the NAACP and the same postwar benefits as Whites from the “G. I. Bill”. But significant desegregation did not come until President Lyndon Johnson persuaded Congress to pass important civil rights legislation from 1963 to 1965.

In first half of 1942 both the Germans and the Japanese remained in the ascendant. despite the British having mastered the Enigma machine which allowed them to break German codes. The code name for this important program of deciphering enemy messages was named “Ultra” in Britain and “Magic” in America. The results of these exposed secrets were passed on to Stalin. Hence the Allies knew in advance where German

offensives would take place. Nevertheless, the Allies still had to defeat the enemy armies in the field; the intelligence gave information about Axis strategy, not operational data.

The German submarine campaign was so successful in 1942 and early 1943 that Britain was near collapse. Despite this crisis the British were willing to bow to the demand of Stalin, now their new ally, for a "Second Front" by launching an exploratory raid on the Continent in an effort to reassure the Russians of their willingness to challenge Hitler in his "fortress" or *Festung Europa*. Thus, in August 1942, the British landed 5,000 Canadians on the French Channel port of Dieppe. The second aim of this raid was to explore the possibilities of an Allied invasion of France. Although precious knowledge for a later invasion was gained, many Canadians condemned the raid, and continue to condemn it, as their distinctively national calamity in which careless British planners sacrificed Canadian troops, for nearly 1,000 soldiers were killed and 2,000 captured.

By the summer of 1942, Hitler's armies had recovered from the defeat before Moscow and launched an offensive in South Russia, attempting to conquer Stalingrad on the Volga, thereby splitting Russia in two while seeking access to the oil fields of the Caucasus. In North Africa, Field Marshal Rommel in mid-1942 led his panzers into Egypt, threatening the Suez Canal, the crucial British route to India and closing in on the Middle Eastern oil supplies.

Oil was the most sought after resource by Germany and Japan; of the known world reserves the Allies controlled about ninety per cent while the Axis powers had about three per cent of the output and four per cent of the refining capacity. America had enforced an oil embargo on Japan early in 1941 as tensions intensified between them. It was to overcome this loss of nearly ninety percent of her supply that Japan chose to lash out against America and Britain in December 1941. Japanese forces sought the rich oil fields of the Dutch East Indian Empire, Java and Sumatra, and seized them by early 1942. Japanese fleets then attempted to transport the oil along her newly captured sea highways. This was only possible while Japan had air and sea dominance. The American victory at the Battle of Midway in June 1942 destroyed this dominance. Thereafter American dive-bombers and submarines wreaked havoc on the Japanese convoys, gradually depriving her war economy of almost all oil and leaving the country's defense solely to the fanatical courage of her soldiers.

Germany began the war with barely enough oil to fight her campaigns. Hitler's armies used synthetic oil produced by German coal and had access to the rich Ploesti fields after Rumania became a satellite, but they did not fulfill the requirements for a long war. That is one of the reasons, perhaps the prime one, why Hitler so desperately sought to conquer the Caucasus in 1942 by crushing Stalingrad and then moving south to oil rich Grozny and Baku.

Hitler, however, driven by pathological egotism and a misplaced sense of his own destiny as a commander, committed strategic error after strategic error. Although he made the key domestic and military decisions, Hitler liked to run the country and empire by setting competing satraps against each other. For example, Goebbels directed the propaganda machine, Goering the Luftwaffe and Himmler the SS and the death camps, while various sycophants composed Hitler's "court" which was managed by his secretary Martin Borman. They often rose and fell depending on Hitler's moods and tantrums or on Borman's suggestions. Hitler oversaw all military plans, alternately firing and rehiring generals. There was no equivalent of General George C. Marshall, the American Army Chief of Staff or of General Sir Alan Brooke, Commander of the British Imperial General Staff. Both Generals ran their campaigns in cooperation with their leaders but with considerable autonomy. In Russia even the meddling, paranoiac Stalin took General Zhukov's advice consistently. Moreover, Hitler and his inner circle never planned properly for a lengthy war. The German economy was incompletely organized until 1943 when shift work was finally instituted.

Hitler had little sense of how to mobilize the German economy. There was no overall German command structure for the economy until Hitler appointed Albert Speer Minister of Armaments in 1942. He attempted to centralize the entire war effort but had to wait until the summer of 1943 for his policies of mass production to bear fruit. Just at that time Allied bombing became so intense that factories had to be dispersed and camouflaged,

thereby arresting somewhat Speer's impressive achievements. He and his jealous rivals were able to mobilize more than 7,500,000 foreign labourers and prisoners of war by 1944 but their productivity never equaled that of Russia or, especially, America.

Hitler intervened impulsively and mistakenly on the military and diplomatic fronts. He neglected General Erwin Rommel whose tanks had seized Tobruk and early in 1942 advanced into Egypt and close to Alexandria. Hitler, however, failed to supply him with enough fuel and tank reinforcements. General Montgomery, the British General, deployed overwhelming force at El Alamein in October 1942, routing the German *Afrikakorps* and thereby opening the way for the Allies eventually to drive the Germans out of Africa by late 1943. Hitler blundered particularly by declaring war on the United States four days after Pearl Harbor and hence exposing his empire to the enormous resources of the America's industrial machine and her vast armies. Churchill and Roosevelt had determined to place the defeat of the Nazis as their first military priority before turning to the Japanese. Meanwhile, the Germans had over extended themselves in Russia, fighting at Stalingrad, some two thousand miles from their homeland, where Hitler refused to allow them to retreat. Stalingrad was the greatest single battle in history.

Hitler and his ministers never fashioned a modern army, popular conceptions to the contrary. While German scientists could produce rockets and jet aircraft by the end of the war, the Third Reich failed to build the much simpler trucks and other motorized vehicles essential to keep her armies moving rapidly. The British and Americans were fully motorised by 1944. So strong did the American war economy develop that the United States was able to supply Russia alone with more trucks than Germany produced during the entire conflict. So inadequately, by contrast, did the German war machine fail to modernize that when her armies were at the gates of Moscow in late 1941 they deployed 3,350 tanks and 650,000 horses.

There were, in essence, two German armies: the "fast army" consisting of tanks and other motorized vehicles, and the "slow army" made up of marching soldiers and the many thousands of horse- drawn guns. Often the distance widened dangerously between them or the panzer forces outran their fuel and had to wait for the tramping troops and horses. As the war continued, the decline of mechanization in the German forces became desperate. By 1944 only one tenth of the German army was motorized, spare parts were almost non-existent, the German air force had no overall direction and their numbers of fighter planes produced fell off in rapid, indeed catastrophic terms from 1943 onwards. Since the German High Command had always envisioned air power as a support for her armies, Hitler's regime had never developed a heavy bomber, such as the British Lancaster or the American B 17 "Super Fortress".

By the spring of 1942 the tide began to turn slowly in favour of the Allies. In the South Pacific, planes from American aircraft carriers stopped the Japanese advance at the "Battle of the Coral Sea" in May. This was the first Japanese setback since Pearl Harbor and demonstrated that they were not invincible. A month later, at the "Battle of Midway", the American fleet under Admiral Nimitz destroyed the bulk of the Japanese aircraft carriers in what was the most important naval battle of the war. Once again air power was decisive; fewer than a dozen American dive bombers struck at the Japanese fleet and with only eleven bombs hitting their targets, three carriers and many of Japan's best pilots were sent to the bottom of the ocean. Luck as well as nautical intelligence determined this outcome, for the Japanese planes were rearming on their carriers when the American planes appeared. This epic sea conflict nearly 1,000 miles northwest of Honolulu marked the turning point of the Pacific war. Thereafter, Japan was always on the defensive. The crucial sea routes were secure for the Allies. Led by MacArthur, the Americans commenced their strategy of "island hopping", bypassing many fortified islands while inexorably closing in on the Japanese homeland. The casualties were terrible as the Japanese often fought to the death.

In Russia, Stalin's armies surrounded the Germans at Stalingrad by late 1942. Hitler's irrational demand that his armies hold out led to their surrender in February 1943. Stalingrad cost the combatants over 1,000,000 dead, with Soviet soldiers much the larger numbers as the Zhukov was prepared to send wave after wave of his soldiers at the Germans even when his men lacked artillery support. The *Wehrmacht* had lost nearly 300,000 highly trained soldiers while twenty-four generals were captured. This was a psychological and military defeat of great

magnitude but most German forces, possessed of an intense anti-Semitism, continuing faith in Hitler and deep fear of a Russian invasion and subsequent revenge, continued to fight tenaciously for over another two years. The last German offensive in Russia was fought and blunted at the Kursk salient in July 1943 in what was the most devastating tank battle in history. For the next two years, Russian armies, composed by early 1944 of 5,700,000 soldiers against fewer than 3,000,000 Germans in the *Wehrmacht* in the East, drove relentlessly toward Berlin.

As in earlier battles, the fighting was carried on with ferocity by both sides, with little or no quarter given to prisoners, the wounded or civilians. Indeed, the outcome of the European war was largely decided on the Eastern Front, where over eighty per cent of the fighting took place and where eighty per cent of the casualties occurred.

In July 1943 the Allies invaded Italy through Sicily. A junta of disgruntled Fascists and the King deposed Mussolini and searched for a way to make peace. While negotiations with the Allies went on, Hitler rushed German troops down the peninsula to stem the advance of the Canadian, British and American armies. Simultaneously, the strategic bombing offensive against German industries and cities had increased from the limited attacks first initiated by the British in 1941 to nightly raids in which a thousand bombers took part and a similar number of American bombers raided during the day. Originally this bombing had been begun as the only way for the British to carry the war to Germany. Soon, however, it was seen both as a means of reassuring Stalin of Anglo-American determination to destroy Hitler and as a way to raise morale on the Allied domestic front. The architects of this air offensive, especially Sir Arthur "Bomber" Harris, believed that they could destroy the German industrial base and erode domestic morale by "dehousing" the civilians. Neither assumption turned out to be valid. As a result of inaccurate air strikes industrial production fell by less than two per cent until the last months of the war. The bombing also steeled the Germans' determination to continue fighting, as had been the case with the British during the "Blitz". Canadians were heavily involved as the first RCAF bomber squadron had been assembled in June 1941. Then Sixth Group of eight squadrons was created and flew many missions, initially in outmoded Wellington bombers and from 1944 in Lancaster bombers. Altogether, more than 17,000 Canadian airmen lost their lives

However important to Allied morale at the time, the bombing of hundreds of thousands of non combatants raised serious moral issues which continue to haunt the victors today. This ethical question was particularly apposite after Allied bombers early in 1945 completely demolished Dresden, a city of no military potential and filled with refugees. Yet in military terms, the Strategic Bombing Offensive was critical in ways not originally foreseen, for air power struck great blows at Germany air power and eventually forced Japan to surrender without being invaded. In Europe the British primarily deployed the Lancaster heavy bomber for night raids, while the Americans used the B-17s, the "flying fortresses", for daylight attacks. The bombing became more devastating in late 1943 when P-51 Mustangs were used for they had enough fuel to escort the bombers to and from their targets deep in Germany. Against Japan in 1944 and 1945, the larger B-29s were deployed. This relentless Allied bombing only slightly disrupted German industry but caused the Nazis to shift thousands of planes and anti-aircraft guns from the Russian Front to defend their cities. It was the air offensive that eventually destroyed both the air power and Japan's capacity for war.

While the Allies were united in their determination to defeat Hitler, they failed lamentably in confronting his persecution of the Jews and his genocidal policies. Even before the war, when news of Hitler's harsh behaviour towards the Jews slowly became known, Western countries were unwilling to revise their immigration laws to admit Jewish refugees in substantial numbers. Canada was particularly culpable in this regard. After word of the slaughter became known in 1941 outside Occupied Europe, the Allied leaders did nothing despite mounting demands from some alarmed groups both in America and Britain. Roosevelt demonstrated limited concern, while Churchill failed to attempt any actions which may have reduced the killing. The Russians, with their tradition of anti-Semitism, had no interest in doing anything for the Jews. Jews and other commentators urged that the Allied air forces bomb the railroads leading to the Concentration Camps, especially after late 1943 when specific information about the camps came to the attention of Allied leaders. Allied planes had photographed most of the death camps and Churchill even had detailed maps of stations on the way to the camps. He deplored these atrocities but neither the British or American air forces ever attempted to bomb the railways or stations. The Allied leaders were fixated

on defeating Germany and, hence, never took any significant action to assist the Jews. Pope Pius XII and the International Red Cross both exhibited the same neglect for the plight of the Jews.

Western failures on behalf of European Jewry may be viewed in a wider context than that of personal failures by Allied leaders. From 1933 to 1938 Hitler mainly incarcerated political opponents and those whom the Nazis saw as physically or mentally defective. Jews were not singled out. Only after *Kristallnacht* in 1938 did the Nazis begin to send increasingly large groups of Jews to the camps. By 1940 the British, Canadians and Americans were preoccupied with the fall of France, the Battle of Britain and the Atlantic war. The murder of the Jews, at that time and well after the war, did not feature as a singular event and hence did not have the shocking distinctiveness that it acquired in the 1970s and 1980s. It was only in those decades that Americans articulated the concept of the Holocaust at a popular level. During the war American and British leaders, conscious of anti-Semitism at home, were loathe to publicize the extermination of Jews by movies or other means. To vilify Hitler they concentrated on other policies and propaganda that were less controversial domestically. There were also so many war horrors that as news of the camps filtered into public consciousness the stories could be integrated into an already well-prepared existing framework of horrors. Even General Eisenhower had little grasp of the enormity of the “Final Solution” until he first witnessed a camp.

On the Home Fronts the Allied Governments made even more extensive use of women than had been the case in the Great War. In Russia, women cleared mines, erected anti-tank obstacles, cleared bomb damage and worked in the armament factories. In addition, to a far greater degree than in the West, women were trained as doctors and middle level managers. Because of the deaths of so many men, Soviet women composed fifty three per cent of the domestic work force by early 1945. Over 800,000 Soviet women also volunteered for military roles where they fought in the streets of Stalingrad, sometimes flew fighter planes, and took part in resistance movements behind the German lines. After 1945 the contributions of these women were written out of the official Soviet war story. The women in industry were almost always in secondary roles, working three hours longer than men in the prewar and with no vacation time. Russia lost at a minimum 21,000,000 people in the war and so many of them were men. Hence there was a great oversupply of women which did little to elevate their status during and after the war. Movies of the “Great Patriotic War”, carefully edited, helped sustain domestic morale and Stalin allowed the hitherto suppressed Russian Orthodox Church to emerge to give consolation to the nearly fifty per cent of the Russians who had held on to their religious beliefs. But hatred of the German armies remained the dominant motive driving Russian patriotism.

In Britain women also played greater roles than in the First World War. *The National Service Act* late in 1941 not only conscripted all men from eighteen to fifty but also required all unmarried women from twenty to thirty to be prepared to take on any military or other essential services determined by the government. Civilian employment increased by 2,800,000, of whom 2,200,000 were women. This war economy was directed by the Minister of Labour, Ernest Bevin, a Labour Party politician and a man of such authority that he was the only Cabinet member Churchill deferred to throughout the war.

The movies, or the cinema, played a vital role in sustaining morale, with many leading actors actively involved, notably Lawrence Olivier, while the film makers Noel Coward and David Lean depicted in a stirring and lofty manner British war experiences. The singer Vera Lynn became the unofficial “sweetheart” of the British forces, despite lacking the conventional glamour of the American film actress, Betty Grable, who became the “pin-up girl” of the United States forces. Indeed, the “pin up girl” became the symbol by which hundreds of thousands of soldiers away from home assuaged their loneliness. For many soldiers the stirring, clear and fetching voice of Vera Lynn sent the message that there was a special “girl” waiting for them at “Home” after the struggle had ended. She continues to be remembered by such songs as *We’ll Meet Again*, *There’ll be Bluebirds over the White Cliffs of Dover* and *A Nightingale Sang in Berkeley Square*. Equally as popular as Vera Lynn was the most famous comedy show of the war in Britain featuring Tommy Handley - “It’s That Man Again” or ITMA. The haunting refrain of *Lili Marlene* was ubiquitous wherever the German soldiers were fighting. The Americans troops were entertained on a massive scale by Hollywood actors and singers, notably Bob Hope, Bing Crosby, Frank Sinatra and Kate

Smith. Crosby's *White Christmas* was beamed to soldiers in every war theatre and became the best selling song in history. *Pistol Packin' Mama* was another enormously popular song, reflecting humorously the theme of the soldier on the loose whose adventures were cut short by the mothers of his girl friends. Religion and sentimentality were combined in popular movies notably two in 1942, *Going My Way* and *Song of Bernadette*. In Canada the comedy show of Johnny Wayne and Frank Shuster developed in their army years and soon became a hit on the CBC.

The British were rallied not only by Churchill but also by a growing belief that this was a "Peoples' War" which had to end with a "Peoples' Peace". That is, they believed that there had to be significant changes in social policy after the war, leading the country to a full "Welfare State". The BBC contributed significantly to this popular and democratic vision of the future by daily programs aimed at sustaining the morale and output of workers in factories. Of note were *Music While You Work* and *Workers Playtime*. The ideals of this postwar aspiration were most clearly articulated late in 1942 by the Liberal bureaucrat William Beveridge who, in a famous *Report on Social Insurance*, advocated a welfare scheme "from the cradle to the grave", with medical care and a minimum income as rights. The Labour Party in the Churchill Coalition became most identified with these ideas and in opinion polls by 1942 was clearly picked to win the first postwar election.

Civil liberties were also reasonably maintained within the Western Allied countries, with, for example, the British Fascist leader, Sir Oswald Mosley, merely kept under house confinement until released in late 1943. Freedom of the press persisted for pacifist newspapers continued to circulate and speeches critical of the war could be delivered in public places. Thus the novelist and journalist Vera Brittain and her colleagues could campaign against the "Area bombing" of German civilians and even have their views discussed on the floor of the House of Commons. In Britain as well as Canada and the United States, Conscientious Objectors were seldom as harassed as they were in World War I. Partly this reflected the realization by Governments that the COs represented little or no danger to the war effort. In part this less intolerant approach arose because most COs were religious pacifists, prepared to take alternative service and not agitate militantly against the war. There were, perhaps surprisingly, since most pacifists loathed Hitler and Nazism, about three times as many pacifists in Britain in the second war as there were in the first. Despite these changed official attitudes, many in all three societies were mercilessly mocked, excluded from fair employment, ostracized socially and occasionally imprisoned.

Canada went to war in 1939 primarily out of sentiment for Britain, from which she had inherited her political system and much of her culture, from that "Mother Country". Most Canadians did not want to see Britain or France destroyed as Great Powers. Many of the 11,000,000 Canadians were initially lukewarm in their support, not least Mackenzie King who wanted Canadian participation to be in terms of "limited liability" with no large army sent, once again, to fight in Europe. In any case Canada's economy was lamentably unprepared for war; the militia was small, the naval force trivial, and the aircraft few and obsolete. Training pilots and giving material assistance were to be the major contributions. Yet Canada's economy for war was so weak that many items had to be bought from the United States. The war, however, was soon to rejuvenate the Canadian economy.

America already was rearming and was keenly aware of Canada's defenseless state. In August 1940, the commanding voice of Roosevelt summoned King by phone to a meeting at Ogdensburg. The Prime Minister, without seeking parliamentary approval, agreed to the President's plan for a "Permanent Joint Board on Defense". Canada would be "consulted" and in return the Americans would build defense installations along the Canadian eastern coast. Two days later, again without any discussion with Canada, Churchill leased bases in Newfoundland and the British West Indies to America for ninety nine years in return for fifty old destroyers. Since Canada looked eventually to incorporate Newfoundland into Confederation, many in the country saw this decision and the Ogdensburg Agreement as evidence of Washington's highhanded diplomacy and indifference to Canadian sensibilities. Later in the war the Americans were to build the Alaska highway virtually without any consent from or partnership with Canada. These developments demonstrated just how far America had replaced Britain as Canada's protector and how much Canada had moved without protest into America's "informal empire".

Under King's adept leadership and with the dynamism of C. D. Howe, Minister of Munitions and Supply, the Liberal Government revived the slack economy, in the process assuming most of the taxing power in the country



Returning to the battle front, it was clear by early 1944 that a key figure had emerged, General Dwight D. Eisenhower. By the time an invasion of the Continent was feasible, Eisenhower had become the Allied Supreme Commander in Europe. He proved to be a remarkably able and successful architect of a difficult coalition, particularly given the overweening egos of Field Marshal Sir Bernard Montgomery and General George Patton. Eisenhower was responsible for planning “Operation Overlord”, the precarious task of launching by sea the opening of a Second Front in mainland Europe. In spite of uncertain weather early in June, he ordered the invasion to begin on 6 June 1944. The largest armada in history sailed to the beaches of Normandy; not to the area around Calais to the North where Hitler and his Generals were convinced the invasion would come. Allied Intelligence had managed successfully to baffle the Germans. Moreover Hitler and his High Command were divided as to how to confront the invasion they knew to be imminent. Field Marshal Rommel believed, given Germany’s token air power by 1944, that the Allied forces had to be stopped on the beaches. By contrast, Field Marshal von Rundstedt was convinced that the German armies must form a mobile reserve, ready to move wherever the danger was greatest. The result was that neither policy was properly implemented. Despite these Allied advantages, the invasion was a very risky business. All that day and the next people in the West sat glued to their radios, anxiously waiting for news that the Allied forces had successfully established a firm foothold, for a defeat would have been a profound setback .

By the end of the first day it was increasingly clear that D-Day had succeeded. Canadian troops landed on Juno Beach and penetrated up to six miles while the Americans faced powerful German units at Omaha Beach. Despite complete air superiority, the Allied troops faced fierce fighting from the determined Germans. A major problem confronting Allied troops was that the German’s possessed better weapons in almost all categories although their economy had never mass-produced them. For example, neither the British nor the Americans had developed a tank that could compete with those of the *Wehrmacht*. Although the Germans were vulnerable to Allied Air power during the day, they were able to inflict terrible casualties in night combat. German soldiers often mocked Allied troops as fearful and cautious in battle. The Germans misunderstood Allied military behaviour because it was the policy of the Western leaders to use fire power whenever possible rather than to waste manpower. By contrast the Soviets were reckless in the way they hurled soldiers at the Germans, which is one reason why they suffered such horrendous casualties. To take Berlin Zhukov sacrificed 300,000 Soviet soldiers, more than America lost during the entire war.

The Canadians and the British, under the overall command of General Montgomery, fought fierce battles around Caen and Falaise in the eastern part of the salient. Canadian troops were tenacious in battle but on the whole were led by unimaginative generals, with the exception of General Guy Simonds. Stuck in this savage combat, the Front for the Canadians and British opened up when the American General Patton broke through the weaker enemy lines to the south west with his tanks and outflanked the Germans around Falaise and then sped past Paris to cross the Rhine aiming to attack the industrial Ruhr. The “Free French” under General Charles de Gaulle accepted the honour of liberating Paris late in August. Thereafter the Allies slowly drove the German armies back into their bomb-devastated homeland. In December 1944 Hitler launched one last, surprise offensive, the “Battle of the Bulge”, through the Ardennes forest. He hoped to kill so many Americans that Roosevelt would pull his country out of the war but he had totally misjudged American resolve and battle field improvisation. By this time Hitler’s rockets, first the V1s and then the unseen V2s, were hitting London but they were too few and too late in the war to be decisive. Even the German jet fighter, the ME 262, was developed in insufficient numbers and often lacked fuel. Those few that got into the air often used the autobahns as runways as the German airfields had been largely destroyed. In the spring of 1945 Nazi Germany finally collapsed. The Russians closed in on Berlin, the Canadians liberated Holland, the British recaptured Belgium and the Americans crossed the Rhine. In South-Eastern Europe Marshal Tito liberated Yugoslavia. He was the only Resistance leader in the war to free his own country. It was this success that permitted him to stand up to Stalin in the postwar period.

In February 1945, the “Big Three” leaders met at Yalta to decide the future of Germany. and to plan for a peaceful post war world. After much haggling they agreed that there would be a United Nations organization after the war to settle future disputes. Roosevelt’s triumph lay in persuading Stalin to agree to work with this projected world body, provided the Permanent Members of its Security Council, that is the “Big Three”, had veto power.

Russia was given the prize of seizing Berlin, which could hardly be denied her since her armies were so close to Hitler's capital. The leaders also decided on partitioning Germany into four zones - the French to have one zone - and to hold trials of alleged German war criminals at Nuremberg soon after the end of hostilities. Stalin also agreed to hold free elections in a restructured Poland. This was a promise that he did not keep, claiming that any government that was not Fascist was democratic.

Photographs taken of the leaders at Yalta reveal Roosevelt to be a dying man. Critics of Yalta have seized upon his appearance to claim that he foolishly "gave away" concessions to the Russians. They have angrily alleged that the line between the Russian and Western armies should have been set much further to the East, denying the Soviets so much of Germany and preventing Stalin from having a free hand in South and Eastern Europe. This alleged "sell out" became part of Republican Party mythology in the post war, contributing to the claim made by some right-wing Republicans that under the Democrats there had been "twenty years of treason" in Europe and soon after in China. This allegation was patently false. However sick Roosevelt was, both he and Churchill had no illusions about Soviet designs. But the Russian army was close to Berlin and vastly superior to the Western forces, so that Russia could not be denied the territories allocated to her at Yalta without risking another war. Hence the boundary between the Russian armies and the Western Allied forces was set at the river Elbe, well to the west of much of Germany. That boundary at least offered a line of demarcation between armies that prevented them running into each other randomly and perhaps militantly. There was still the war in the Pacific and, judging from the ferocious manner in which the Japanese continued to fight, the conflict seemed far from over.

Just as America and Britain prepared to concentrate on Japan, Roosevelt died suddenly in Warm Springs Georgia on 12 April 1945 of a massive stroke. His death shocked the Western world. Many battle-hardened soldiers wept, although some right-wing Republicans and big business barons greeted his demise with toasts. In Canada too there was shock as many admired not merely Roosevelt's war leadership but also his domestic reforms of the 1930s, the "New Deal". High School yearbooks were dedicated to his name, moving speeches were given in the House of Commons and there were fulsome editorials in the newspapers. No American leader has ever touched Canadian hearts as deeply as Roosevelt.

His successor, Harry Truman, had little knowledge of the war secrets, for Vice Presidents at that time were not privy to the innermost policies of the President and his close advisors. Most significantly, Truman had not been informed about the Manhattan Project to build an atomic bomb. Many detractors saw him merely as a provincial, a failed haberdasher from Missouri who would be out of his depth in dealing with world problems. These critics were to be proven wildly wrong. Truman helped carry on the war against Hitler and the Japanese to a successful conclusion.

The European war ended on 8 May 1945 when the German forces, now under the leadership of Admiral Doenitz, surrendered. Hitler had committed suicide in his deep bunker near the Reichstag on 30 April by shooting himself. He had boasted that his regime, the Third Reich, would last a thousand years. Instead his grisly experiment ended after twelve years of terror, butchery and other depravities. Hitler died as he had lived, blaming others for all his mistakes and, in his *Political Testament*, accusing the German people of "letting him down". If he could have had his way in the last days of the European war, Hitler would have had his underlings devastate what remained of Germany's economic infrastructure. The Western and Soviet contempt for Hitler and the relief felt at his death were reflected in the exuberant celebrations throughout Europe and North America which have been captured in enduring photographs and newsreels. What was not seen were the savage rapes of tens of thousands of German women in Berlin and earlier in Vienna carried out by vengeful Soviet troops.

Truman and the Allies now turned to the war against Japan. The Americans had been sobered by the implacable manner in which the Japanese soldiers fought on the island of Iwo Jima in February 1945 and even more so by the losses suffered taking Okinawa in June 1945. This fanatical fighting was paralleled by *kamikaze* or suicide attacks on American shipping by fighter pilots carrying explosives. Although American bombers were systematically destroying almost all Japanese industrial plants and cities, where the destruction was total because the houses were made of wood, the Truman Administration was wary of attacking the islands of Japan proper.

Military experts predicted arbitrarily that the Americans would suffer anywhere from 200,000 to 1,000,000 casualties in an invasion. These considerations led to Truman's decision to order the air force to use atomic bombs against Japan.

The Americans first tested an atomic device at Alamogordo, New Mexico, on 17 July 1945. Its success was dramatic. Truman, Churchill and Stalin were at the Potsdam Conference deciding, and quarreling about, how to deal with contentious postwar problems. When Truman heard of this extraordinary explosion he became more confident in negotiating with the Russians with whom relations had become increasingly difficult. Churchill and Roosevelt had decided in 1944 to keep the secret of the atomic bomb program from the Soviets. As a concession to some of his scientists and other advisors, however, Truman at Potsdam casually mentioned to Stalin that America possessed a new destructive weapon. Stalin was equally casual in his offhand response because he already knew about the bomb from his spies on the Manhattan Project, particularly the physicist Klaus Fuchs. At Potsdam the Americans, supported by the British and the Chinese, stated terms of surrender to Japan. Russia was not then at war with Japan. The Japanese response to the ultimatum was confused and so Truman ordered that the two available bombs be sent to a bases near Japan and dropped as soon as possible. On 6 August 1945 the Enola Gay dropped the first atomic bomb on hitherto untouched Hiroshima, killing over 100,000 immediately and many others later from radiation. The second bomb was dropped on Nagasaki on 9 August, both to demonstrate to the Japanese and to the increasingly hostile Russians that America had more than a single atomic device. On the same day Russia entered the war against Japan, sending armies into Manchuria.

These bombs did not defeat Japan, which was already on the verge of collapse. What the bombs did was to force Japan to surrender. Since the American casualties were mounting alarmingly the nearer her armies got to the Japanese homeland, Truman and his advisors desperately sought a rapid end to the conflict rather than enduring further months of rooting the enemy out from his foxholes and bunkers. They also justified the use of nuclear power by reflecting that a President could scarcely say after a prolonged invasion, and with many more hundreds of thousands of American soldiers dead, that America had had a weapon to end the war but declined to use it. There was also such bitter hatred of the Japanese that the ideas of warning them in advance or attempting to bomb an uninhabited area were not seriously considered. Some of the scientists responsible for making the atomic bomb, led by Hungarian-born physicist and German expatriate Leo Szilard, did draw up a petition urging Truman to warn the Japanese in advance, but he never saw the document. Retrospective observations by Americans who had been close to Roosevelt have claimed that there was no doubt that he would have dropped the bomb. Serious questions, however, still remain: were the Americans mainly seeking Japan's surrender or were they hoping primarily to intimidate Stalin into more conciliatory negotiations? So far evidence indicates that both questions determined the American course of action. Another issue which persists is that of whether America would have deployed such a terrible weapon against the Germans, a "white race"? That answer can never be known but from all the evidence of the Allied animosity towards the Axis powers the answer seems to indicate yes. There is, moreover, little doubt that the Germans or the Japanese, had they developed the atomic bomb first, would surely have used it. Yet the Allies always claimed that they fought on a higher moral ground than the Axis. And so the issue continues to be debated, often passionately.

On 14 August 1945 Japan surrendered. On behalf of the Allies, General MacArthur conducted the surrender ceremonies on board the battleship *Missouri* in Tokyo Bay.

## **VI. THE AFTERMATH**

Some historians, seeking broad patterns in time, have described the period 1914 to 1945 as a second “Thirty Years War”, comparing it with the Thirty Years War in Europe from 1618 to 1648. However facile this analogy may seem and however profound the differences in the crises, the idea has some utility, if only in providing a sense of perspective on our times. Both eras witnessed terrible, intermittent fighting in the German-speaking lands and within other adjacent European societies; both periods were characterized by fanatical behaviour - in the earlier case the struggle was between militant Catholic Counter Reformation ideology exemplified by the Jesuits and aggressive Protestantism manifested by the Calvinists; both eras saw shifting, cynical alliances and betrayals; Catholic France, for example, had allied with the Moslem Ottoman Turks against the Catholic Holy Roman Emperor just as Hitler had allied with Stalin; the two times of trouble witnessed campaigns of pillage, rape, wanton destruction, undisciplined armies and terrible loss of life - it is estimated that thirty per cent of “Germany” was slaughtered; and both peace settlements envisioned some form of trans-national organization as a means to prevent the recurrence of such ghastly wars, a “Concert of Europe” in 1648 and the United Nations in 1945.

Many German historians and ordinary Germans alike have been disturbed by such comparisons for the implications of viewing the period 1914 to 1945 as one of continuity troubles them deeply. If there was continuity, then Hitler’s Third Reich and its atrocities cannot be seen as an aberration, as a distinctive episode arising from unique circumstances of the 1930s. The Allied decision, unprecedented historically, to try twenty two leading Nazis at Nuremberg in 1945 on charges of “Crimes against Peace” and Crimes against Humanity” reflected not just a belief by the victors that their cause had been just; it also demonstrated the Allied decision to blame the Nazi clique and not the German people. To argue, by contrast, that Hitler’s Germany was part of a continuity extending back to 1914, and even earlier, is to see him as deeply embedded in the course and nature of modern German history. That means that the culture which produced a Beethoven, a Bach, a Goethe and numerous other contributors to the richness and well being of humanity also carried alongside it, indeed within it, some of the darkest manifestations of evil in history. This question has imposed an almost intolerable burden on many Germans, not least the young today. Allied to this dilemma, is the question of German complicity in the Holocaust. Was it carried out primarily by Hitler and the grisly gang of thugs in his court and in the SS? Or was it done with the complicity of the great majority of the German people? Certainly, there is no doubt now that the ordinary soldiers of the *Wehrmacht* were deeply involved in the “Final Solution”. To what extent the great majority of the German people were or were not “Hitler’s willing executioners”, to take the title of a recent book of that persuasion, remains a question of continued, impassioned debate. These issues help explain why the Germans continue to engage in extended attempts to come to grips with their World War Two past. By contrast the Japanese have shown no evidence of contrition, particularly in the patriotic interpretations contained in school text books

There was also, as in the period after 1648, some sense of futility after 1945, for the sacrifices of World War II did not lead to security, as the Continent, and much of the rest of the world, was almost immediately split into two rival political and military blocs This division led to immense wastage of resources that could have been allocated to the improvement of humanity. Nevertheless, some humane developments occurred. For example, fearful of a postwar depression such had occurred after 1918, and anxious to reward veterans, Canada, the United States and to some extent economically exhausted Britain, provided generous post war benefits. Unwilling to see the West fall into the narrow, restrictive tariff policies which crippled the West after 1918, the United States also persuaded, and sometimes coerced, its allies to embrace a multi-lateral world trading system. This facilitated economic growth and consolidated the American world economic empire. Such economic activities, and especially industrial production for European aid and for continued military developments, produced the greatest and longest economic boom in history. Canada benefited enormously from this unexpected boom, entering a period of stability based on greater social justice financed by a healthy economy.

There was no general peace conference, because there was no German government which could sign any such treaty. Stalin in any case had no wish to re negotiate the enormous gains Russia had made in terms of territory. So the division of Europe remained the de facto situation that prevailed at the end of the war. In terms of distress, the Allies had to confront the fact that millions in 1945 were displaced and hungry, indeed often starving. The United Nations and volunteer agencies helped to feed many of the hungry. The United Nations Refugee Relief

Administration (UNRRA) was confronted by a tidal wave of refugees, including some 8,000,000 Germans and nearly 9,000,000 other from other nationalities most of whom were fleeing from the Red Army. They were slowly dispersed throughout Western Europe and eventually many managed to get to North America. These “Displaced Persons”, the DPs, were a common feature of the demographic landscape of postwar Canada and the United States. Alas, the Western Allies often forcibly expelled many thousands of refugees whose return Stalin demanded. Many chose mass suicide rather than be repatriated.

Well before the war ended it was clear that the world would be dominated by two superpowers, the United States and Soviet Russia, whose rivalry had begun in earnest by 1945. The eclipse of Western Europe seemed permanent. Stalin was resolved to fashion a glacis of subservient states on his western border as a protection possible against future attacks and as a source of raw materials and manufactured goods. From the agreements at Yalta and because his army was in Eastern Europe, he slowly tightened his grip by 1946 on such states as Poland, Rumania, Bulgaria and Hungary. Czechoslovakia he took control of by a coup in 1948. He looted Eastern Germany and other satellite countries for industrial machinery and other goods to rebuild Russia’s exhausted economy. Yet he respected earlier agreements by refusing to support the Communists in Greece which he saw as in Britain’s sphere of influence. Nor did he interfere on behalf of the Italian Communist Party, the largest such organization outside of the Soviet Union. In the battle for the minds of non-Europeans, Stalin revived international communism, intensifying the Cold War with the United States and its Allies. Furthermore, his scientists, aided by traitors in the West who still believed Russia was the best hope for the world, worked tirelessly to produce and detonate an atomic bomb. They were successful in 1949, to the shock of the Western powers who thought it would take Russia a good deal longer than that.

In any case the Cold War had begun well before 1949. The nature of the struggle had been described prophetically by Churchill in a speech at Fulton, Missouri in 1946. He warned that “from Stettin in the Baltic to Trieste in the Adriatic, an iron curtain has descended across the Continent”. Behind that line lay many of Europe’s greatest cities and populations, all under the control of Moscow. Churchill did not believe that the Soviet Union desired war, but predicted that they wished to extend their power. As yet, the West did not fully grasp the prison world of the Soviet Union with its Gulags.

American policy makers also began to perceive the world in that stark fashion. They found Stalin both indifferent to recovery plans for Germany and Europe in general and apparently prepared to promote instability in still precariously democratic states. Hence in May 1947 George Kennan, at Truman’s request, drew up plans for a European Recovery Scheme that would rebuild the economies of Europe so as to prevent them falling into the hands of domestic Communist Parties dominated by Moscow. This scheme became the Marshall Plan, named after the George Marshall, the Secretary of State. Congress was persuaded to rehabilitate Europe. On the decision of Stalin, Russia and her satellites refused to participate, claiming that the Plan was “a capitalist ruse”. At the same time, Truman accepted on behalf of his country the leadership of the non-Communist world. There was to be no return to “isolationism” or a withdrawal to “Fortress America” By the “Truman Doctrine” of March 1947, American troops were pledged to remain in Europe, and elsewhere in the world, to assist countries threatened by “armed minorities or outside pressure”. This stand against Communism was labeled by Kennan in an article in July 1947 as “Containment”. It was to remain American policy until the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991.

Truman’s decisions reflected a new-found maturity in American foreign policy as well as an often paranoid fear of the Soviets. This excessive fear had been heightened by events in China. Despite the millions of dollars in aid to Chiang Kai shek, his Nationalist Party rapidly lost ground to the Communist Party led by Mao Zedong. Most Americans did not realize just how corrupt the Nationalists were and how dependent they were on war lords in the interior and financial interests in such coastal cities as Shanghai. Mao, by contrast, through appealing to the Chinese peasantry - there being no industrial proletariat - brought a message of hope for the future from landlord oppression and grinding poverty. Quickly the Nationalists disintegrated until by 1949 Mao was triumphant and Chiang was confined to Taiwan. This reversal in China fueled the anti-Communist fears, indeed hysteria, which gripped the United States from the late 1940s through the early 1950s. Right-wing “China Lobby” politicians

alleged that the Democratic Administration of Truman had “lost” China. This implied grandly that China, with one billion people, could have been kept in the American orbit if only so-called “traitors”, notably the distinguished public servants Dean Acheson and George Marshall, had not betrayed their country! This rabid anti-Communist crusade was typified by the actions of Senator Joseph McCarthy, a powerful member of the House Un-American activities Committee (HUAC). His reckless charges of internal Communist subversion, supported by many Americans, terrified Washington, intimidated high civil servants, artists and academics and, almost always without reasonable evidence, destroyed many productive careers. Most Canadians, less unbalanced about the Communist menace, viewed these American proceedings with astonishment and alarm, not least because it was scarcely possible to imagine a “House Un-Canadian Activities”! McCarthy was finally censured by the Senate in 1954 for conduct unbecoming a Senator.

In Japan the Americans were successful. Commander-in-Chief Douglas MacArthur presided over the rebuilding of Japanese cities and the rehabilitation of their economy. The Japanese were allowed to keep their Emperor, Hirohito, as a figurehead. Despite MacArthur’s imperious nature, he was also instrumental in laying the foundations for a democratic state. Denied the right by the peace treaty to build up another military state, Japan has been content to shelter under the American defensive shield while rebuilding their industry in an extraordinarily short time and developing modern technologies in demand all over the world. Yet MacArthur reversed earlier plans to break up Japan’s industrial oligarchy by, for example, allowing the Japanese industrial magnates who formed the *Zaibatsu* cartel to return and run the economy.

The Americans counted upon Great Britain to be an important, if subordinate, ally in the postwar. To the surprise of many in the West and to the astonishment of Stalin, Churchill and the Conservatives had lost the general election of late July 1945 to the Labour Party under Clement Attlee, British voters revered Churchill’s role in the war, but they wanted major social changes after the conflict and believed that Labour was far more likely to advance that agenda. The high point of Labour’s welfare state policies was the institution of a free, inclusive system of National Health. At the same time, Labour leaders wanted Britain to remain a Great Power. To that end the Government built an atomic bomb, retained conscription and maintained a large garrison in the British zone in divided Germany.

Britain, however, had been exhausted by the war. She had sold much of her foreign investments to pay for the war, most of her merchant navy had been sunk, her industrial plant was outmoded and damaged by the German bombing and much of her foreign trade had been lost to America. In addition, the Truman Administration behaved with ruthless parsimony towards Britain, canceling Lend Lease as soon as the German war was over. Given the weakened state of Britain and the Americans’ need to keep her ally as a bulwark against Russia in the slowly emerging Cold War, this was not only a mean-spirited act, it was also strategically foolish. In 1946 Washington was still intent on exacting harsh terms from Britain. Instead of a free gift which many Britons, especially Lord Keynes, believed was due their country for its war effort, the Truman Administration demanded interest at two per cent for the Anglo-American loan of 3.75 billion dollars. This was designed to keep the British economy afloat. The Americans, however, also insisted upon the pound being convertible into dollars for transactions. Since the pound was now so weak, demand for dollars caused a rapid run on British currency thereby defeating some of the objectives of the loan. Canada, for her part, agreed to a loan of 1.25 billion dollars, a third of the American amount. This was a remarkably large subvention, designed to restore long-term trading benefits. As the price of their loan, America also demanded that Britain relinquish her system of Imperial Preferences, opening her markets fully to the United States. Such was the price of American hegemony.

Britain could not simultaneously implement a welfare state, retain an Empire and maintain a major military establishment. In 1947 she began her long retreat from Empire, for the British no longer had the resources or the will to maintain their imperial status. That year the Labour Government gave India the independence that had been promised during the war. Unfortunately Hindu - Moslem tensions were so great that Partition was the only answer. In a crisis in which many, many thousands were killed, India and Pakistan came into existence as sovereign states. In the same year, the United Kingdom declared that it could no longer keep order in the Palestine Mandate, which

she had administered since its creation after World War I. The British departed and most observers thought that the enveloping Arab armies would drive the Jewish settlers into the sea. To the surprise of the world David Ben Gurion rallied the Jewish forces, defeated the Arabs and proclaimed the state of Israel. Since then Israel's existence has been underwritten by the United States.

The other European Colonial Empires could not survive the combination of humiliating defeat in World War II and rising nationalism. As early as August 1945, Sukarno proclaimed Indonesian independence from the Dutch and two weeks later Ho Chi Minh declared Vietnamese independence from France. France attempted far longer than Britain to preserve its Empire, hopelessly in the event. She fought disastrous colonial wars first in Vietnam until 1954 and then in Algeria until General de Gaulle extricated them from that quagmire in the late 1950s and early 1960s.

Canadians at the end of the war were reasonably prosperous, politically stable and proud of their accomplishments in defeating the Axis. If the Canadian military's role was not as glorious as in the Great War, it was no less important. King and his fellow Liberals, following their party's tradition of accommodation to the United States, rejected a policy of developing an independent nuclear deterrent and allowed America to establish early warning stations in the North. Although Canada did not disarm totally, she was content in the postwar years to play the role of a United Nations peace keeper. Indeed, Canadians were enthusiastic about the establishment of the United Nations and hopeful of its prospects. Domestically, Canada followed America in urging women war workers to return to housekeeping. This doctrine was instilled steadily by such magazines as *Chatelaine*. The introduction of the "new look", longer dresses for women, indicated that the "uniform" of "Rosie the Riveter" and "Jill Canuck" was obsolete. The population was enriched by as many as 45,000 war brides from the United Kingdom and by skilled immigrants from Britain and such countries as the Netherlands.

Canada was content to shelter under the American nuclear deterrent, while enjoying the fruits of the American economic boom. Under the guidance of C. D. Howe, Canadian industry began to flourish. Wheat sales to Britain, negotiated somewhat ineptly by James Gardiner, the Minister for Agriculture, brought some gains to the Western farmer. Veterans took advantage of the Veteran's Charter to seek education in unprecedented numbers. Never again would Canada go to war with only two per cent of her soldiers possessing a Grade Six education. Housing construction was extraordinarily high as Canadians used some of their war-time savings for large numbers of single family dwellings. Mortgages were made available cheaply through the provisions of the National Housing act of 1944. The suburban sprawl so evident today was soon underway. In international affairs Canada attempted to play the role of a "Middle Power", concentrating on peace-keeping and relief work.

Many aspects of the "Cold War" still remain controversial despite the release since 1991 of significant numbers of Soviet documents. Was Stalin, as American policy makers and many historians believed, set on world domination? The blockade of Berlin during 1948-49, the subversion of states in Eastern Europe, the support of anti-colonial revolutionary movements and the extensive spy network that penetrated Western societies are some of the indications that Stalin was interested in much more than merely promoting Russian security. Canadians, for example, were shocked in late 1945 when Igor Gouzenko, an obscure cipher clerk in the Russian Embassy, revealed that a few Canadian citizens and public servants had betrayed secrets to the Russians, including information concerning the atomic bomb. Americans became understandably if often hysterically fearful at the evidence of treason in high places, such as that of Alger Hiss and some atomic scientists, notably Klaus Fuchs. Krushchev's belligerent prediction made at the United Nations in 1960 that "history is on our side. We will bury you" appeared to indicate more evidence of Soviet world designs. On the other hand, historians in the 1970s and after have seen in some American policies evidence of Washington's desire to dominate Russia and the world economically and militarily. They point to American support of dreadful dictators such as Franco in Spain and Batista in Cuba so long as they remained anti-Communist. It is clear now that, despite the Western fear of Soviet prowess in building missiles and putting a man into space in 1957, the Soviet Union did not in the long run have the technical resources, the trained labour, the efficient agriculture and the capital to compete with America. The Soviet "Command Economy" was massively inefficient. Despite crises such as the Korean War, a general peace was maintained

throughout Cold War by the fact that both superpowers had nuclear arsenals. It was MAD, the doctrine of Mutually Assured Destruction, that brought to an end the most horrendous period of world wars in history.

While the threat of nuclear annihilation prevented war between the superpowers and their respective allies, it did not stop conflicts between client states. The Korean War of the early 1950s and the Vietnam conflict from 1954 to 1973 are tragic examples of wars on the periphery of the superpowers. Ironically, the collapse of the Soviet Union by 1991 led to a recurrence of fighting between nationalities which on the whole had been kept under control during the Cold War. Such peoples as the Serbs and the Croats, for example, who shared so many characteristics in common, fought brutally notably in Bosnia. Their “narcissism of small differences”, to borrow an insight from Sigmund Freud, led to savage mutilations and killings such as had occurred in the Balkans before 1914. However much “globalisation” has brought the world closer together in some respects, it has not, alas, muted classical xenophobia.