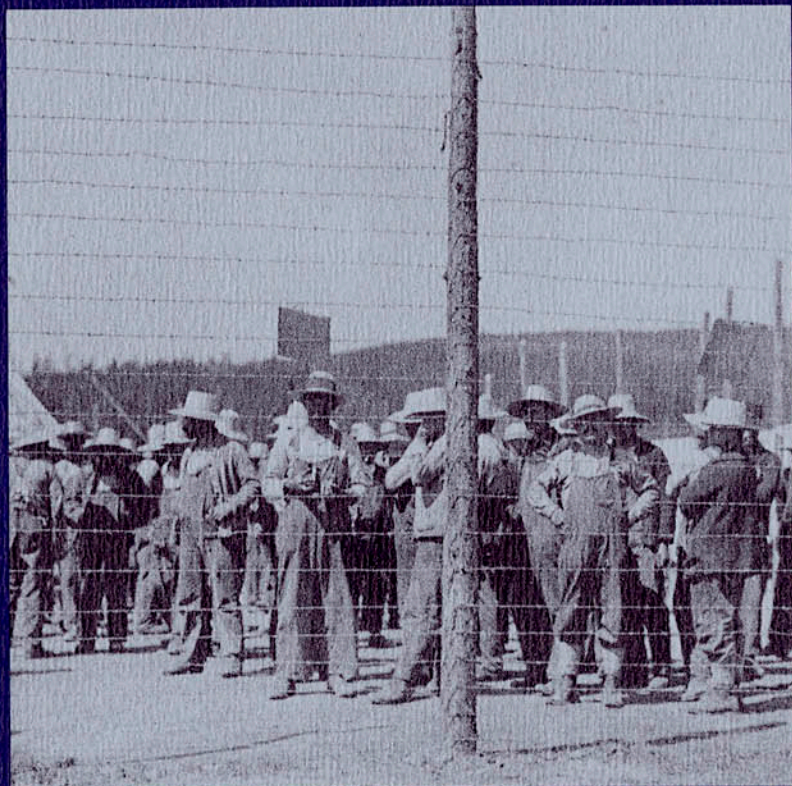


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I — INTRODUCTION

Canadians like to describe their country as “a peaceable kingdom”, little touched by the effects of war. They also cherish the notion that immigrants to Canada flourish in a tolerant “multicultural mosaic”, rather than struggle against the assimilative “melting pot” of the United States. The experience of World Wars I and II challenges both of these myths of Canada’s national self-image. During each war, ethnic minorities — Canadians of German, Ukrainian, Italian, or Japanese background — endured nativistic discrimination because the country of their birth or their ancestral origin suddenly become Canada’s enemy. Thousands among them — many naturalized citizens or Canadian-born — lost their legal rights, their property, and their freedom.

The beginning of World War I marked the end of the greatest wave of immigration in Canada’s history. Between 1900 and 1914, migration from Britain, continental Europe, and the United States increased the population by more than one-third, from just over five million to more than seven million people. Most of these immigrants came to farm the prairies, or to do the rough physical labour needed to open Northern Ontario and Canada’s “Last, Best West” to economic development. The influx peaked in 1913, when 400,870 migrants arrived in Canada. The reception native-born Canadians gave to these migrants varied according to the newcomers’ origins. Immigrants from the British Isles, the United States, Germany, or Scandinavia satisfied prevailing prejudices about which ethnic groups made suitable building blocks for Canadian society. Others from Southern, Eastern, or Central Europe met animosity: ethnocentric journalists denounced Italians as “stiletto-carrying dagos” and Ukrainians as “degenerate Eastern Europeans”. The number of Asian immigrants was small, but even a minuscule migration from India, China, or Japan aroused virulent nativism.

Defined by historians as “opposition to an internal minority on the grounds that it posed a threat to Canadian national life”, nativism took many forms, from the routine exploitation meted out to the unskilled Ukrainian labourer, to the periodic mob violence which terrorized the Chinese and Japanese of British Columbia. Nativists demanded that the tiny trickle of migrants from Asia be cut off completely, and that immigration from Europe be strictly regulated to separate “the wheat from the chaff”. “There is a danger and it is national”, warned the introduction to *Strangers Within Our Gates*, a survey of “the problem of immigration” published in 1909. “We must see to it that the civilization and ideals of Southeastern Europe are not transplanted to and perpetuated on our virgin soil”. Far from multiculturalism — defined as “the preservation and

promotion of minority languages and cultures” — the goal of English-speaking Canadians was Anglo-conformity: that immigrants to Canada should be forced to assimilate to the language and customs of the majority. A host of proposals, ranging from the abolition of bilingual education to the prohibition of the alcoholic beverages immigrants used in ethnic celebrations, was offered as a means to accomplish this goal.

II — WORLD WAR I

Nativism was well established before World War I, but the guns of August 1914 gave the nativist agenda a new urgency, and specifically identified two ethnic minorities directly with Canada’s enemies. Britain’s declaration automatically committed Canada to war against the Central Powers: Germany, Austria-Hungary, Turkey, and Bulgaria. There were few Turks in Canada, and fewer Bulgarians, but there were more than 500,000 Canadians — one in fourteen — linked by birth or background to Germany and Austria-Hungary.

More than 400,000 Canadians were of German descent. Over half of them were Canadian born, and lived in long-established German communities in Nova Scotia and Ontario. These communities took pride in their background. Until the war began they saw no contradiction between their sense of Germanness and loyalty to Canada: after all, the German and British Royal Families were related by marriage. As a measure of the ease with which German-Canadians accepted their two identities, the burghers of Berlin, Ontario, erected a statue of the Kaiser Wilhelm in the park they named for his grandmother Queen Victoria! Another 150,000 German-speaking settlers had made homes in the West since the 1870s. Only a fifth of them came directly from Germany, however; others arrived from German-speaking areas in Eastern Europe, and still others after a sojourn in the American Middle West. The Germans of the West were also divided by religion: some were Catholics, some Lutherans. Like some of the Germans in Ontario, more than 20,000 were Mennonites, members of a pacifistic communitarian group which had begun to establish communities in Manitoba in the 1870s. This diversity meant that those who shared the German language had no cohesive German ethnic identity, and that few had more than a marginal interest in the affairs of Imperial Germany. Until Canadians were blinded by the passion of war, Germans were exempted from the scrutiny of nativists. In *Strangers Within Our Gates*, J.S. Woodsworth observed that “Even those who detest ‘foreigners’ make an exception of Germans, whom they classify as ‘white people like ourselves’.... As a whole,” Woodsworth concluded, “it need hardly be said that they are among our best immigrants”.

An overwhelming majority of the 120,000 “Austrians” in Canada in 1914 were in fact Ukrainians from Galicia and Bukovyna in the Austro-Hungarian Empire. These people were among the half-million peasants pushed out of these provinces by economic hardship, unable to survive on tiny peasant farms of only two or three hectares. A migration of Ukrainian peasants to Canada had begun in the

1890s, accelerated rapidly after 1905, and continued until cut off by the war. Their destinations were North-western Ontario or the bush lands of the prairie provinces, where families built self-sufficient homesteads, and men, married and single, toiled as “navvies” — the contemporary term for unskilled workers in railway construction and the extractive industries. It was a harsh existence, but after the conditions they had survived in Europe, Canada seemed a “promised land” to most Ukrainian immigrants. The fulminations of nativists made life that much harder: usually called “Galicians” by English-Canadians, Ukrainians became a favourite nativist target. “In so low an estimation are they held”, wrote a journalist more sympathetic than most, “that the word Galician is almost a term of reproach”.

Legally, the only “enemy aliens” were those who had not yet naturalized: about 20,000 Germans and some 60,000 Ukrainians. But many Anglo-Canadians distrusted naturalized Germans and “Austrians”, even those who were Canadian-born. Were they loyal to Canada and King George V, or did their hearts secretly belong to Germany’s Kaiser Wilhelm and the Austro-Hungarian Emperor Franz Joseph? For the rest of the World War and beyond, the menace of the “enemy alien” added a new dimension to the “immigration problem”. Accidental disasters were attributed to the “hidden hand” of enemy alien saboteurs: the fire that destroyed the parliament buildings in February 1916, or the explosion that leveled Halifax in December 1917. Harvest-time brought rumours that “Austrian” farm labourers were about to set fire to the prairie grain crop. One Alberta editor warned that Ukrainians planned to “throw off British rule and establish a Ukrainian nation here in Canada”. Letters to members of parliament reported an army of German-Americans massing below the United States border, poised to invade, and that Germans or “Austrians” within Canada were drilling secretly to be ready to join them.

Nightmares about enemy aliens were groundless. Some recent arrivals from the old country undoubtedly found their loyalties in conflict, but most kept their qualms about the Allied cause to themselves. There was the occasional rash prediction of an Allied defeat: in Pembroke, Ontario, a German bragged that the flag of his fatherland would soon wave over the town’s post office. Throughout the war, no German or Ukrainian resident of Canada was ever found guilty of any act of sabotage, and historian Desmond Morton has concluded that it should have been “obvious that the Germans and Austrians in Canada posed no significant military threat”.

But demonstrating this to the majority was not easy. Neither Germany nor Austria-Hungary conceded the right of its subjects to change their nationality; both empires had universal military conscription, and expected their veterans living overseas to return to the colours. A week before the British declaration of war, when it seemed that the conflict might be confined to Serbia and Austria, Bishop Nykyta Budka of the Ruthenian Greek Catholic Church urged those Ukrainians who were Austrian reservists to “go to defend the threatened fatherland”.

Once Britain declared war on Austria, however, Budka recanted with alacrity, declaring that “we Canadian Ukrainians have a great and holy obligation to join the colours of our new fatherland,...[and] to sacrifice our property and blood for it...under the flag of the British state”. An estimated 10,000 naturalized Ukrainians served in the Canadian Expeditionary Force, one of whom, Filip Konowal, won the Victoria Cross. But unnaturalized Ukrainians who attempted to enlist faced a “Catch-22”: enlistment would have proven their loyalty, but as “enemy aliens” by birth, they were denied the right to volunteer. Ukrainian communities could and did make significant donations to the Red Cross and to the Patriotic Fund, a charity established to aid soldier’s families. This proof of their loyalty eased the doubt in the minds of at least one important Canadian — in February 1918, Prime Minister Borden conceded privately that the “spirit of co-operation” of Ukrainian-Canadians during the war “deserves every commendation”.

Nothing that a German Canadian did seemed enough, however. A Lutheran minister in Pembroke, Ontario, was publicly condemned for addressing his congregation in German, even though his eldest son was in the trenches. A German-born professor in Western Ontario who volunteered to speak at recruiting rallies was rejected on the ground that he might be a spy. The home-front propaganda war imprinted a new negative stereotype of the German to replace the positive pre-war image. The federal government made certain that every newspaper in the country received the British *Report of the Committee on Alleged German Outrages*, which accused the German armies in Belgium of “murder, lust, and pillage...on a scale unparalleled in any war between civilized nations”. Canadian editors responded with a steady stream of tendentious “atrocities” stories which portrayed the enemy as less than human. After a submarine torpedoed the liner *Lusitania* in May 1915, even the most skeptical Canadians were persuaded that Germans were sub-human “blood-crazed madmen”. With pre-war nativism reshaped and legitimated by the war, enemy aliens faced both popular and official discrimination. Popular discrimination victimized all those with enemy alien connections whatever their legal status, because it enabled civilians to strike a blow against the “enemy”. Some was silly. School children refused to sing the songs in their music reader written by German composers, or dog show judges derided Dachshunds. But prejudice in the workplace was common and more vicious: the University of Toronto dismissed three German-born professors amidst much fanfare, and in Fernie, British Columbia, miners struck rather than work alongside Germans. Violence was all too common: in almost every Canadian city at least once during the war, a frenzied mob smashed and looted the property of real or imagined German-Canadians after rumours that an “alien” had been employed in preference to a veteran. In Regina the offices of *Der Courier*, a German-language newspaper, were wrecked; in Berlin, Ontario, two German-Canadian clubs were demolished.

Governments never encouraged such attacks on minorities and, in fact, usually spoke out against them. But as the war went on, politicians gradually yielded to popular pressure to take official action against enemy aliens. As

repugnant as popular discrimination was, official discrimination from governments had much more serious consequences. The War Measures Act, passed without opposition in August 1914, gave the federal government powers of “arrest, detention, exclusion, and deportation” of individuals, and specifically denied the rights of bail and of *habeas corpus* to anyone arrested “upon suspicion that he is an alien enemy”. These sweeping powers had ominous overtones for ethnic minorities, although they were used with relative restraint early in the war. By Order in Council (the War Measures Act eliminated the need for parliamentary approval) enemy aliens were given a month to report with local magistrates acting on behalf of the Dominion Police. Eighty-five thousand turned up. Over 80,000 were duly registered, handed over firearms if they owned them, promised not to try to leave Canada, and were allowed to return to their homes. The remainder, considered potentially dangerous, were arrested. In October 1914, an internment system administered by the Department of Justice sprang into being to confine them; over the next four years, a total of 8,579 enemy aliens were imprisoned. The official report of Major-General W.D. Otter, the officer who administered the camps, provides an exact accounting of the 7,762 internees who were residents of Canada (the remainder were prisoners of war captured elsewhere). Germans made up only 1,192 of those incarcerated; 5,954 were categorized as Austro-Hungarians, but all but a few hundred of these “Austrian” internees were Ukrainians. Their individual files list many reasons for internment. Fewer than a third were actually enemy reservists; others were arrested for failing to register, for travelling without permission, for “using intemperate language”, for acting in a “very suspicious manner”, for being “of shiftless character”, or simply for being “undesirable”. Six Ukrainians were interned for lying about their country of birth in order to enlist! The real “crime” of most Ukrainians was to be out of work. Several city governments used internment as a subterfuge to purge their towns of unemployed immigrant workers.

The 26 “concentration camps” (despite its use in the Boer War, the term had not yet taken on its present-day implications) in which the internees were held stretched from Halifax to Nanaimo, British Columbia, and ranged from decrepit military installations and an abandoned factory to tents in the bush of the Canadian shield. As a bitter irony, the largest of the internment camps, at Petawawa, Ontario, was built on land expropriated from German immigrant farmers! Some camps held potentially violent German prisoners of war, and were really maximum security prisons. At Amherst, Nova Scotia, an attempted escape left one prisoner dead, four others with bullet wounds, and a guard severely injured. Others were work camps in the wilderness where the principal security measure was the five-day walk to the nearest town. Despite the barbed wire and middle-aged guards, living and working conditions were not much different than the usual lot of a Ukrainian navy. Internees in such camps resisted passively, leaning on their shovels and exerting themselves as little as they could. One of the few Ukrainian internees to write about his experience in a camp described the work as “goofing off most of the time, relaxing in shifts”. By

1917 Canada faced a war-induced labour shortage, and it had become obvious to all in positions of authority that virtually all of the Ukrainian internees were no danger to anyone. Over some public protest, all but three camps were quietly closed and all but 2,000 of the inmates were paroled into the custody of railway and resource industry companies. Nonetheless, the significance of internment for the innocent majority of the prisoners should not be underestimated. The barbed wire was real, and no matter how benign the guards, their rifles were loaded. Internees lost several years of their freedom, and were separated from friends and families. Watson Kirkconnell described the effects of captivity upon the prisoners he guarded at Kapuskasing, Ontario: "Among the camp population [there were] few on whom the long years of captivity had not left their mark.... Confinement in a strange land, inactivity and hopeless waiting were in themselves enough to shatter the nerves and undermine the health". One cannot measure the anxiety the threat of internment caused to other Germans or Ukrainians in Canada who never saw the inside of a camp.

The War-time Elections Act of 1917 was the most openly discriminatory blow to minorities during the First World War. Internment and registration applied only to unnaturalized enemy aliens. The War-time Elections Act deprived uncounted tens of thousands of naturalized Canadians of a fundamental democratic right — the vote. Designed to ensure a victory for the Union Government and its policy of conscription, the act denied the franchise to all those "born in an enemy country and naturalized subsequent to 31 March 1902". Since naturalization required a minimum of three years' residence, the act affected anyone who had arrived in Canada after 1899; the overwhelming majority of Ukrainian-Canadians fell into this category. Members of pacifist religious groups, Mennonites and Doukhobors (the act misspelled it as "Doukabors") were similarly stripped of their votes, regardless of their places of birth. The contradiction between this colossal gerrymander and Canada's professed war aim of defending democracy was lost on English Canadians, who generally applauded the act. The minorities robbed of their ballots accepted their humiliation with resignation and without public protest, for fear that the government might listen to vocal nativists who complained that the War-time Elections Act had let "enemy aliens" off too lightly.

The franchise was restored to minorities in 1920. More serious in the long term were decisions in Manitoba and Saskatchewan to abolish minority language rights in the provincial schools. English Canadians saw the public school as their principal weapon in the campaign for Anglo-conformity, as a "mill" which would take in immigrant children and "turn them out with the stamp of the King and the maple leaf". Demands for compulsory unilingual education pre-dated 1914, but war created the opening nativists needed to achieve their goal. In Manitoba in 1916 and in Saskatchewan in 1918, all ethnic minorities — not just Germans and Ukrainians — lost the right to have public schools teach in their mother tongues. (In both provinces, the educational rights of French-Canadians were also severely circumscribed.) To make certain that the children of ethnic

minorities learned English, school attendance was made compulsory to age fourteen. Saskatchewan further required school trustees to take an oath of allegiance.

Harsh as internment and disfranchisement were, the English-Canadian public would have supported even more repressive measures. As the fighting on the western front intensified in 1917 and 1918, nativism on the home front intensified along with it. Wounded soldiers returned to Canada to become an outspoken anti-immigrant lobby. Angry that “the alien had been left to fatten on war-time prosperity”, the Great War Veterans Association called for immediate deportation of all enemy aliens, and demanded that naturalized aliens be conscripted to work in industry for the \$1.10 a day paid to a private soldier in the trenches. The federal government did not accede to every nativist demand, but as the war dragged on it began to use its emergency powers with less restraint. The 1917 Bolshevik Revolution in Russia aroused the hopes of radicals and the fears of Canada’s ruling class. The federal government had never really believed that enemy aliens were fifth-columnists for the Kaiser, but it took much more seriously the thought that enemy aliens might be minions of Lenin and Trotsky. After the Russian Revolution, “enemy alien” became a synonym for “Bolshevik”, providing the justification for a new round of political repression. “Enemy alien” newspapers had been monitored by the Dominion Press Censor since 1915; in September 1918 papers which published in German, Ukrainian, and seven other “enemy alien” languages were summarily banned by Order in Council under the War Measures Act. In October, another such order prohibited meetings “conducted in the language of...any country or portion of any country with which Canada is at war, or any of the languages of Russia, Ukraine or Finland”. It further specifically designated thirteen left-wing political groups of largely immigrant membership, among them the Ukrainian Social Democratic Party, as “unlawful associations”. Their supporters could be arrested without a warrant, and sentenced to five years’ imprisonment.

Because of its new anti-radical focus, the campaign against enemy aliens did not end with the Armistice in November 1918. Instead, it gathered momentum with a post-war “Red Scare” across North America. The worst nativist riots took place in Winnipeg in January 1919, as veterans marauded through the immigrant north end of the city, demanding that anyone who looked like an alien kneel to kiss the Union Jack. As in 1914, employers laid off immigrants so that “real” Canadians could have their jobs. A 1920 best-seller was a book which asked *The Burning Question of Today: Shall the Alien Go?* Author Wellington Bridgeman answered a resounding yes: all “enemy aliens”, men, women, and children, should be deported and their property confiscated and distributed among veterans.

The federal government was less sweeping than Bridgeman recommended, but in 1919 section 41 was hastily added to the Immigration Act to allow the speedy deportation of immigrants who were political radicals. A Order-in-

Council that same year, PC 1203, prohibited Germans, Austrians, Hungarians, Bulgarians, or Turks from immigrating to Canada. The pacifist religious groups of the prairies and British Columbia, the Mennonites and the Russian-speaking Doukhobors, had been left in relative tranquility in their rural communities during the war. Although stripped of the ballot, and pressured to contribute to wartime charities, Mennonites and Doukhobors were relieved that the federal government honoured its promise of exemption from military service. Because of this promise, some 1200 Hutterian Brethren left the United States in 1918-19 to establish communal agricultural colonies in Manitoba and Alberta; their arrival further exacerbated English-Canadian resentment. Another Order-in-Council of 1919, PC 1204, specifically denied Doukhobors, Hutterites, and Mennonites entry to Canada because of "their peculiar customs, habits, modes of living and methods of holding property".

The discrimination of wartime affected its two principal minority targets differently. Many German Canadians reacted to the nativism of wartime by shedding the vestiges of their ethnic identity; as K.M. McLaughlin puts it, Schmidt became Smith, Braun became Brown, and Biehn became Bean. Anglicized names for German-Canadian towns and cities also symbolized this assimilation. Dusseldorf, Alberta, was renamed Freedom. Berlin, Ontario, became Kitchener; its Board of Education eliminated classes in German in the public schools; worshippers in its Lutheran churches heard only English-language sermons. More than 100,000 German Canadians were sufficiently ashamed of or nervous about their background that they identified themselves to the 1921 census takers as "Dutch" or "Austrian". But the injustices meted out to Ukrainian Canadians worked against the nativist goal of assimilation. Before the war, peasant migrants from Galicia and Bukovyna had only a weakly-developed concept of themselves as Ukrainians; Galicians, argued some nativists, were "eager to become Canadianized". But their resentment of unilingual education, internment, and disenfranchisement aided a small nationalist intelligentsia to encourage a growing national self-consciousness. This identity was further heightened after 1917, as they followed with excitement the Ukrainian National Republic's unsuccessful struggle for independence. Fighting for their rights taught them the importance of active political participation, and solidified their transition from peasants into Ukrainian Canadians.

III — WORLD WAR II

The First World War's legacy of resentment and suspicion clouded ethnic relations in Canada throughout the inter-war period. Over the opposition of the trade union movement and some farm organizations, restrictions against the immigration of former enemy aliens were gradually dismantled between 1923 and 1925. Popular prejudice would have kept the restrictions in place, but corporate greed had more influence in Ottawa than citizen bigotry. Canada's "captains of industry" were not motivated by sympathy for those shut out by

nativist immigration policies. Their intent was the same as it had been before 1914: to assure a steady supply of unskilled immigrant navvies. Immigrants from former enemy countries and religious pacifists were categorized as “non-preferred”, but in 1925 the federal government agreed to allow the Canadian National and Canadian Pacific Railways to recruit immigrants in Europe and transport them to Canada without the immigrants passing through the normal channels. Under this agreement, 150,000 immigrants entered Canada between 1925 and 1930 who would have been excluded had regulations against “enemy aliens” remained in force. Because the overall volume of migration to Canada slowed during the 1920s, immigrants who were former enemy aliens made up a larger proportion of total immigration to Canada after World War I than they had prior to 1914!

This second wave of immigration from Europe inspired a more virulent nativism than the first, best illustrated by the sudden appearance and rapid growth of the Ku Klux Klan of Kanada. Klan orators invoked images of English-Canadian sacrifices “on Flanders field”, blamed immigrants for crowding “our own people” out of the job market, and urged governments to “see that the slag and scum that refuse to become 100 percent Canadian citizens is skimmed off and thrown away”. The Great Depression further exacerbated ethnic relations. Massive unemployment forced the Bennett government to shut off immigration in 1930 and it remained restricted thereafter. The years leading up to the World War I had seen the largest numbers of immigrant arrivals in Canada’s history; in explicit contrast, those of the years before the World War II saw the lowest. More immigrants arrived in any single year between 1905 and 1914 than landed during the entire decade of the 1930s! This pause meant a slightly greater degree of emotional security for the English-Canadian population: a smaller percentage of the total Canadian population was foreign born than it had been a quarter-century earlier, less than nine per cent as compared to more than eleven per cent.

With World War I as its guide and the War Measures Act already in the statute books, the federal government quickly equipped itself with emergency powers as war in Europe became a certainty. The Defence of Canada Regulations proclaimed on 3 September 1939 — one week before Parliament’s formal decision to enter the war — turned back the clock to 1918. Once again the minister of justice could detain without charge anyone who might act “in any manner prejudicial to the public safety or the safety to the state”; once again normal legal procedures, *habeas corpus* included, were set aside, and once again there was little public protest. As Ramsay Cook has pointed out, Canada’s emergency powers were more extensive than those granted to the British government by the laws on which the War Measures Act was modeled. In Britain, the cabinet had to seek annual parliamentary approval to renew its emergency powers. In Canada, even this limited check on arbitrary authority was not available. Cabinet not only handed itself dictatorial powers for the duration of the war; it also handed these same powers to provincial and local authorities much less scrupulous about their use. The attorney general of Ontario felt the Defence of Canada Regulations did

not go far enough to give police the free hand they needed to deal with “slimy subversive elements” at work in his province. Saskatchewan’s attorney general enrolled 7,000 World War I veterans into the Saskatchewan Veterans Civil Security Corps, and turned them loose to enforce the Regulations in “isolated areas, especially where Anglo Saxon settlers are in the minority”. In their search for subversives, SVCSC volunteers harassed Canadians of German, Ukrainian, and Italian background, without bothering with the fine distinctions of native birth or naturalization. Ethnic newspapers and conscientious objectors were made special targets.

But despite the same precarious legal situation, the enemy aliens who had fared worst in World War I fared somewhat better in the second. There were several reasons for the differences. Even though 90,000 new “Germans” had been admitted to Canada during the 1920s, in 1939 only 16,000 of them had not been naturalized. The newcomers were even less “German” than those groups who had come before 1914: only one in ten had come directly to Canada from Germany. Lingering English-Canadian prejudices made it impolitic to be openly nationalistic, and few felt such inclinations in any event. Nazi efforts to nurture National Socialism among recent immigrants and to involve German Canadians in the *Bund*, the “Canadian Society for German Culture” had correspondingly little success. All Germans naturalized since 1922 were required to register under the Defence of Canada Regulations, but even though the RCMP applied a rigorous standard for loyalty, only 800 were found sufficiently dangerous to merit arrest. As they had 25 years before, nativists held mass meetings to complain that there were not enough enemy aliens in internment camps.

Once again, events in Europe determined the level of domestic anxiety rather than actual evidence of any subversive threats. Within two weeks after the fall of Denmark and Norway in the Spring of 1940, the Prime Minister’s Office received more than 200 letters demanding action, and 400 more enemy aliens were rounded up for internment. Continuing the echo of the earlier conflict, most of those swept up were farmers and unskilled labourers. After December 1942, German internees began to be quietly released. There were few public protests against these releases, and serious unofficial discrimination against German-Canadians never took place. Between 1939 and 1945, anti-German words rarely led to action, and there was no renewal of the riots and vigilantism of 1918 and 1919. During the First World War every German, from the Kaiser to the most humble peasant, had been a “Hun”. Guilt for World War II was not collectively attached to the German nation, but was personified in Adolf Hitler and the Nazi hierarchy. The setting of the World War II was also different. Although the war lasted longer, without the bitter infantry struggle in the trenches there were fewer Canadian fatal casualties. Partly as a result, although there was a renewed crisis over conscription, there was not the same fragmentation of French and English which marked 1917-1918.

Two German-speaking religious groups encountered special problems, the Mennonites and Hutterites. Although conscientious objector status was not seriously in doubt, the Canadian government pressed Mennonites to contribute alternative service. The 111,000 Mennonites were internally divided as to what sort of alternative service might be compatible with their principle of pacifism. The *Russlander* of the western provinces were prepared to serve under fire as medical personnel, while the more traditional and longer-established Mennonites in Ontario were uncomfortable with the notion of abetting conflict in any way. The Department of National War Services showed a willingness to consider these disparate points of view, and through lengthy negotiations was able to create alternative service programs flexible enough to satisfy most Mennonite factions. Traditional Mennonites who were unhappy with this accommodation to the demands of the state were shocked by the substantial number of Mennonites — an estimated 3,000 — who made the ultimate compromise of enlistment. The Hutterites adamantly rejected any concession whatsoever. As a result the Hutterite communal farms which dotted Manitoba and Southern Alberta made an inviting nativist target. War legitimated the prejudices of peacetime, and Alberta's Land Sales Prohibition Act denied Hutterites the right to lease or purchase land on which to create new colonies. As evidence that the war had legitimated rather than originated prejudice, the legislation was amended in 1947 to become the Communal Property Act, which continued until 1972 to restrict Hutterite expansion.

German Canadians, whatever their specific background, had been through the wartime experience before. For the 112,000 Canadians of Italian origin, 40,000 of them born in Italy, the sudden shock of becoming enemy aliens was accordingly more severe. Italian consuls in Montreal and Toronto, the centres of Italo-Canadian life, had worked hard to plant fascism in the *émigré* Italian communities. Italian Canadians took pride in the stability Mussolini brought to their homeland, but in this they were hardly unique: *The RCMP Quarterly* had expressed similar approval. Italo-Canadian attachment to Mussolini was social rather than ideological, and had more to do with community self respect in a new land than with fascist doctrine. But after Italy "stabbed the Allies in the back" in June 1940, the RCMP and the local policemen who assisted them were incapable of such subtlety. Italian Canadians suspected of fascist sympathies were taken from their homes and their jobs without warrant, some unable to inform their families of their arrest. "Enemy alien" was defined broadly to include Italian Canadians who became citizens after 1929 as well as the 9,000 who were actually unnaturalized. More than 200 of the 700 interned were naturalized citizens, and another twenty were Canadian-born. In a half-dozen cases, internees had sons serving in the Canadian forces. Antonio DiSippio, a naturalized Allied veteran of World War I and a member of the Canadian Legion, was not interned. But the Ontario government doomed his hotel business to bankruptcy by canceling his liquor license. Italians paradoxically benefitted from their demeaning pre-war peasant stereotype; even more than with the Germans and Hitler, the war was blamed on

Mussolini and not the ordinary Italo-Canadian. Unofficial discrimination against Italian Canadians was thus relatively subdued. Calgary's municipal government dismissed 24 Italian-born maintenance workers — then hired them back two weeks later, since there was no one else to operate the city's water and sewer systems!

The situation of Ukrainian Canadians was also fundamentally different in 1939 than in 1914. Some 65 per cent of the total Ukrainian Canadian population of 305,000 were Canadian born; almost all of those who had been born in Europe were now citizens; and Canada was not at war with the countries which had divided up Ukraine after World War I. Because of the bewildering complexities of central-European politics, however, and the intra-ethnic divisions between communists and nationalists in Canada, Ukrainian Canadians remained suspected of dual loyalties. Between August 1939 and June 1941, when Hitler respected his non-aggression pact with Stalin, communists became security risks because of their opposition to the "imperialist war". Right-wing nationalists who dreamed of Ukrainian independence from the Soviet Union should have been similarly suspect, for many of them hoped that Nazi victories might liberate Ukraine. True to the traditions of 1919, the RCMP worried more about the Ukrainian left than the right. In June 1940, the Communist party was banned, and its newspapers suppressed. One-third of the 133 Communists who were interned were Ukrainian Canadians. They languished in confinement long after the Soviet Union had become Canada's ally, and official Communist policy had changed to support for the war effort, and after most suspected German and Italian fascists had been paroled. The justification offered by the Commissioner of the RCMP was Canada's "large foreign population", which made "fertile ground for agitators". The Ukrainian Labour-Farmer Temple Association, a Communist affiliate, was also declared illegal, even though many of its members were not Communists. ULFTA libraries were impounded, and in one case burned; meeting halls were confiscated and sold by the Custodian of Enemy Property at bargain prices.

Nationalist Ukrainian elites, however, were courted by the federal government to mobilize support for the war effort. Through the intervention of the Department of National War Services, all non-Communist Ukrainian organizations were brought together in November 1940 into an umbrella organization called the Ukrainian Canadian Committee, which co-ordinated war charities, war bond drives, and recruitment. About 35,000 Ukrainians served in the Canadian forces (including some of the Communists, who went directly from internment camp to khaki), a rate of enlistment which matched that of Canada as a whole. The UCC went so far as to endorse a "yes" vote in the April 1942 plebiscite on conscription, and was embarrassed when rural constituencies with large Ukrainian populations were the only non-French-speaking areas to vote "no". Significantly, their audacity brought no repercussions from their English-Canadian neighbours.

The way the National War Services Department coaxed co-operation from Ukrainian Canadians illustrates the greater sophistication with which the

federal government dealt with the problem of the multitude of ethnic solitudes during World War II. The Bureau of Public Information, after 1941 the Wartime Information Board, consciously cultivated support for the war effort among ethnic minorities, including those with enemy alien connections. At the same time, and in direct contrast to 1914-1918, propaganda efforts were devoted towards persuading English Canadians that these minorities were *Canadians All*, to use the title of a WIB-sponsored series of pamphlets and radio programs. The improvement was relative: it is an exaggeration to see these tentative efforts as an early commitment to multiculturalism.

The Wartime Information Board scorned only one ethnic minority: the Japanese Canadians. At the same time that government propagandists were persuading English Canadians that ethnic Canadians could be loyal to their adopted land, the National Film Board documentary *The Mask of Nippon* was portraying deceit and duplicity as integral elements of Japanese national character. In their wartime comic books, children identified Canada's German and Italian enemies through caricatures of Hitler and Mussolini, but the leering, simian "Jap" was a generic figure who stood in for an entire people. The roots of anti-Japanese racism extended back to a trickle of migration which began in the 1890s. The "problem" was confined to one province — more than 95 per cent of those of Japanese birth or background lived in British Columbia. Japanese immigrants suffered discrimination far beyond that directed at any European group. Had control of immigration been *intra vires* of the province, British Columbia would have cut off migration from Asia completely. As it was, the provincial government severely restricted the rights of its oriental residents. Orientals were not allowed to vote, and their exclusion from the voters' list disqualified them from the public service, the professions, and even from obtaining logging licenses. The bases of B.C.'s fear of Asians were contradictory. The fact that Japanese Canadians huddled together in "little Tokyos" was offered as proof of their "inassimilability"; yet White British Columbians made this a self-fulfilling prophecy by denying the Japanese any opportunity to accommodate to a wider world.

Japanese-Canadian identification with Imperial Japan varied according to length of residence and naturalization status, just as identification with the "old country" did in any ethnic community. But Japan was considered a military threat, and after 1937, the Japanese army's depredations in China were universally condemned by European Canadians. In British Columbia's three Japanese-language newspapers, however, these victories were celebrated as front-page news. As did Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy, Japanese diplomats in Canada attempted to strengthen the expatriates' affinity with their mother country, and to recruit them to serve expansionist Japanese foreign policy. But there is absolutely no evidence that such efforts were successful. By 1941, 16,848 of Canada's 22,086 Japanese were Canadian-born, and another 3,288 had been naturalized, so that 91.2 per cent were citizens, even though they were denied an elemental right of citizenship, the franchise. The Canadian-born second generation, the Nisei, clearly believed in Canadian democracy, despite the hardship and

humiliation Japanese Canadians suffered. As war loomed in the Pacific, the Nisei newspaper *The New Canadian* urged its readers to have confidence in “the inherent tolerance, good sense and decency of our Canadian neighbours and the democratic way of life”. Events of the next three months were to mock this naivete.

In war as in peace, Japanese Canadians were treated much more brutally than European “enemy alien” ethnic minorities. The day after the destruction of Pearl Harbor, the Royal Canadian Navy confiscated 1300 fishing boats, for fear that their Japanese-Canadian owners would use them to guide an invasion force to strategic locations on the Coast. The government at first intended to handle Japanese Canadians exactly as it had Italians and Germans. But Japan’s rapid series of military successes inspired a public hysteria which in turn forced the federal cabinet to implement policies of rapidly escalating severity. On 16 December 1941, all Japanese Canadians were ordered to register, regardless of birthplace; on 14 January 1942, males between the ages of 18 and 45 were ordered dispatched to work camps in the interior. On 27 February an order in council under the War Measures Act began the “evacuation” (the official euphemism used to distinguish the operation from formal internment) of every one of the 21,000 Japanese Canadians who lived west of a line drawn a hundred miles inland from the Pacific coast. The architects of evacuation justified it as protective custody from the wrath of whites. The removal was not carried out by the military, but by a specially-created civilian agency called the British Columbia Security Commission, assisted by the RCMP. Evacuation’s cruelest aspect was the forced separation of families. About 2000 able-bodied males went to work camps in the British Columbia interior, while 12,000 women, children, and old people were dispatched to hastily-renovated detention centres in abandoned mining towns. The 750 men who refused to “volunteer” to leave their families, or who otherwise resisted the evacuation, joined the suspected Nazis, Fascists, and Communists in the official internment camps. Another 4000 Japanese Canadians were able to keep their families united by leaving British Columbia to become an indentured labour force in the sugar beet fields of Alberta and Manitoba.

Two aspects of the forced resettlement cast doubt on the “protective custody” explanation: the forced sale of Japanese-Canadian property and the attempt to deport them after 1945. The evacuees were allowed to take only those personal belongings they could carry. Their homes, 1300 boats, 800 farms, and 1500 automobiles and trucks were left in what they were told was the protection of a “Custodian of Japanese Property”. In January 1943, however, these assets suddenly went on the market: most sold at a fraction of their pre-war value. The proceeds went to the original owners only after deductions for administrative costs and for support while in detention. Uazusu Shoji, a twice-wounded Canadian veteran of World War I, received exactly \$39.32 for his 18-acre chicken farm! As the war drew to a close, Japanese Canadians were pressed by the government to “return” to their homeland. The courts refused to uphold

deportation orders issued against their will to people born in Canada, but about one in six Japanese Canadians was sufficiently disillusioned to agree to deportation. The five-sixths of the community who remained were not given the option to return to British Columbia; Japanese-Canadians were dispersed, spread across Canada from the Rocky Mountains eastward to Montreal.

IV — CONCLUSION

World War II hastened the nativists' longstanding goal of assimilation. The uprooting of the Japanese-Canadian community was wartime nativism's most visible success. Yet on whatever scale one uses to measure assimilation — language use and retention, residential and occupational segregation, marriage patterns, membership in ethnic churches and voluntary associations — all of the victimized ethnic minorities (with the single exception of the Hutterites) were better integrated into the mainstream of Canadian life after the war than they had been in 1939. Some of this came as a result of the war's economic effects: military service and jobs in wartime industry drew Ukrainians, Germans, and Mennonites out of homogenous rural settlements in western Canada. But some assimilation was a response to the humiliating blow the wartime experience dealt to ethnic identity.

In 1969 — a year before he himself invoked the War Measures Act to suppress an internal crisis — Pierre Elliott Trudeau told Canadians that “We must never forget that, in the long run, a democracy is judged by the way the majority treats the minority”. Using Trudeau's standard as our guideline, the record of the Canadian majority during two world wars must be judged severely. It is an embarrassing record inconsistent with the national values expressed in the Constitution Act of 1982, and which compares unfavourably to that of the United States and Great Britain. Canadians' physical treatment of those defined as internal enemies was better than that imposed by the regimes Canada fought against, but a parliamentary democracy can hardly take refuge behind the argument that its mistreatment of minorities was less ruthless than that of Nazi Germany or Imperial Japan! There are disturbing patterns. None of these minorities ever constituted a serious threat to Canadian security. In all cases the war emergency provided the justification for internment, but policies were built upon long-established patterns of prejudice established in peacetime. It would be an exaggeration to see wartime nativism as part of a carefully-crafted strategy to repress the political left, but some ethnic minorities were targeted because of their allegedly radical political beliefs. Nor can the majority displace responsibility onto the shoulders of its political leaders; careful study of the situations suggests that Prime Ministers Borden and King and most of their cabinet colleagues pursued policies which were relatively moderate when compared to those urged upon them by nativists.

Pressed by National Association of Japanese Canadians, the majority has recently begun to come to terms with these dark pages from its past. In 1988 they

were granted “redress” by the Canadian government in the form of an official acknowledgement of the injustice, an individual cash settlement to 14,000 internees still living, and a monetary award to the Japanese Canadian community. Most important, the redress agreement also created a foundation for the study of racism. Other ethnic communities, Ukrainian Canadians most vociferously, have demanded similar recognition that their ancestors were unfairly treated. In the autumn of 1990, Prime Minister Brian Mulroney formally apologized to the Italian and Ukrainian-Canadian communities for the “brutal injustice” done to them during two World Wars. His words to the National Congress of Italian Canadians make a fitting conclusion: internment of civilians without trial solely because of their ethnic origin “was not then, is not now, and never will be acceptable in a civilized nation that purports to respect the rule of law”.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER READING

There is a considerable historical literature on Canada's wartime treatment of ethnic minorities, but there are few studies which make inter-group or inter-war comparisons. There is no good overview of the situation during World War I, although Desmond Morton provides a dispassionate history of internment operations in the final chapter of his biography of *The Canadian General: Sir William Otter* (Toronto, 1974). Ramsay Cook's "Canadian Freedom in Wartime, 1939-1945" in W.H. Heick and Roger Graham, eds., *His Own Man: Essays in Honour of A.R.M. Lower* (Montreal, 1974), provides a broad interpretation of World War II. The articles in Norman Hillmer, Bohdan Kordan, and Lubomyr Luciuk, eds., *On Guard for Thee: War, Ethnicity, and the Canadian State, 1939-1945* (Ottawa, 1988) discuss government policy towards ethnic minorities and consider six specific groups: German, Italian, Ukrainian, Japanese, Mennonite, and Jewish Canadians. Howard Palmer provides a complete survey of a diverse province in "Ethnic Relations in Wartime: Nationalism and European Minorities in Alberta during the Second World War", *Canadian Ethnic Studies*, XIV, 3 (1982).

The rest of the literature approaches the subject from the perspective of individual ethnic groups, one war at a time. Frances Swyripa and John Herd Thompson, eds., *Loyalties in Conflict: Ukrainians in Canada During the Great War* (Edmonton, 1983), looks at a misunderstood minority in the World War I, while Thomas M. Prymak, *Maple Leaf and Trident: The Ukrainian Canadians During the Second World War* (Toronto, 1988) sorts out the complex situation in the latter conflict. Robert Keyserlingk discusses "The Canadian Government's Attitude toward Germans and German Canadians in World War II" in *Canadian Ethnic Studies*, XVI, 1 (1984), and Hildegard Martens considers "The Response of Mennonites in Canada to World War II" in *Histoire sociale/Social History*, 14 (1974).

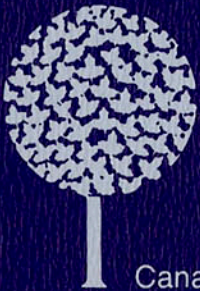
The most controversial Second World War situation is also the most studied: the uprooting of the Japanese Canadians. F.E. La Violette's *The Canadian Japanese and World War II: A Social and Psychological Account* (Toronto, 1948) provides a thorough analysis which in some respects has not been superseded, but there are many more recent scholarly and semi-scholarly contributions. Ken Adachi's *The Enemy That Never Was* (Toronto, 1976) purports to be *A History of the Japanese Canadians*, but more than half the book is devoted to *An account of the deplorable treatment inflicted on Japanese Canadians during World War Two*. Barry Broadfoot's *Years of Sorrow, Years of Shame* (Toronto, 1977) is a compilation of the authors' interviews. Ann Gomer Sunahara's *The Politics of Racism: The Uprooting of Japanese Canadians During the Second World War* (Toronto, 1981) reflects its author's unrestrained outrage and exaggerates the responsibility of political leaders, whom she accuses of exploiting the situation for electoral advantage. In the penultimate chapter of *White Canada Forever: Popular Attitudes and Public Policy toward Orientals in British Columbia* (Montreal, 1978), W. Peter Ward sets the evacuation within

the context of a century of Euro-Canadian racist reaction to Asian immigration. While these authors differ in their explanations of the uprooting, all agree that the internees posed no threat to Canadian security. In the cover story in the November 1986 issue of *Saturday Night* magazine, J.L. Granatstein made the controversial claim that there were good reasons for the Canadian government to consider Japanese Canadians as "The Enemy Within". Granatstein has repeated his argument in scholarly form in Hillmer's *On Guard For Thee*, and in Granatstein, Patricia E. Roy, Masaka Iino, and Hiroko Takamura, *Mutual Hostages: Canadians and Japanese During the Second World War* (Toronto, 1990). But however much evidence Granatstein provides of the attachment of a minority of Japanese-Canadians to Imperial Japan, or of directives to Japanese consulates in North America to recruit such sympathizers, he has found no evidence whatsoever linking Japanese Canadians to any subversive activity.

Discussions of the treatment of ethnic minorities during wartime are a subsidiary theme of the general histories of each ethnic community. It is impossible to list all such references, but there are succinct accounts and excellent bibliographies in the four relevant pamphlets in this *Canada's Ethnic Groups* series: *The Ukrainians in Canada*, by O.W. Gehrus and J.E. Rea; *The Germans in Canada*, by K.M. McLaughlin; *The Italians in Canada*, by Bruno Ramirez; and *The Japanese in Canada*, by W. Peter Ward.

During both wars (and in peacetime as well, for that matter,) anti-radicalism was an ever-present theme of the concern about enemy aliens. This is best discussed for World War I in Donald Avery's *'Dangerous Foreigners': European Immigrant Workers and Labour Radicalism in Canada, 1896-1932* (Toronto, 1979). The degree to which the Defence of Canada Regulations were "a prelude to the cold war to follow" is explored in Reg Whitaker's "Official Repression of Communism During World War II", *Labour/le travail*, 17 (1986).

Two studies which look at minorities on the home front during World War I from regional perspectives are Barbara M. Wilson's *Ontario and the First World War, 1914-1918* (Toronto, 1977), and John Herd Thompson's *The Harvests of War: The Prairie West, 1914-1918* (Toronto, 1978). Other than these, however, the question of ethnic minorities has received disappointingly little attention in broader studies of the two World Wars. The literature listed above still waits to be integrated into the general surveys and textbooks: it is a long journey from academic monographs and scholarly articles into the public historical consciousness.



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