

3

Canada in the 1920s

GUIDING QUESTIONS

Society & Identity

- How did new technologies influence society in the 1920s?
- How does the United States influence Canadian identity?
- How did women advance their status during the 1920s?
- In what ways was Aboriginal identity threatened in the 1920s?
- Why was there labour unrest after the First World War, and how did people try to improve their working conditions?

Politics & Government

- What is regionalism, and how was it expressed in the 1920s?

Economy & Human Geography

- What was the impact of American investment on the Canadian economy?

Autonomy & World Presence

- What factors contributed to Canada's emerging autonomy?



TIMELINE

1919

Winnipeg General Strike gives voice to post-war dissatisfaction
League of Nations established, with Canada as a full member

1920

British Columbia votes against Prohibition

1921

Minority government elected
Agnes Macphail becomes first woman elected to Parliament
Frederick Banting and Charles Best discover insulin

1922

Prime Minister Mackenzie King refuses to send troops to support Britain during the Chanak Crisis

1923

Mackenzie King signs the Halibut Treaty with the United States and refuses to let Britain sign
Foster Hewitt gives play-by-play for first radio broadcast of a Canadian hockey game

CHAPTER FOCUS QUESTION

How did Canada adjust to political, social, and economic changes following the First World War?



KEY TERMS

communism
Winnipeg General Strike
collective bargaining
Prohibition
Persons Case
Famous Five
Canadian Constitution
regionalism
Old Age Pension Act
Chanak Crisis
Halibut Treaty
King-Byng Crisis
Imperial Conference
Balfour Report
Statute of Westminster
Depression

The 1920s are generally thought of as a decade of prosperity, fun, and wild living. To some extent this was true. The end of the war released an emotional flood of relief. Prompted by the horror and exhaustion of war, young people in particular tried to sweep away the remnants of the old world. This was the “Jazz Age.” Bold new music, shocking fashions, and crazy fads quickly spread across the United States and into Canada.

This 1927 editorial from *Canadian Homes and Gardens* may give a false picture of what life was really like for most women, but it certainly catches the optimism of the age:

There is a certain magic to housekeeping these days—the magic of electricity—over which I confess I never cease to marvel. Your modern housewife leaves the dishes within a machine, pops the dinner into an oven, laundry into a washer, and jumps into a roadster [car] with never a thought except for... the round of golf which she is away to enjoy for an afternoon. She returns to find the washing done, her china and crystal sparkle, a six course dinner is ready for serving.

—Canadian Homes and Gardens, May 1927

Life did improve for many people in the 1920s. For many more, however, the prosperity of the decade was merely an illusion. Life continued as before, filled with discrimination, poverty, and lack of political power.



1924

Revised Red Ensign approved for use on Canadian government buildings abroad

1926

King-Byng Crisis illustrates Canada's need for autonomy from Britain
Imperial Conference leads to publication of the Balfour Report

1927

Federal government introduces old-age pensions; first government-run assistance program in Canada

1929

Persons Case opens way for Canadian women to be appointed to the Senate
Stock market crashes

- Why was there labour unrest after the First World War, and how did people try to improve their working conditions?

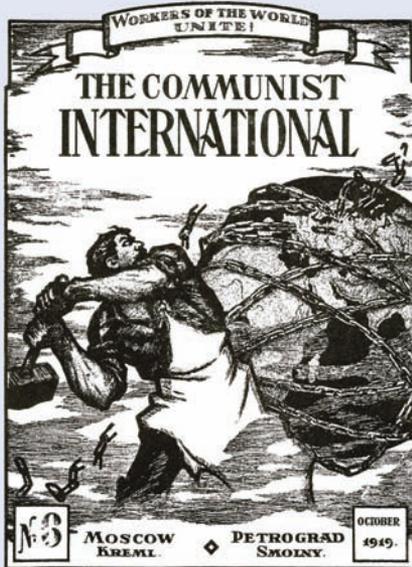


FIGURE 3–1 English translation of a 1919 Russian Communist publication

Analyzing Images What do you think the chains represent? What message is being conveyed?

KEY TERMS

inflation the rise in prices for goods and services that increases the cost of living and triggers demand for higher wages

communism a social and economic theory that property, production, and distribution of goods and services should be owned by the public, and the labour force organized for the benefit of all members of society

socialist believing in a system in which the government controls the economy so that everyone benefits equally

branch plants factories, offices, or other operations set up in Canada but owned or controlled by U.S. or other foreign companies

tariffs taxes on imported goods

primary industry an industry that deals with the extraction or collection of raw materials, such as mining or forestry

secondary industry an industry that deals with manufacturing or construction

An Uneasy Adjustment

In November 1918, Canadians celebrated the end of the First World War. Soldiers returned home to find that there were few support services for them, and few jobs. Many Canadians who had jobs were also dissatisfied. During the war, workers had reluctantly agreed to lower wages as part of their patriotic duty. After the war, **inflation** made it difficult for many people because wages no longer covered the cost of rent and food. Workers demanded more money, and confrontation with employers was inevitable.

The Rise of Communism

At the end of the First World War, many people around the world were dissatisfied with governments and the disparity between rich and poor. As you read in Chapter 2, the Bolsheviks established a communist regime during the violent 1917 Russian Revolution. Under **communism**, all the means of production (such as factories and farms) and distribution (transportation and stores) are publicly owned. There is no private or individual ownership of business or land. The Bolsheviks encouraged workers around the world to join this revolution. Communism never gained widespread support in Canada, but the ideas of these revolutionaries inspired workers in Canada to try to improve working conditions.

Workers Respond

Workers' demands for higher wages, better working conditions, and the right to join unions resulted in numerous strikes across Canada. Many strikes were long, bitter disputes. Standoffs between workers and employers, for example, led to four years of labour wars in Eastern Canada. Most communities in the Maritimes depended on a single employer for jobs: the British Empire Steel Corporation. When demand for wartime industries declined after the war, the company tried to save costs by reducing wages. The workers responded by reducing their output and striking. When the strikes turned violent, the company looked for support from provincial police and federal troops. In 1926, a Royal Commission criticized the labour practices of the British Empire Steel Corporation, but the Commission's findings did little to ease suffering and poverty in the Maritimes.

There were also many strikes over wages and working conditions in western Canada. Some western union leaders were more **socialist** in their policies, believing as the Bolsheviks did, that ordinary people should be more involved in government. At the Western Labour Conference in March 1919, union leaders from Western Canada founded One Big Union (OBU), which would represent all Canadian workers. The OBU's goal was to help workers gain more control of industry and government through peaceful means. The main weapon would be the general strike, a walkout by all employed workers.

Canada's Changing Economy

Canada began the 1920s in a state of economic depression. By the middle of the decade, however, the economy started to improve. Wheat remained an important export for Canada, but there was also enormous growth in the exploitation of natural resources and manufacturing. The demand for Canadian pulp and paper grew, and new mills were built in several provinces. Mining also boomed. Record amounts of lead, zinc, silver, and copper were produced for export. These minerals were used to produce consumer goods such as radios and home appliances. The expanding forest and mining industries increased demand for hydroelectric power and several new hydro-generating stations were constructed to provide Canadian industries with cheap energy.

● What was the impact of American investment on the Canadian economy?

The United States Invests in Canada's Economy

Before the war, Canada traded mainly with Britain. After the war, Britain was deeply in debt, and the United States emerged as the world's economic leader. During the 1920s, American investment in Canada increased. American companies invested in pulp and paper mills and mines across Canada. The majority of these resources were then exported to the U.S. Almost 75 percent of the newsprint produced in Canada was exported to the U.S. Most of the metals mined in Canada were used in American-made products, such as cars and radios.

American Ownership of Canadian Businesses

Rather than lend money to Canadian businesses the way the British had, most American investors preferred to set up **branch plants**. By manufacturing cars in Canada for the Canadian market, American car makers avoided having to pay Canadian **tariffs**. By the end of the 1920s, the Canadian auto industry had been taken over by the “Big Three” American automobile companies—General Motors, Ford, and Chrysler. American companies also owned a large proportion of Canada's oil business, nearly half the machinery and chemical industries, and more than half the rubber and electrical companies.

Many Canadians were so pleased with American investment that they did not question the long-term consequences. It was true that the United States enriched Canada's economy by extracting or harvesting raw materials (**primary industries**), but these materials were transported to the U.S. for processing and manufacturing (**secondary industries**). It was the American economy that benefited most from this development.



FIGURE 3–2 Logging in British Columbia continues to be the province's major industry.

The Winnipeg General Strike: Labour Unrest or Communist Conspiracy?

In 1919, the labour movement grew across Canada. Workers formed trade unions in many different industries. These groups usually demanded higher pay, better working conditions, and an eight-hour workday. Scores of workers took action by walking off the job. It is said that more workdays were lost to strikes and lockouts in 1919 than in any other year in Canadian history.

Post-war tensions between labour and business boiled over in Winnipeg, at that time the financial centre of Western Canada and its largest city. The city's metal and building trades workers demanded higher wages, a shorter workweek, and the right to **collective bargaining**, which would allow union leaders to negotiate with employers on behalf of the union members. Labour and management negotiated for months. Finally, in May 1919, negotiations broke down and the Winnipeg Trades and Labour Council voted for a general strike. Up to 30 000 people walked off the job, crippling the city.

The strike closed factories and retail stores. Many people sympathized with the striking workers and joined their strike, including firefighters and postal workers. There were no streetcars or deliveries of bread or milk, and no telephone or telegraph services. Winnipeg was paralyzed. The Strike Committee, which coordinated the strike, bargained with employers and allowed essential food items to be delivered. Opponents of the strike felt that this showed that the strikers were running Winnipeg, instead of the legally elected civic government.

Not everyone sympathized with the strikers. Many people in Canada worried that the formation of trade unions might lead to the same violent uprisings that happened in Russia. The **Red Scare** contributed to an anti-communist sentiment that made people nervous about unions. In response to the strike, business leaders, politicians, and industrialists formed the Citizens' Committee of 1000. The committee saw the union leaders as part of a communist conspiracy to overthrow the government. They urged Winnipeg's leaders to restore order. The city responded by firing the entire police force, who sympathized with the strikers, and replacing them with a special force to contain the strike. The mayor of Winnipeg also had many civic workers and the strike leaders arrested.



FIGURE 3-3 Strikers attacked this streetcar as it moved through the crowd because it was operated by the Citizens' Committee of 1000.

Thinking Critically What does the photograph tell you about the Winnipeg General Strike? How does the information in the photograph compare with the Workers' Liberty Bond?

The federal government decided to intervene because it feared that the disruption and protest could spread to other cities. It changed the Criminal Code so that foreign-born union leaders—and anyone whom it believed was trying to start a revolution—could be arrested and deported without trial. The federal government also sent troops to Winnipeg to try to restore order.

On June 21, strikers held a parade to protest the mayor's actions. The parade turned violent when the Royal North-West Mounted Police and the city's special force, armed with clubs and pistols, charged the crowd. In the resulting clash, one striker died, 30 were injured, and scores were arrested. This event became known as **Bloody Saturday**. Defeated, the strikers returned to work after a 43-day protest.

● Why was there labour unrest after the First World War and how did people try to improve their working conditions?



What did the strike achieve? In the short run, the union movement suffered a setback. Seven of the arrested leaders were convicted of conspiracy to overthrow the government and served between two months and two years in prison. Many striking workers were not rehired; others were taken back only if they signed contracts vowing not to join a union. Distrust and divisions between the working class and businesses grew deeper.

In the long run, the verdict is less clear. A Royal Commission set up to examine the strike found that the workers' grievances were valid. Gradually, much of what they fought for was achieved. Some of those involved in the strike took up political positions in which they could work toward social reform. For example, J.S. Woodsworth (a well-known social reformer who was arrested during the strike) went on to found the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation (see Chapter 4), which later became the New Democratic Party.

Looking Further

1. Write a newspaper headline to explain the reaction of the Citizens' Committee of 1000 to the Winnipeg General Strike. Remember the attitudes and values of the times.
2. Write a letter to the editor of a newspaper to explain why you think the Winnipeg strikers were, or were not, justified in their actions.

KEY TERMS

Winnipeg General Strike massive strike by workers in Winnipeg in 1919

collective bargaining negotiation of a contract between unions and management regarding such things as wages and working conditions

Red Scare the fear that communism would spread to Canada

Bloody Saturday June 21, 1919, when the Royal North-West Mounted Police charged a crowd of protesters during the Winnipeg General Strike

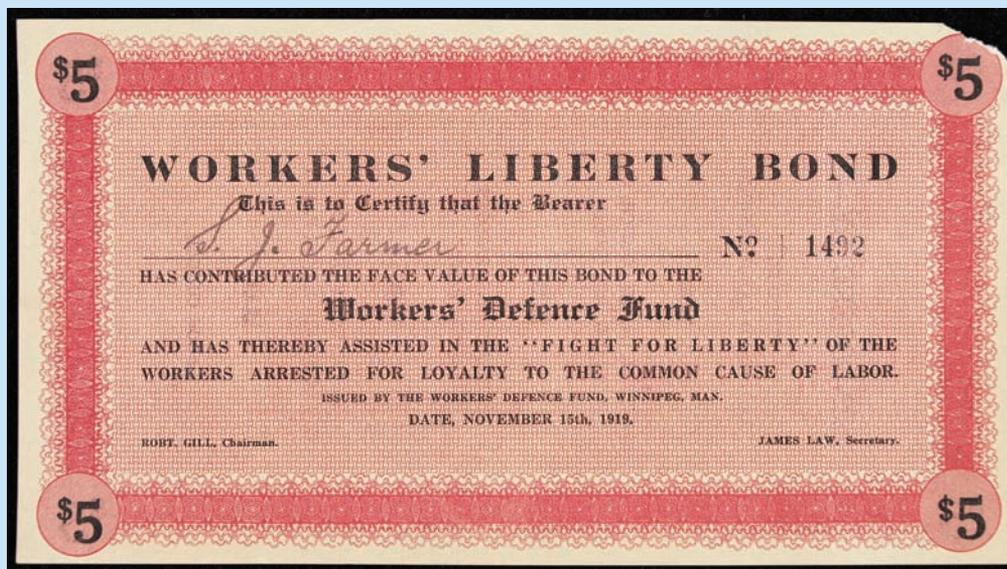


FIGURE 3-4 Canadians were able to show their support for the strikers in Winnipeg by buying bonds to assist in the “fight for liberty.” The Workers’ Defence Fund used the bonds to help pay for the legal costs of those arrested.

Bootlegging Across the Border

There was one product that Canada exported in large quantities to the United States: illegal alcohol. Although organizations such as the Woman's Christian Temperance Union succeeded in bringing about **prohibition** during the First World War, alcohol was still available for those with money. People could get it as a “tonic” from a doctor, or from a “bootlegger”—someone who made or sold alcohol illegally. By 1920, the provincial governments had to admit that Prohibition was not working: it was too unpopular with most Canadians. From 1921 on, most provincial governments regulated the sale of alcohol rather than ban it. In a series of **plebiscites**, Canadians eventually adopted government-controlled liquor outlets.

In the United States, Prohibition continued until 1933. Canadians took advantage of this golden opportunity to supply the U.S. with illegal liquor. Rum-running—smuggling alcohol into the U.S.—became a dangerous but profitable business. Ships from ports in the Maritimes and Québec, speedboats from Ontario, cars and trucks from the Prairie provinces, and salmon trawlers from British Columbia transported alcohol to the U.S. as fast as they could. Although it was dangerous, rum-running was extremely profitable. Many Canadians tolerated rum-runners and admired how they flouted the U.S. authorities. Canadian governments seemed content to close their eyes to the practice.



FIGURE 3-5 This young woman with a liquor flask in her garter reflected the carefree attitude toward alcohol that was at odds with those who supported Prohibition.

Thinking Critically In what ways would this young woman have outraged the older generation? What comparisons can you make with the attitudes of young and old today?

PRACTICE QUESTIONS

1. Explain the terms *communism*, *general strike*, and *collective bargaining*.
2. a) What was the effect of the 1917 Communist (Bolshevik) Revolution in Russia on Canada?
b) Why was the One Big Union seen as a threat?
3. Review the concept of perspective and world view in Building Your Skills (page 82). In a two-column organizer, list reasons why the views from the following two newspaper sources would differ.

Source 1

...this is not a strike at all, in the ordinary sense of the term—it is a revolution. It is a serious attempt to overturn British institutions in this Western country and to supplant them with the Russian Bolshevik system of Soviet rule....

—Winnipeg Citizen, May 17, 1919

Source 2

It must be remembered that [Winnipeg] is a city of only 200 000, and that 35 000 persons are on strike. Thus it will be seen that the strikers and their relatives must represent at least 50 per cent of the population. In the numerical sense, therefore, it cannot be said that the average citizen is against the strike... there is no soviet [revolutionary council]. There is little or no terrorism.

—Toronto Star, May 23, 1919

The Roaring Twenties

The upswing in the economy meant that many Canadians could afford more luxuries and leisure time. The decade became known as the “Roaring Twenties,” reflecting the general feeling of indulgence. The misery of the First World War was over and people enjoyed the new forms of entertainment that were available. The “flapper” look dominated women’s fashion. “Bobbed” hair, hemlines above the knees, and silk stockings outraged the older generations. Young people also scandalized their parents with dances such as the Charleston, the Shimmy, and the Turkey Trot.

Increased Mobility

In the 1920s, the automobile was beginning to change the landscape of the country. The invention of the assembly line in 1913 by Henry Ford meant that cars could be mass produced inexpensively and quickly. The most popular automobile was the Model T Ford. By the late 1920s, 50 percent of Canadian homes had an automobile. Its popularity prompted more and better roads to be built, making it easier for people to travel.

Aviation expanded rapidly in the years after the war. Airplanes helped to make the rugged coast of British Columbia and Canada’s remote northern regions more accessible. Many veteran pilots became “bush pilots” who flew geologists and prospectors into remote areas to explore mining opportunities. Wilfrid “Wop” May was one of the best-known bush pilots who became famous for his daring exploits. In 1929, he and another young pilot tackled dangerous flights from Edmonton to help save the people of Fort Vermilion from a contagious outbreak by delivering serum. May’s most famous adventure was his participation in the RCMP hunt for Albert Johnson, the “Mad Trapper” of Rat River. May’s flight made Canadian history due to the duration of the chase and because it was the first time two-way radios and aircraft were used in pursuit of a criminal.



FIGURE 3–6 Jack Bowen, Frank Riddell, and Wilfrid “Wop” May, (far right)

Improved Communications

By the 1920s, the telephone had become a standard household appliance. Telephone lines were shared by many neighbours, which meant anyone could listen in on your conversation. Widespread use of the radio began to break down the isolation between far-flung communities. It soon became a necessity, bringing news as well as popular culture and entertainment into Canadian homes across the country. The radio was a revolutionary development. Smaller Canadian stations, however, soon found it difficult to compete with bigger, more powerful stations from the United States. By the end of the 1920s, nearly 300 000 Canadians were tuning in to American stations for their news and entertainment. Canada would move to introduce legislation to ensure Canadian content, which you will learn about in Chapter 6.

● How did new technologies influence society in the 1920s?

KEY TERMS

prohibition the banning of the sale and consumption of alcohol

plebiscite a direct vote by electors on an issue of public importance; the outcome of the vote may not be binding on the government

WEB LINK

Read more about Wop May on the Pearson Web site.

Innovations

Canadian Inventions and Inventors

During the 1920s, Canadians witnessed rapid changes in technology. Many innovations occurred in household appliances, and inventors from Québec made surviving the Canadian winter a little easier.



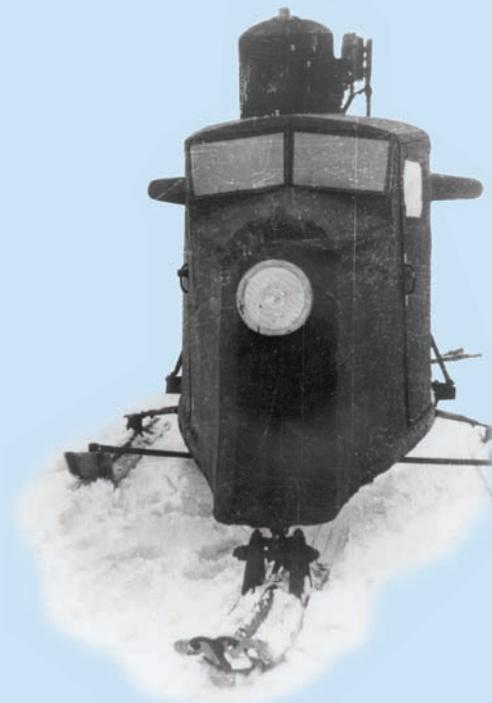
An alternative to the snow shovel Born in Québec, Arthur Sicard responded to Canadian winters by inventing the snow blower in 1925. The difficulty of travelling on snowy roads in early automobiles led him to find a way to efficiently remove snow. He adapted a four-wheel-drive truck to carry a snow-scooping section and a snow blower that would clear and throw snow up to 30 metres away from the truck.



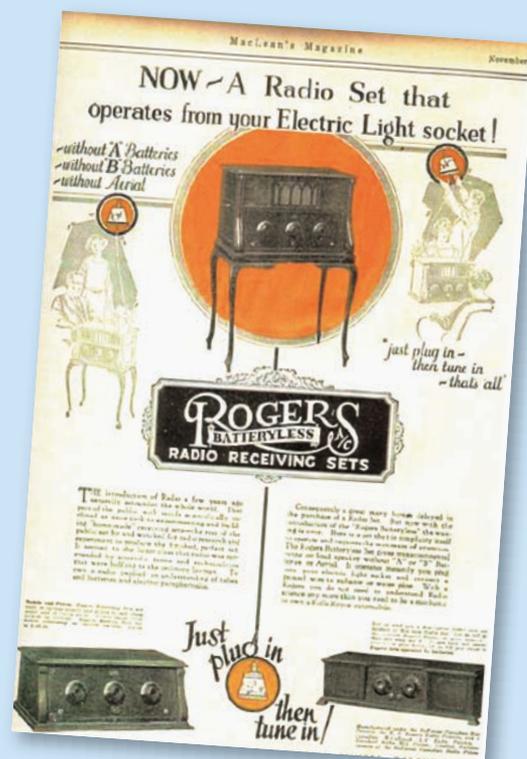
A medical breakthrough In 1921–1922, Frederick Banting, assisted by Charles Best, discovered insulin. This discovery continues to help millions of people suffering from diabetes. In 1923, Banting won the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine.

Rogers hits the airwaves

In 1925, Edward Rogers of Toronto invented the world's first alternating current (AC) radio tube, replacing the noisy, battery-operated model. The AC radio tube allowed radios to be powered by ordinary household electric current. In 1927, he launched the world's first all-electric radio station, called Canada's First Rogers Batteryless (CFRB). In 1931, he was granted Canada's first television licence.



A vehicle of necessity Armand Bombardier of Valcourt, Québec, was only 15 years old when he developed the snowmobile in 1922. Over the next few years, he improved on the first machine and designed vehicles that could travel on snow-covered roads. His invention helped people in rural and remote areas of Canada overcome the isolation of winter.



Arts and Leisure

With the Roaring Twenties and new-found prosperity, people sought out different forms of entertainment. Canada began to find its voice as a nation with a distinct culture. As a result, several new forms of distinctly Canadian art and entertainment emerged in the 1920s.

Moving Pictures

Soon radio entertainment was rivalled by moving pictures—the movies. At first, movies were silent. An orchestra or piano player would provide sound effects to accompany the silent screen, while subtitles conveyed the messages and dialogue. The “talkies” arrived in 1927 with comedians such as Laurel and Hardy and the Marx Brothers.

Movies about Canada were made here during the early days, but Canadian-made films could not compete with productions from the big studios in the United States. Eventually Hollywood came to dominate the industry. In the absence of a home-grown industry, many Canadian actors, writers, and technicians were drawn to the glitter and glamour of Hollywood. Many were very successful. Movie star Mary Pickford, born in Toronto, became known as “America’s Sweetheart.”



FIGURE 3–7 The Mounties as a symbol of Canada were a favourite topic with Hollywood. In true Hollywood style, the Mounties always caught the villain and got the girl.

Using Evidence What stereotypes are used in this photo to portray the RCMP? Do these stereotypes still hold for the Mounties today?

A New Canadian Art

The increased American influence on Canada’s culture coincided with the development of a new Canadian art movement. In 1920, the **Group of Seven** held an exhibition in Toronto that broke with traditional Canadian art. These painters were in tune with the new post-war national confidence. Rather than imitate realistic classical styles, members of the group sought to interpret Canada’s rugged landscape as they saw it, using broad, bold strokes and brilliant colours. Although criticized by some critics in the early years as the school of “hot mush” painting, the Group of Seven had gained wide acceptance by the end of the 1920s.

● How does the United States influence our Canadian identity?

KEY TERM

Group of Seven group of Canadian landscape painters in the 1920s

WEB LINK

Read more about the Group of Seven on the Pearson Web site.

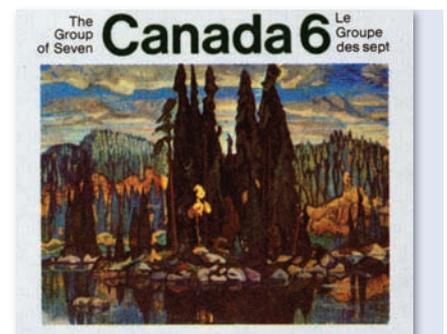


FIGURE 3–8 Stamp commemorating the Group of Seven

Canada's Growing National Identity

The emerging sense of independence and identity was also reflected in Canadian literature. The political magazine *Canadian Forum* first appeared in 1920. Political debates and works of Canadian poets and writers appeared regularly on its pages. As well, *Maclean's* magazine published Canadian stories and articles from across the country, being careful to use only Canadian spellings. Canadian novelists R.J.C. Stead, F.P. Grove, Martha Ostenso, and Morley Callaghan wrote novels about Canadians and their experiences. And poets A.J. Smith and Frank Scott wrote passionately about Canada and Canadian issues. Yet Canadian magazines and writers found it difficult to compete with American magazines and books.

Sports as Popular Entertainment

The thirst for entertainment led to tremendous interest in spectator sports. Hockey came into Canadian homes across the country when sportswriter Foster Hewitt made the first play-by-play radio broadcast in 1923. Canadian athletes also succeeded on the international stage, including two notable athletes who excelled in several sports. Lionel Conacher was a baseball

player, a star at lacrosse, a football player, and an NHL all-star. Nicknamed the “Big Train,” Conacher was known for his power, stamina, and speed. One day in 1922, he hit a triple in the last inning of a baseball game to win the championship for his team and then later the same day he scored four times and assisted once in lacrosse, bringing victory to that team as well. Fanny “Bobbie” Rosenfeld is one of Canada’s greatest female athletes. She was a star at basketball, softball, hockey, and tennis, as well as track and field. In the 1928 Olympic Games in Amsterdam, she won a gold and a silver medal for Canada, becoming a national hero and the best-known Canadian woman of her time.



FIGURE 3–9 Bobbie Rosenfeld (number 677). At the Amsterdam Olympics, Rosenfeld won a silver medal in the 100-m dash and a gold in the women’s relay team. She was at one time the joint holder of the world record for the 100-yard [91-metre] dash, which she ran in 11 seconds.

PRACTICE QUESTIONS

1. What evidence is there that the 1920s were the beginning of the modern “consumer age”?
2. **a)** Which innovations made the 1920s a period of great change in communications.
b) Beside each development, make short notes on how the change affected Canadian society.
c) **Patterns and Change** How did these technological developments make Canada a “smaller” country?
3. How did new technology contribute to the spread of American popular culture in Canada?
4. What does the interest in professional sports tell you about leisure time and the standard of living for Canadians in this period?
5. Compare and contrast Bobbie Rosenfeld’s and Lionel Conacher’s achievements as athletes with those of popular sports heroes of today. How would you account for the differences?

Emily Carr was a unique Canadian artist and writer. Born in 1871 in Victoria, B.C., she trained in the United States, England, and France at a time when new trends in twentieth-century art were developing. She was also inspired by the Group of Seven. She was moved by their bright, powerful images and inspired by their uniquely Canadian vision and commitment to their art. Lawren Harris, one of the Group, became her mentor and helped her develop her artistic style.

Carr seemed to thrive in the isolation of British Columbia's wilderness and drew her themes from First Nations culture and the raw power of nature. She painted scenes of West Coast forests and Aboriginal cultures. Carr made many journeys to sketch at isolated villages in coastal B.C. She described her work as follows:

Local people hated and ridiculed my newer work.... Whenever I could afford it I went up to the North, among the... woods and forgot all about everything in the joy of those lonely wonderful places. I decided to try and get as good a representative collection of those old villages and wonderful totem poles as I could.... Whether anybody liked them or not I did not care a bean. I painted them to please myself in my own way.... Of course nobody wanted to buy my pictures

—Emily Carr

At first, Carr gained little recognition for her work. She had almost abandoned hope of making a living from painting when the National Museum in Ottawa organized a showing of West Coast art built around her work. Carr eventually had shows at the Vancouver Art Gallery and in Eastern Canada.

Emily Carr's expression also took the form of writing, publishing journals and five books. She won a Governor General's Literary Award for *Klee Wyck*, a collection of stories about her life with British Columbia First Nations peoples. Another well-known book is her autobiography, *Growing Pains*.

1. To what degree did the isolation of Victoria and B.C. influence the art of Emily Carr?
2. Would you consider Emily Carr's art to be uniquely Canadian? Explain your answer.
3. How important is art like that of Emily Carr and the Group of Seven in developing a Canadian identity? Explain.
4. Why are her paintings so popular today? Explain your answer.

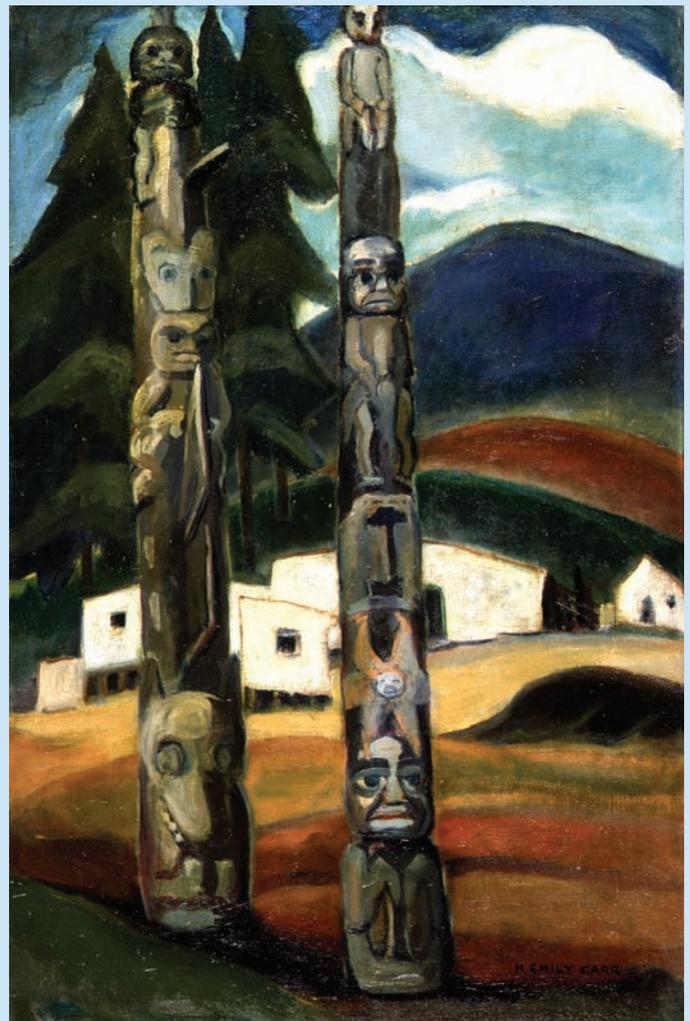


FIGURE 3–10 Totems and Indian Houses

Using Evidence How representative of Canada at the time was Emily Carr's painting?



FIGURE 3-11 New labour-saving devices—such as the washing machine, refrigerator, vacuum cleaner, and electric iron—became more affordable to middle-class women. But this often meant that women were expected to maintain higher standards of cleanliness in the home.

Missing the Roar

Not everyone benefited from the social and economic changes of the Roaring Twenties. Many Canadians still battled discrimination, lack of political representation, and poverty.

The Role of Women

In the 1920s, hopes were high for reforms in health, education, and the working conditions for women and children. Women were gaining more control of their lives and were taking on roles traditionally held by men, such as factory workers, politicians, and even sports stars. Despite these gains, women still faced many social and political restrictions.

Women's Social Status

The main role of women was as wives and mothers. Married women were expected to stay at home and raise a family. Single women had limited career opportunities. They could be nurses or teachers, but these jobs paid very poorly. A few women became doctors, lawyers, professors, or engineers, but most women who worked in business or industry held jobs as secretaries, telephone operators, or sales clerks. Women usually earned much less than men for doing the same job.

- How did women advance their status during the 1920s?

Women in Politics

Although most women had won the right to vote in federal elections in 1918, only four women ran for office during the 1921 election. Only one, Agnes Macphail, won her seat. Macphail was the only woman in the House of Commons until 1935. The four Western provinces elected nine women to their legislatures, but the federal and provincial governments remained firmly male dominated. Although progress for women at the political level was slow, they made gains in social reform. Mary Ellen Smith, British Columbia's first female Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA), and reformer Helen Gregory MacGill fought to expand rights for women and children. By the end of the 1920s, an Equal Rights measure was passed in the B.C. legislature. It reversed most of the laws restricting the political and legal rights of women.

TIMELINE

The Advance of Women's and Children's Rights in B.C.

1917

Equal Guardianship of Infants Act gives women same rights to their children as men
Helen Gregory MacGill appointed British Columbia's first female judge

1918

The Women's Franchise Act passed, allowing most women to vote in federal elections
Mary Ellen Smith becomes B.C.'s first female Member of the Legislative Assembly
Minimum Wage Bill for Women passed

1920

Mothers' Pensions Act

1921

Mary Ellen Smith appointed first female Cabinet minister

1922

Jury duty for women approved
Maternity Protection Act prohibits the employment of women until six weeks after delivery
Fathers made responsible for the maintenance of their children

The Persons Case

The **Persons Case** of 1929 brought the issue of women participating in politics to a head. Emily Murphy, a well-known suffragist, was appointed a magistrate in Alberta. Her appointment was challenged on the basis that only “persons” could hold this office under the BNA Act, and that women were not “persons” in the eyes of the law. The Supreme Court of Alberta ruled that Murphy did, indeed, have the right to be a judge, but the matter did not stop there. Emily Murphy and four other women activists, known as the **Famous Five**, challenged Prime Minister Mackenzie King to appoint a woman senator and to clarify the definition of “persons.” In April 1928, the Supreme Court of Canada decided that women were not “persons” under the **Canadian Constitution**. Murphy and her associates appealed to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council in Britain. On October 18, 1929, the Judicial Committee declared its support for the women:

[The exclusion] of women from all public offices is a relic of days more barbarous than ours.... To those who would ask why the word “person” should include females, the obvious answer is, why should it not?

—*Privy Council Judgement, October 18, 1929*

Following the decision, Henrietta Muir Edwards wrote:

Personally I do not care whether or not women ever sit in the Senate, but we fought for the privilege for them to do so. We sought to establish the personal individuality of women and this decision is the announcement of our victory. It has been an uphill fight.

—*Quoted in A Harvest to Reap: A History of Prairie Women, 1976*

The struggle for equality was far from won. The economic upheaval of the next decade would threaten the Famous Five’s hard-earned gains.



FIGURE 3–12 The Famous Five were Nellie McClung, suffrage activist and writer; Emily Murphy, writer and the first female magistrate in the British Empire; Irene Parlby, the first female cabinet minister in Alberta history; former Alberta MLA Louise McKinney; and Henrietta Muir Edwards, who helped found the National Council of Women of Canada and the Victorian Order of Nurses.

Thinking Critically How do the backgrounds of the Famous Five represent the changing roles of women in the early 20th century?

KEY TERMS

Persons Case a court case in which the Famous Five successfully fought to have women declared “persons” under Canadian law in 1929

Famous Five five Alberta women who fought for the political status of women

Canadian Constitution the document that describes the powers and responsibilities of the government and its parts, and the rights of citizens

1923

Factory Act amendment prohibits children under 15 from working

1925

Equal inheritance approved for boys and girls

1928

Mary Ellen Smith appointed the first female speaker of the B.C. legislature

1929

Women declared “persons” under Canadian law

1931

Equal Rights measure gives women legal equality with men

- In what ways was Aboriginal identity threatened in the 1920s?

Aboriginal Peoples: The Struggle to Preserve an Identity

Aboriginal peoples saw little of the good life in the 1920s. As you read in Chapter 2, Aboriginal veterans returning from the battlefields of Europe found that their contribution to the war effort did little to change their situation at home. Aboriginal peoples were still not classified as “persons” under the law. They could not vote in provincial or federal elections. In British Columbia, Aboriginal people did not win the right to vote in provincial elections until 1949. It was not until 1960 that all Aboriginal peoples across Canada could vote in federal elections.

A Policy of Assimilation

The government continued to use residential schools in an attempt to assimilate Aboriginal children. First Nations peoples were instructed by the government to replace traditional or family leaders with graduates of residential schools. This practice often divided the community between those who supported traditional leaders and those who sought to replace them.



FIGURE 3–13 In 1920, attendance at residential schools was still compulsory. Instruction was in English and children were not allowed to speak their first language, at the risk of being severely punished.

Using Evidence Use the diagram on page 82 in *Building Your Skills: Establishing Cause, Effect, and Results* to create a cause and effect diagram dealing with residential schools.

Cause and Consequence

In the early 1920s, First Nations peoples in British Columbia challenged the federal and provincial governments by fighting for the right to hold potlatches, an important cultural ceremony among certain peoples of the Pacific Coast. At this ceremony, births, deaths, marriages, and other significant events were recorded in the oral tradition. Potlatches involved families and even entire villages and was a way of establishing status in tribes.

The government viewed potlatch ceremonies as an obstacle to assimilation. The practice was forbidden in 1884. The ban was vigorously enforced after the First World War when the Kwagiulth people decided to hold several potlatch ceremonies in 1921. The provincial government arrested the chiefs responsible, and many were sentenced to jail terms.

The Struggle for Land

Aboriginal peoples in British Columbia continued to struggle for land claims, or **Aboriginal title**, in the 1920s. Only a few First Nations peoples on Vancouver Island had negotiated land treaties. The federal government had set aside large tracts of land as reserves, but it had been taking some of this land without the consent of the Aboriginal bands involved. These were known as **cut-off lands**. Aboriginal leaders wanted their claims to the land recognized by the federal government. As you read in Chapter 1 (page 13), Joe Capilano travelled to London, England, in 1906 to present a land claim petition to King Edward VII. Several years later, the Allied Tribes of British Columbia appealed the federal government taking cut-off lands. They claimed the government had gone against the Indian Act, which regulated relations between the federal government and the Aboriginal peoples. The federal government responded by changing the Indian Act so that Aboriginal consent was not needed to transfer reserve lands to the government. The Act was also amended to prevent anyone from raising money to pursue land claims without special permission. This made it virtually impossible for First Nations peoples to fight for Aboriginal title.

The Road to Self-Determination

In addition to residential schools and cut-off lands, Aboriginal peoples also fought against the federal government's use of **enfranchisement** to try to enforce assimilation. In 1920, the Indian Act was changed to allow the government to enfranchise people without their consent. This meant that the government could take away a person's Indian status and land. Aboriginal peoples resisted the government's policy of involuntary enfranchisement and it was given up two years later. But Aboriginal women who married men who were not status Indians were still forced to give up their Indian status (see Chapter 10).

Cayuga Chief Deskaheh (Levi General), a leader of the Six Nations Council of the Iroquois Confederacy, took the issue of Aboriginal **self-determination** to the League of Nations in 1923. He wanted international recognition of the Six Nations as an independent state and to end ties with Canada and the Indian Act. The Six Nations would have their own laws, financing, employees, and police. In a radio talk in 1925, Deskaheh explained the rationale behind the Six Nations' fight for self-determination. Unfortunately, Britain blocked Deskaheh's efforts for the League of Nations to hear the Six Nations' claims. Self-determination for Aboriginal peoples in Canada is still an issue today.

This story comes straight from Deskaheh, one of the chiefs of the Cayugas. I am the speaker of the Council of the Six Nations, the oldest League of Nations now existing. It was founded by Hiawatha. It is a League which is still alive and intends, as best it can, to defend the rights of the Iroquois to live under their own laws in their own little countries now left to them, to worship their Great Spirit in their own way, and to enjoy the rights which are as surely theirs as the white man's rights are his own.

—Chief Deskaheh

KEY TERMS

Aboriginal title claims by Aboriginal peoples to lands that their ancestors inhabited

cut-off lands lands taken from reserves without consent of the Aboriginal peoples

enfranchisement giving up one's status as an Indian

self-determination the freedom for a group to form its own government



FIGURE 3-14 The Ku Klux Klan, founded in the southern United States, promoted fanatical racial and religious hatred against non-Protestants and non-whites. In the 1920s, the Klan established short-lived local branches in Canada, such as this one in Vancouver in 1925.

Thinking Critically What does the existence of the Ku Klux Klan in Canada say about the attitudes of the time?

African Canadians: Undisguised Racism

The Canadian government discouraged the entry of African Americans into Canada during the heyday of immigration before the First World War. Those who managed to move to Canada faced blatant discrimination. In Nova Scotia, the Education Act of 1918 allowed separate schools for “Blacks” and “Europeans,” a policy that remained unchanged until 1954. Racial segregation was openly practised and, in some instances, supported by the courts. For example, in 1921, the Superior Court of Québec ruled in favour of racially segregated seating in Montréal theatres.

There were also instances of tolerance. In 1919, the Brotherhood of Railway Employees accepted black porters as members. In 1924, Edmonton City Council refused to support an attempt to ban African Canadians from public parks and swimming pools.

Immigrants

After the First World War, the Canadian government adopted immigration restrictions, giving preference to applicants from Britain and the United States. Some Canadians did not want restrictions on immigration for selfish reasons and others welcomed immigrants because they would work for low wages in jobs that Canadian workers did not want. Labour groups, however, supported the restrictions because unions saw the willingness of some immigrants to work long hours for low wages as “unfair competition.”

Restrictions on Asian immigrants were particularly severe. In 1923, the federal government passed a law that virtually excluded Chinese immigrants to Canada until 1947 (see Chapter 1). A Canada-Japan agreement in 1922 restricted immigration from Japan to 150 servants and labourers per year.

In 1925, as the economy improved, the government relaxed restrictions on immigration. Thousands of immigrants landed monthly at Canada’s ports looking for jobs and security. Many were forced to work in terrible conditions for pitiful wages.

PRACTICE QUESTIONS

- Perspectives** What does it mean to be a “person” in a legal sense? How did the idea of not being a person affect women, Aboriginals, and visible minorities?
- What was the attitude toward women in positions of authority in Canada during the 1920s?
- Give examples to show that the federal government was pursuing a policy of cultural assimilation of Aboriginal peoples. What responses show that Aboriginal peoples were prepared to defend their rights?
- With a partner, list the issues and criticisms faced by women in the 1920s and women of today. Which are most similar and most different?
- How were blacks treated in Canada during the early 20th century?
- Which groups supported immigration and which did not? Explain.

A New Challenge to Federalism: Regionalism

After the war, **regionalism**, or the concern of the various regions of the country with their own local problems became more pronounced in Canadian politics.

The Maritimes

During the 1920s, the Maritime provinces (Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island) found that their influence in national politics was declining. The population in the Maritimes was small, which meant it had fewer seats in Parliament. Some businesses and banks moved to Ontario and Québec, while others suffered because their products (such as coal) were no longer in demand. Prominent business and political leaders formed the Maritime Rights movement and urged politicians to promote policies that would benefit the Maritimes.

The Prairies and Rural Ontario

Other regional challenges came from farmers on the Prairies and in rural Ontario. They were frustrated by the National Policy of 1878 that placed tariffs or duties on foreign goods imported into Canada. These tariffs made foreign goods more expensive, encouraging people to buy goods produced in Canada. Western farmers felt alienated by this policy because they had no such protection. They were forced to buy Canadian-made machinery, but their agricultural products were sold on the open world market. Farmers wanted **free trade**, abolishing tariffs and allowing them to buy cheaper American-made machinery. They also wanted lower freight rates and storage fees.

When neither the Liberals nor the Conservatives met their demands, farmers formed their own political parties. By the early 1920s, Ontario and the Prairie provinces had all elected members of United Farmers' parties to their legislatures. In some provinces, these parties formed the government. In 1920, the federal Progressive Party was created, led by Thomas Crerar, a former Minister of Agriculture in Robert Borden's Union Government. The Progressive Party wanted a new National Policy based on free trade and public ownership of the railways.

● What is regionalism, and how was it expressed in the 1920s?

KEY TERMS

federalism a political system that divides power between federal and provincial legislatures

regionalism a concern for the affairs of one's own region over those of one's country

free trade trade between countries without tariffs, export subsidies, or other government intervention



FIGURE 3-15 In 2001, Manitoban farmers demanded more financial aid from the government by driving their vehicles to the legislature in a national day of protest.

Thinking Critically How effective do you think this protest was in getting support for the farmers? In what ways was this protest the same as and different from protests of the 1920s?

KEY TERMS

nationalize move from private to government ownership

minority government a government in which the ruling party has less than half the total number of seats in the legislature

Old Age Pension Act an Act passed in 1927 to provide social assistance to people over 70

Québec

The economic boom in the 1920s, and Québec's proximity to the United States, led to rapid growth in many Québec industries. Cheap labour and vast forests resulted in the expansion of the province's pulp and paper industry to feed the U.S.'s demand for newsprint. Increased manufacturing in Canada and the U.S. during this decade helped to expand Québec's mining industries. To provide power to its growing industries, Québec took advantage of the hydroelectric potential of its many rivers. The abundant hydroelectric resources attracted the aluminum industry, and the Aluminum Company of Canada opened several plants.

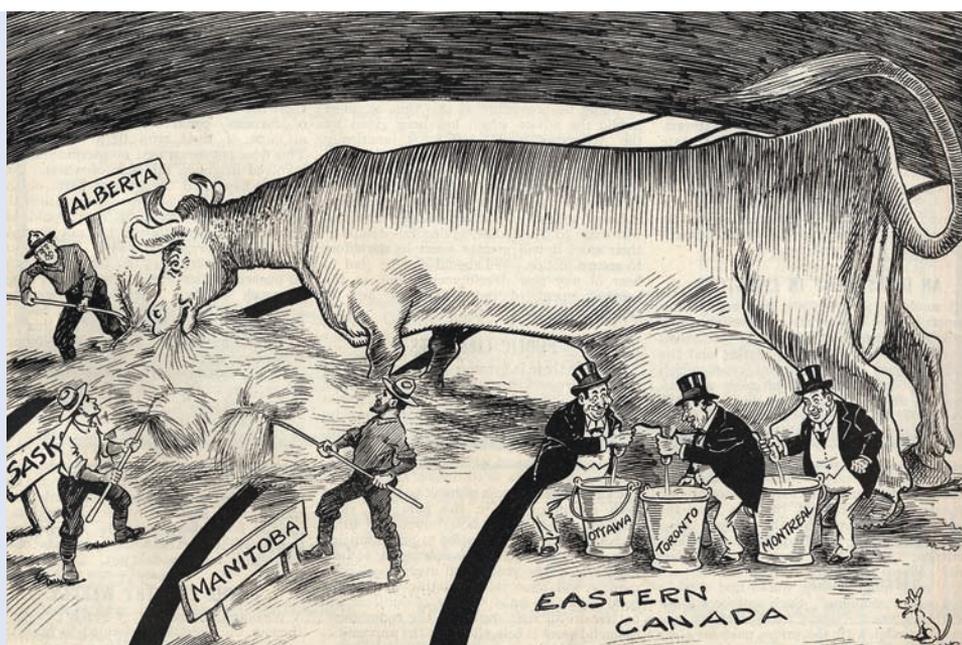
As Québec's industries expanded, so did its desire to protect its own interests. Hostility to the Conservative Party because of conscription and language rights helped the Liberals sweep all 65 seats in Québec in the 1921 federal election. Provincial politics were dominated from 1920 to 1936 by Premier Louis-Alexandre Taschereau's Liberal Party.

Western Interests

For most of the 1920s, British Columbia was led by Liberal John Oliver, who often attacked the federal government for favouring the interests of Eastern Canada. B.C.'s growing economic strength during the 1920s meant its politicians had a stronger voice in federal politics. The products of B.C.'s forests and mines were in demand. Communities grew around the new pulp and paper mills and mines. After the war, the port of Vancouver began to benefit from the Panama Canal that had opened in 1914. More importantly, Pacific Coast ports could challenge Eastern Canada's dominance in shipping Western grain. Premier Oliver went to Ottawa three times to demand railway freight rates be reduced, a fight he won each time. As a result, annual shipments of grain from B.C. ports increased throughout the 1920s. By the end of the decade, 40 percent of Canada's grain was exported through B.C.

FIGURE 3–16 Cow East and West

Interpreting a Cartoon What point is being made by the cartoon? How effective is the cartoon in explaining its message? Why?



Canadians Choose a New Government

Regionalism and the Progressive Party greatly influenced the results of the 1921 federal election, effectively upsetting the balance of power between the Liberals and Conservatives.

In the 1921 election, both the Liberals and the Conservatives had new leaders. William Lyon Mackenzie King was chosen to lead the Liberals in 1919. He had a reputation as a reformer and was an authority on social and economic issues. Arthur Meighen, a brilliant debater and long-standing Member of Parliament, was chosen to replace Borden as the leader of the Conservatives. While King always tried to find the middle path that would offend the fewest people, Meighen believed in principles over compromise and did not care who might be offended by his stand on issues. Meighen's hard line alienated many groups before the election. His involvement in creating the Conscription Act and the new electoral laws of 1917 meant he had little support in Québec. His harsh treatment of the leaders of the Winnipeg General Strike also provoked the hostility of the labour movement.

The Progressive Party's election platform was based on their proposed National Policy, calling for free trade and to **nationalize** the railways. In the election, the Progressives managed to win an astonishing 64 seats, mostly in Western Canada. This made it the second largest party in Parliament, giving the Liberals a **minority government**. Because they were not the majority, the Liberals needed the support of some of the opposition members to pass legislation.

Despite its initial success, the Progressive Party did not last very long. However, it was influential in bringing about changes to Canada's social policy. In 1926, for example, King was challenged by the Progressives to set up an old age pension. The **Old Age Pension Act** was passed in 1927. The Act was an acknowledgement that government had a role to play in providing a network of social services for its citizens. The Progressive Party lost public support in the 1925 and 1926 elections, and it eventually dissolved. But it did manage to change Canadian politics by helping to create Canada's first minority government.

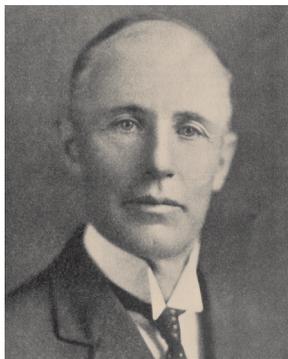


FIGURE 3–17 In a 1920 speech, Arthur Meighen said, “Thousands of people are mentally chasing rainbows, striving for the unattainable, anxious to better their lot and seemingly unwilling to do it in the old-fashioned way by honest intelligent effort. Dangerous doctrines taught by dangerous men, enemies of the State, poison and pollute the air....”

Using Evidence What groups was Meighen referring to? How would they have reacted to his speech?

Prime Minister Arthur Meighen

- born 1874, Anderson, Ontario
- lawyer
- first elected to Commons in 1908
- prime minister 1920–1921, June–September 1926

Domestic Record

- helped write and pass the Military Service Act and Wartime Elections Act
- created the Canadian National Railways in 1919 by nationalizing several transportation companies
- played a prominent role in ending the Winnipeg General Strike in 1919
- formed a minority government during the King-Byng Crisis in 1926

International Record

- successfully argued against an Anglo-Japanese alliance at the 1921 Imperial Conference

PRACTICE QUESTIONS

1. List the concerns expressed by each region during the 1920s: Maritimes; Québec; Prairies and rural Ontario; Western Canada. To what extent were the concerns resolved?
2. Why was the Progressive Party so successful during the 1921 election? What impact did this have on the federal government from 1921 to 1926?

- What factors contributed to Canada's emerging autonomy ?

Prime Minister

William Lyon Mackenzie King

- born 1874, Berlin (Kitchener), Ontario
- author, editor, journalist, lawyer
- first elected to Commons in 1908
- prime minister 1921–1926, 1926–1930, 1935–1948

Domestic Record

- created the Industrial Disputes Investigation Act in 1907
- helped create Canada's first old-age pension program in 1927
- fought for Canadian autonomy during the King-Byng Crisis (1926) and in signing the Halibut Treaty with the United States (1923)
- appointed Cairine Wilson as the first woman senator in 1930
- commissioned the Rowell-Sirois Report of 1937
- introduced unemployment insurance in 1940
- held national plebiscite on conscription in 1942
- passed the Family Allowance Act in 1945
- helped create the Canadian Citizenship Act in 1947, which was the first statute to define Canada's people as Canadians
- longest-serving prime minister in Canadian history

International Record

- defended Canada's autonomy during the Chanak Crisis (1922)
- helped create the definition of Dominion status at the Imperial Conference of 1926
- insisted that Parliament decide if Canada would become involved in international conflicts

Canada's Growing Independence

After the First World War, Prime Minister Borden took a number of important steps that raised Canada's profile internationally, including participating in the Paris Peace Conference and signing the Treaty of Versailles (see Chapter 2). Mackenzie King, once he became prime minister, continued to push for greater independence from Britain.

The Chanak Crisis

In 1922, Mackenzie King refused Britain's call for support when British occupation troops were threatened by nationalist Turks during the **Chanak Crisis**. Chanak was a Turkish port controlled by Britain as a condition of one of the treaties signed at the Paris Peace Conference. If Turkey regained this port, it would have clear access to Europe through the Black Sea to the Mediterranean. Britain saw this as a threat and sent a telegram to King, asking him to send Canadian troops to support the Empire. Instead of automatically granting Britain's request, King brought the issue to Parliament. By the time the issue was debated in the House of Commons, the crisis in Turkey had passed. The Chanak Crisis marked the first time that Canada did not automatically support the British Empire in war.

The Halibut Treaty

The following year, Canada negotiated a treaty with the United States to protect halibut along the coasts of British Columbia and Alaska. Mackenzie King insisted that Canada be allowed to sign the **Halibut Treaty** without the signature of a British representative. Britain wanted to maintain its imperial right to sign international agreements on Canada's behalf. When Britain tried to pressure King into letting their representative sign the treaty, King insisted that it was a matter between Canada and the U.S. He threatened to set up an independent Canadian representative in Washington, and Britain backed down. The Halibut Treaty was the first treaty negotiated and signed independently by the Canadian government.

The King-Byng Crisis

In 1926, Mackenzie King publicly challenged Britain over the role of the **governor general** and Britain's influence on Canada's internal politics in what became known as the **King-Byng Crisis**. During the election of 1926, King was able to avoid the issue of the scandal and appeal to nationalist sentiments. He claimed that it was undemocratic for the Governor General, an official appointed by Britain, to refuse to take the advice of the prime minister, who was elected by Canadians. Since the King-Byng crisis, no Governor General has acted against the wishes of an elected prime minister.



FIGURE 3–18 After the King-Byng Crisis, King gained national support by claiming it was undemocratic for the governor general, a British representative, to go against the wishes of a prime minister elected by Canadians.

KEY TERMS

Chanak Crisis the Canadian government's refusal in 1922, led by King, to support British troops in defending the Turkish port of Chanak; the first time the Canadian government did not support the British military

Halibut Treaty a 1923 treaty between Canada and the U.S. to protect halibut along the Pacific Coast; the first treaty negotiated and signed independently by the Canadian government

governor general the person who represents the British crown in Canada

King-Byng Crisis a situation that occurred in 1926 when Governor General Byng refused Prime Minister King's request to dissolve Parliament and call an election

coalition a formal alliance of political parties

confidence in politics, it means support

prorogue to postpone or suspend, as in Parliament

FAST FORWARD

King-Byng Revisited in 2008?

In 2008, Prime Minister Stephen Harper faced a crisis similar to that of Mackenzie King in 1926. The three opposition parties (Liberal, New Democrat, and Bloc Québécois) were dissatisfied with the minority Conservative government's financial policies and formed a **coalition** to oust the government. They asked Parliament to hold a non-**confidence** vote against Harper's government. Before the vote took place, Harper asked Governor General Michaëlle Jean to **prorogue**, or suspend, Parliament for a month so the government could bring in a new financial policy. Governor General Jean agreed. During the month Parliament was suspended, Harper managed to convince the Liberal leader to accept the Conservatives' new financial plan and support them in the non-confidence vote. With the Liberals' support in Parliament, Harper's Conservative government stayed in power.



FIGURE 3–19 This cartoon shows the three opposition leaders, Stéphane Dion, Gilles Duceppe, and Jack Layton, pointing at Stephen Harper.

Using Evidence How would you have advised Governor General Jean regarding Harper's request to suspend Parliament?

Establishing Cause, Effect, and Results

How many times have you been asked to discuss the causes of an event on an exam? As you probably know, it is much easier to describe *what*, *where*, and *when* an event happened than to explain *why* it happened. For example, there is no disagreement that the First World War (what) began in Europe (where) in 1914 (when). Explaining the causes, effects, and results of the war is not so straightforward. Was one country more responsible than others? Why did countries declare war? Why did the generals continue to use outdated tactics? What future events resulted from the decisions made at the Paris Peace Conference?

Events in history are the result of many other events that directly or indirectly caused that incident to happen. This is called causality. Understanding causality helps us to see the relationship between one event (the cause) and another event (the effect). The effect then leads to long-term results or consequences that in turn lead to more effects (see Figure 3–20). Some of the results of the First World War still affect us today. For example, the location of boundaries in the Balkans, and in Middle East countries such as Iraq, established by the treaties of 1919, are still a source of conflict today. Historians (and geographers) use cause-effect-results organizers to explain change.

People often have different perspectives and world views. Few people will understand events in exactly the same way. They will explain the causes,

effects, and results of an event in different ways, and their differing viewpoints will often lead them to different conclusions about the same event.

Although the discussion on this page deals with history, you will find examples of cause and effect throughout this textbook. Issues related to politics, human rights, population, and the environment all raise questions about cause-effect-result relationships. Is the drop in voter turnout in elections related to demographics? What impact did the atrocities in the Second World War have on the development of human rights legislation? What changes in the environment can be directly related to global warming?

Applying the Skill

1. Referring to Figure 3–20, create a cause-effect-results organizer for the Winnipeg General Strike.
2. Identify the background causes of regionalism in Canada during the 1920s.
3. Note the immediate and longer-term effects of closer relations between Canada and the United States in the 1920s.
4. Record the effects of discrimination on one or more of the following groups during the 1920s: Aboriginal peoples, African Canadians, or immigrants.

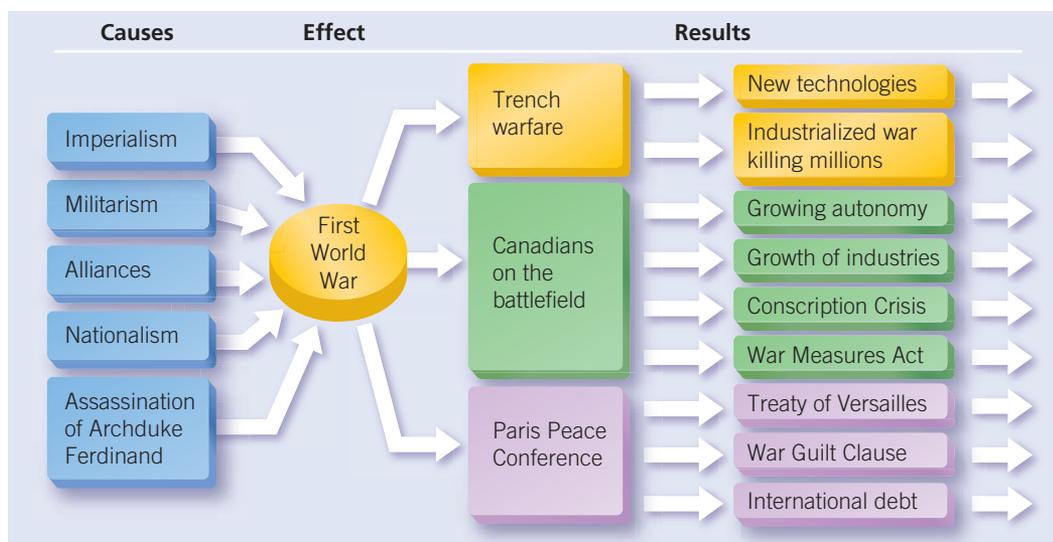


FIGURE 3–20
Cause-effect-results organizer for the First World War

The Imperial Conference and the Balfour Report

It was at the **Imperial Conference** of 1926 that Canada made the greatest progress toward changing its legal dependence on Britain. At this conference, the dominions of the British Empire (Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, and the Irish Free State) requested formal recognition of their autonomy, the freedom to govern themselves. A special committee under the leadership of Lord Balfour, a respected British politician, examined the request. The committee's findings, published as the **Balfour Report**, supported the dominions' position:

...[We] refer to the group of self-governing communities composed of... Britain and the Dominions. Their position and mutual relation may be readily defined. They are autonomous communities within the British Empire, equal in status, in no way subordinate one to another in any aspect of their domestic or external affairs, though united by a common allegiance to the Crown....

—Summary of Proceedings at the Imperial Conference, 1926

KEY TERMS

Imperial Conference a meeting of the leaders of the countries in the British Empire

Balfour Report the conclusions of the 1926 Imperial Conference that acknowledged that Canada was an autonomous community within the British Empire

Statute of Westminster the law that changed the British Empire into the British Commonwealth; all commonwealth countries to be considered equal in status with Britain and able to make their own laws

British Commonwealth an association of nations that were formerly colonies of the British Empire

amending formula the process by which changes can legally be made to the Canadian Constitution

The Statute of Westminster

The recommendations of the Balfour Report became law in 1931, when the **Statute of Westminster** was passed by the British government. This statute formally turned the British Empire into the **British Commonwealth**. The commonwealth countries were considered free and equal states that shared an allegiance to the British Crown. Canada was now a country equal in status with Britain and could make its own laws. There were, however, two remaining restrictions on Canada's independence. Canada's constitution, the British North America Act (BNA Act), remained in Britain because the Canadian federal and provincial governments could not agree on an **amending formula**, the procedure for changing the Act. As well, the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, a court of final appeal for Canadians, resided in Britain until 1949.

PRACTICE QUESTIONS

1. What was the significance of each of the following for Canada: Chanak Crisis, Halibut Treaty, Statute of Westminster?
2. How was King able to turn an election defeat in 1925 into an election victory?
3. Explain the challenges faced by minority governments.
4. **Patterns and Change** Review the Fast Forward. Which elements of the King-Byng Crisis and Harper's prorogation of Parliament are the same? What is the key difference between the two events?
5. What restrictions to Canadian autonomy remained after the Statute of Westminster was passed?

● How does the United States influence Canadian identity?

Was Canada more or less independent by the end of the 1920s?

While Canada gained greater political independence from Britain in the 1920s, it developed much closer economic and cultural ties to the United States. In 1922, U.S. investment in Canada topped that of Britain's investment for the first time. By 1930, 61 per cent of foreign investment in Canada was from the U.S. During the same period, close to a million Canadians moved to the U.S. in search of better jobs and higher pay.

Despite a growing cultural industry in Canada, most Canadians listened to American radio stations, watched Hollywood films, and drove American-designed Model T Fords. Even Canadian sports teams were being bought up by U.S. interests. The National Hockey League became Americanized as smaller Canadian cities were unable to compete following the inclusion of U.S. teams.

One historian described the close ties between Canada and the United States in the 1920s:

...in the immediate aftermath of the war, the United States had a... depression and Canada had a... depression too. Coal strikes broke out in the United States; coal strikes broke out in Canada. The United States embarked on Prohibition; so... did almost all the provinces of Canada. The United States spawned the Prohibition gangster; Canada spawned the Prohibition rum-runner to keep him supplied.

—Ralph Allen, *Ordeal By Fire: Canada, 1910–1945*

A Separate Identity

Had the U.S. simply replaced Britain in controlling Canada's development? On the one hand, Canada's economy was very dependent on that of the U.S. Canada was also awash in American popular culture. But it is hard to say how much the exposure to American entertainment diminished Canadian identity in the 1920s. For example, the people of Québec remained relatively untouched by the influence of American culture in Canada. A different language and a protective church helped to ensure that most French Canadians remained beyond American influence.

On the other hand, concern about American cultural and economic domination made Canadians determined to protect their identity. A Royal Commission in 1928 recommended that the government regulate private radio to ensure Canadian content. Although Canadians benefited from having a larger, more prosperous neighbour to the south, they never showed interest in becoming part of the U.S. J.A. Stephenson, a British correspondent in Canada during the 1920s, observed:

The people of Canada are imbued with... a passion to maintain their own separate identity. They cherish the rooted belief that they enjoy in their existing political and social order certain manifest advantages over their neighbours.

—Quoted in *Contemporary Review*, October 1931

Year	Britain %	U.S. %	Other %
1910	77	19	4
1918	60	36	4
1920	53	44	3
1922	47	50	3
1925	41	56	3
1926	44	53	3
1930	36	61	3

Figure 3–21 Percent of foreign investment in Canada

Interpreting the Table In what year did U.S. investment in Canada overtake that of Britain? What are some reasons that might account for this change?

Analyzing the Issue

1. In Vancouver in 1923, U.S. President Warren Harding made the following statement about the interdependence of Canada and the U.S.: "We think the same thoughts, live the same lives, and cherish the same aspirations...." Do you think many Canadians would have agreed with Harding? Why or why not?
2. Write a letter to the editor of a newspaper, explaining why you agree or disagree with President Harding's statement. Give examples of Canada's dependence or independence to support your argument.

The Stock Market Crash

KEY TERM

Depression a severe economic downturn in the global economy in the 1930s

In the latter half of the 1920s, the North American economy was booming. In 1929, the president of the Vancouver Board of Trade, Robert McKee, reflected a sense of optimism in the financial community when he told a business audience that "prosperity was so broad, so sound, [and] so hopeful" that it inspired confidence in the future.

However, as you will see in the next chapter, the prosperity soon came crashing to an end. On Tuesday, October 29, 1929, the New York Stock Exchange collapsed. On that day, prices of all stocks fell dramatically. The order to traders was to "Sell, sell, sell!" More than 16 million shares changed hands, but prices continued to fall. Everyone knew a disaster had occurred. As you will read in the next chapter, the stock market crash marked a shift from the prosperity of the 1920s to the crushing poverty of the Depression of the 1930s.



Stock Speculators Shaken in Wild Day of Panic

Erratic Wheat Prices Churn Market

Your Paper

IN ACCORD with its daily custom, The Globe this morning carries the official figures of the trading in all stocks on the New York Exchange at yesterday's record session. As a result of the panic of trading, the ticker did not catch up with the transactions until nearly 8 o'clock last night, after which the official compilation had to be concluded. The Globe utilized two leased wires direct from the office of the New York Times in the race against time in order that its readers might have the complete tables, as usual, in this morning's issue.

BODIES AND FLOTSAM MUTELY TELL OF FATE MET BY 50 ON FERRY

Life-Belted Remains of Sailors Found in Lake Michigan

WATCH TIMES DISASTER

No Evidence Found to Support Story of Erie Foundering

(Special and A. P. Despatch.)

Milwaukee, Oct. 24.—Four bodies picked up on Lake Michigan and the sighting of a dozen others floating on the rough water gave definite evidence tonight that the car ferry Milwaukee had spent its life to the bottom with her crew of fifty men.

Two of the bodies were recovered by this afternoon. Tonight, the coast guard boats were out on the lake, and were identified as those of Captain Robert McKay of Detroit and Purser A. R. Saxon, Grand Haven, Mich.

Because of the extreme roughness of the lake, salvaging operations were suspended until tomorrow.

The missing steel chemist picked up two bodies eleven miles off Kenosha, and five miles farther out in the lake, the white pilot house with "Milwaukee" printed on it. The Hellettin on the lake, salvaging operations were suspended until tomorrow.

New Records Set

Total sales on the New York Stock Exchange reached 12,894,650 shares, 4,000,000 shares more than the previous record day.

Total sales on the Toronto Stock Exchange reached 277,000 shares and on the Montreal Stock Exchange 382,531 shares, outstripping all previous records.

Shares from all parts of North America were dumped on the New York Stock Exchange by nervous sellers, by people selling out of panic, and by "short" sellers who later covered, resulting in the worst breaks in quoted values since the war panic of 1914.

Bankers and responsible brokers in the United States and Canada consider the debacle yesterday was the inevitable result of too much speculation, and that it has "cleared the air."

There was a noticeable recovery in values in the last hour of trading, though the losses were still severe as compared with the previous day's close.

Brokers' loan totals, announced at the end of trading, showed a decrease of \$167,000,000.

Frantic scenes were also witnessed in grain markets of Winnipeg and Chicago as grain prices crumbled, with a considerable recovery in first trading.

MAELSTROM OF PANIC AS VALUES PLUNGE, THEN LEAP UP AGAIN

Chicago, Then Winnipeg, Subjected to Ruthless Smashes

SMALL MAN SQUEEZED

Turn of Finger as Signal Scales Millions From Total

(Associated Press Despatch.)

Chicago, Oct. 24.—The bottom dropped out of the wheat pit today in a severe reminder of war panic days. Panic traders dumped their holdings of wheat into a market already overflowing with selling orders, and under tremendous pressure, support crumbled and prices dropped 12 cents a bushel below yesterday's closing levels.

By noon the avalanche had spent its force, and with the stock markets rebounding, wheat, too, came back to finish 4 1/2 to 5 1/2 cents lower than Wednesday.

The final prices were: December wheat, \$1.20 1/2, to \$1.20 3/4; March, \$1.20 1/2, to \$1.20 3/4; and May, \$1.21 1/2, to \$1.21 3/4.

Other grains were strong in contrast, corn recovering from a small decline to end 1/4 to 1/2 cent higher, and oats losing only 1/4 to 1/2 cent.

The break started early in the day, and the firm of a finger sent a million bushels of wheat from the wheat crop, and galvanized widely in their efforts to unload on the falling market. The price was too far to excuse stop-loss orders. The firing hands and fingers that signal bids and asks on fluctuations of an eighth of a cent each, each day, and talking of half cents and cents a bushel, and the firm of a finger sent a million bushels of wheat from the wheat crop, and galvanized widely in their efforts to unload on the falling market.

The break started early in the day, and the firm of a finger sent a million bushels of wheat from the wheat crop, and galvanized widely in their efforts to unload on the falling market.

Record for All Time Is Set by Wall Street In Frenzy of Selling

Most Disastrous Decline in History of New York Stock Exchange Sees 12,894,650 Shares Churned—Total of 974 Separate Issues Handled—Thousands of Accounts Wiped Out Before Leading Bankers Combine to Halt Slump—Losses Reported to Reach Billions of Dollars

FINANCIAL LEADERS IN CONFERENCE ISSUE REASSURING STATEMENT

Securities Markets of Country Feel Effects of Downward Movement—Chicago Prices Break in Record Day's Trading of 1,220,000 Shares—London Spends Nervous Day Watching Events Across Atlantic

(Special Despatch to The Globe.)

NEW YORK, Oct. 24.—The most disastrous decline in the biggest and broadest stock market of history rocked the financial district today. In the very midst of the collapse five of the country's most influential bankers hurried to the office of J. P. Morgan & Co., and after a brief conference, gave out word that they believed the foundations of the market to be sound, that the market smash had been caused by technical, rather than fundamental considerations, and that many sound stocks are selling too low.

Suddenly the market turned about, on buying orders thrown into the pivotal issues, and before the final quotations were tapped out, four hours and eight minutes after the 3 o'clock bell, most stocks had regained a measurable part of their losses.

The break was one of the widest in the market's history, although the losses at the close were not particularly large, many having been recouped by the afternoon rally.

Speculators go down.

It carried down with it speculators, big and little, in every part of the country, wiping out thousands of accounts. It is probable that if the stockholders of the country's foremost corporations had not been calmed by the attitude of leading bankers, and the subsequent rally, the business of the country would have been seriously affected. Doubtless business will feel the effects of the drastic stock shake-out, and this is expected to hit taxpayers most severely.

It was far the biggest market day in the country's history. Total sales on the New York Stock Exchange were 12,894,650 shares and on the Curb 6,217,415 shares. A total of 974 separate issues was dealt in on the exchange. This figure established a new record.

The total losses cannot be accurately calculated, because of the large number of transactions and the thousands of dollars. Four struck the big speculators and little ones, big investors and little ones. Thousands of them threw their holdings into the whirling stock exchange pit for what, they would bring, and thousands of prosperous brokers and bank accounts found and healthy a week ago, were completely wrecked in the strange debacle due to a combination of circumstances, but so accustomed to a crash by fate.

Trading Reaches Climax

(Associated Press Despatch.)

NEW YORK, Oct. 24.—The remarkable area of avid public speculation in stocks, which has swept over the country during the past five years, came to a climax today in the most terrifying stampede of selling ever experienced on the New York Stock Exchange and other leading security markets.

CRASH IN NEW YORK ROCKS SHARE PRICES IN TORONTO MARKETS

Rush of Orders Demoralizes Communications for a Time

MINES SHARES AFFECTED

Vigorous Upswing Late in Day—Montreal Exchange Has Record Day

Unable to withstand the sudden and terrific pressure of record-breaking liquidation, prices on the Toronto and Montreal Stock Exchanges collapsed yesterday in a market which made financial history.

Vigorous upswing late in day—Montreal Exchange has record day.

Almost as rapidly as it had declined, the stock market turned vigorously upward in the afternoon, and many of the day's extreme declines at Toronto and Montreal were reduced by as much as 50 per cent.

Greatly encouraging was the fact that the Standard Stock and Mining Exchange not only withstood the effect of selling on other markets, but losses among mining issues were largely of a minor character.

With no warning of the impending decline, exchanges at Toronto, Montreal and New York opened at approximately the same levels as at the close on Wednesday. For more than an hour the list moved irregularly, until shortly after 11 o'clock the New York ticker spelled out the first words and figures in quotations that were to become historic.

Rush to sell.

As prices revealed declines of extravagant proportions between consecutive sales of stocks at New York, nervous traders in Toronto and Montreal rushed to sell their holdings at what they could obtain. The result was a semi-panic, in which the floor of the Toronto Stock Exchange became the focal point of interest. Frantic efforts to "unload" led to such heavy trading that the ticker soon ceased to be of any use as a guide to prices, and by noon trading almost was completely demoralized. It was during the first half of the day that most of the 227,000 shares traded in Toronto made their appearance, while at Montreal no fewer than 392,531 shares changed hands. Both were far above any previous records.

Communications Clogged.

At the height of the selling, millions of dollars were curtailed from the market value of Canadian and interrelated stocks, and the confusion was further increased by the cessation of telephone messages into Toronto brokerage houses, and in turn from Toronto brokers to their correspondents at New York. Consequently many brokerage orders were virtually isolated from tele-

SLANDER CAMPAIGN IN SOUTH ONTARIO CHARGED BY SINCLAIR

"Contemptible Tactics" Vigorously Attacked by Liberal Leader

SPEAKS IN OWN RIDING

(Canadian Press Despatch.)

Pont Perry, Oct. 24.—Claiming a campaign of slander is being waged against him in his own riding, William E. N. Sinclair, Liberal leader, tonight addressed a large meeting here. Apart from one or two matters, however, he declined to refer to the allegations of F. G. Mason, Conservative candidate, and his supporters.

"My position in the riding is," he said, "does not require me to answer any of the small stuff being bandied over my opponents. One of the charges dealt with was that of a Conservative speaker, who said, 'If the Liberal candidate, Mr. Sinclair himself, would buy their permits on the table the consumption of liquor would drop tremendously.'"

"Ladies and gentlemen, I have no permit, and never had one," declared Mr. Sinclair. "And I leave it to the people to judge of the man making that statement."

The Liberal leader said one of the men who signed the nomination papers of Mr. Mason was an employer in the Chawara liquor store. This, he said,

CANADIAN SITUATION ECONOMICALLY SOUND, SAY FINANCIAL CHIEFS

Giant of Yesteryear

(Special Despatch to The Globe.)

NORTH BAY, Oct. 24.—Remarkable in size, symmetry and the soundness of its wood, a white pine tree, which has been lying 50 years or more on the farm of Norman Reid on Chouinard Lake near Westmeath, was utilized this week for wood and yielded seventy cords. The pine measured 145 feet from the tip to the base, with a diameter of 5 feet 10 inches. The stump bears evidence that the tree was felled either completely or partly possibly half a century ago. The wood was perfectly sound.

President A. E. Phipps of Bankers' Association Sees No Reason to Be Troubled About General Business Conditions

Local Stock Market Weathers Test Well

"DIP" FORESEEN BY OBSERVERS

Banking and brokerage authorities in Toronto yesterday were in agreement that the sweeping declines on New York, Montreal and Toronto Stock Exchanges were more or less "coming" to the market, but that too much stock had been bought by people who were weak financially and who had made too little investigation as to the soundness of value, and that those who had made sound commitments within their means had little reason to fear. The bankers especially, though regarding the losses to small with more than a little concern, felt that there was no reason to be troubled about general business conditions. One high banking authority expressed the opinion that a distinct advance in business conditions

SOCIALIST MAY LEAD NEXT PARIS CABINET

President to Confer With Newly Elected Radical Leader

PARIS, Oct. 24.—

Long Night of Reckoning

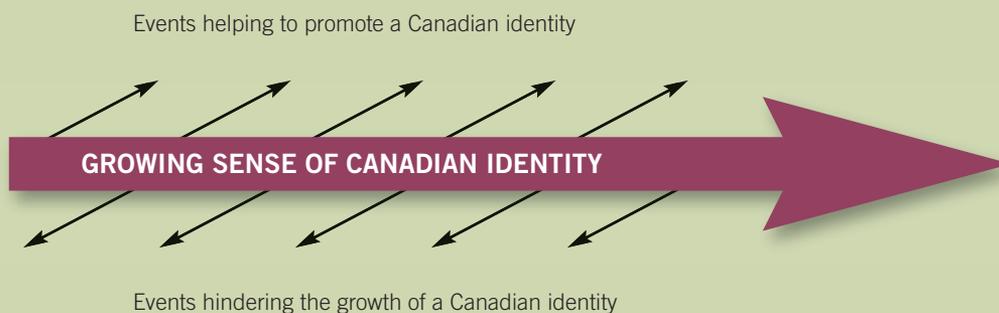
NEW YORK, Oct. 24.—The remarkable area of avid public speculation in stocks, which has swept over the country during the past five years, came to a climax today in the most terrifying stampede of selling ever experienced on the New York Stock Exchange and other leading security markets.

FIGURE 3-22 Front page of Toronto's *The Globe* just before the stock market crash Using Evidence How does this front page show the different opinions on the state of the stock market prior to the crash? What words express concern? Confidence?

CHAPTER FOCUS QUESTION How did Canada adjust to political, social, and economic changes following the First World War?

Canadians in the 1920s began to develop a distinct sense of identity from Britain. Events and developments following the First World War at times encouraged and at other times hindered this trend.

1. a) Complete the organizer below, gathering examples of events from the chapter that helped in the growth of a Canadian identity and examples of events that worked against developing an identity.
- b) Which of the examples do you think had the greatest impact on the growing sense of Canadian identity? Which examples most hindered the growth of a Canadian identity? Give reasons for your choices.
- c) How many of the examples affect your sense of identity as a Canadian today? Explain.
- d) Pretend you are in a foreign country and are mistaken for an American by someone you meet. How would you explain the difference? What makes us Canadian?



Vocabulary Focus

2. Review the Key Terms listed on page 61. Create a three-column organizer for the key terms in this chapter using the following headings: social; political; and economic.

Place each term into the category you think is correct. If a term fits in more than one category, place it in all columns you think are appropriate. Make a note about the terms you are having difficulty understanding and review them.

Knowledge and Understanding

3. Continue the annotated timeline begun in Chapter 2 showing steps to Canadian autonomy. Review the events that are covered in the chapter. Write the name and date of each event on the timeline and explain how the event contributed to Canadian independence.
4. List the advantages and disadvantages of foreign investment and branch plants in Canada. Use your list to determine whether the positive impacts of foreign investment outweigh the negative impacts.

5. Discuss why the 1920s are described as the “Roaring Twenties.” Do you agree with this name? Explain your answer. If you do not agree, decide on another name.
6. What do the immigration policy, Aboriginal policy, and treatment of African Canadians reveal about the attitudes and values of Canadian authorities in the 1920s?
7. What current political parties offer a change from traditional parties? How effective are these alternative parties at influencing government policy?
8. What was the long-term impact of the King-Byng Crisis?

10. Rank the following from most to least important for their impact on Canada’s independence. Provide information to support your ranking.

Chanak Crisis
 Halibut Treaty
 King-Byng Crisis
 Imperial Conference
 Balfour Report
 Statute of Westminster

11. Debate: Prime Minister Mackenzie King did more for Canadian autonomy than any other Canadian prime minister.

Critical Thinking

9. Compare the struggle of women and Aboriginal peoples during the 1920s. In your opinion, which group was more successful in the short term and long term? Provide specific evidence to support your opinion.

Document Analysis

12. What point is the cartoon below making about Canadian identity? WASP stands for White Anglo-Saxon Protestants and refers to Canadians of British descent. United Empire Loyalists fought for Britain during the American Revolution and, after the war, settled in what is now Canada.

BETWEEN POLLS

by Michael Eddenden

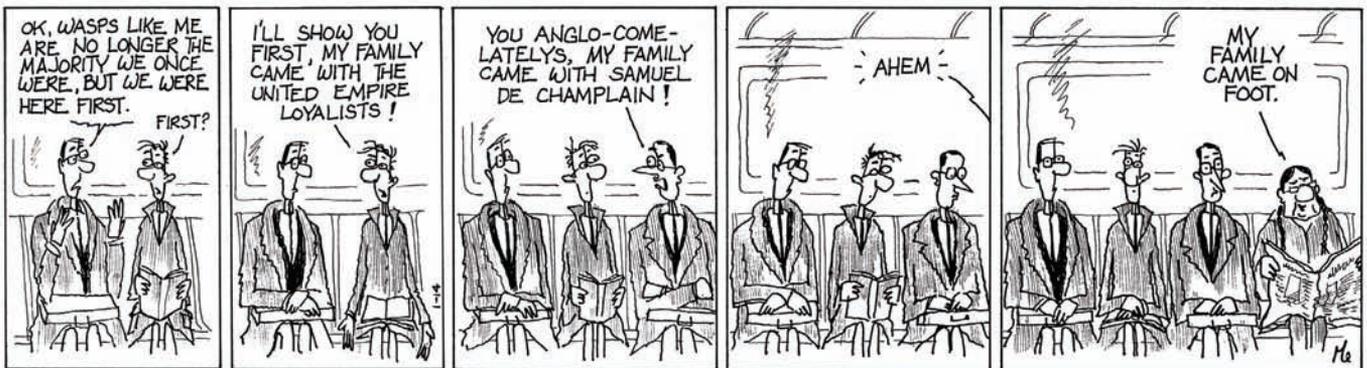


FIGURE 3–23