What kind of global citizen did Canada become during the Cold War?

The end of World War II brought peace — at least temporarily. Prosperity came quickly, too. Canada entered a new era in which almost everyone had a job and teenagers could stop worrying about dying on a foreign battlefield and start thinking about their plans for Saturday night.

But even as the horrific images of Hiroshima and Nagasaki began to recede in the public’s mind, people realized that something important had changed. Overnight, the goal of achieving worldwide peaceful coexistence had become a matter of survival. Atomic bombs had the potential to destroy the world as they knew it.

Canada had played a vital role during World War II. It was yet to be seen what roles Canada would take up in the postwar world.

Examine the political cartoon on the previous page and consider the following questions as you reflect on one of the major issues facing Canada and the world in the decades after World War II:

• In what ways are various elements of the cartoon, such as the size of the people and symbols, significant?
• The labels on the symbols say “How to kill everybody” and “How to live with everybody.” In 1945, did people know how to do these two things? Explain your response.
• Who is pondering these questions? Who should have been pondering them?
• What was D.R. Fitzpatrick’s message? In what ways does this cartoon sum up the dilemmas of its era?
• In what ways is this cartoon still relevant? Explain your response.

LOOKING AHEAD

The following inquiry questions will help you explore the extent to which Canada successfully expanded its role in the international community after World War II:

• What roles did Canada play in the Cold War?
• What did Canada accomplish in the Korean War?
• How did Canadians promote world peace?

Key Terms

bloc
superpower
espionage
defect
mutual deterrence
mutually assured destruction
peaceful coexistence
proxy war

LEARNING GOALS

In this chapter you will
• describe Canada’s role in the Cold War
• explain how Canada’s approach to international relations evolved
• identify key political developments and policies of the time
• describe Canada’s relationship with the United States, a Cold War superpower
• describe the contributions of various individuals and groups to Canadian society and politics
• assess the significance of the Avro Arrow, and its demise, for Canada
What roles did Canada play in the Cold War?

The Cold War divided the world into two groups of allied countries, or blocs — the West and the East. The United States and its allies dominated the West, and the Soviet Union and its satellite states dominated the East. The United States and the Soviet Union both became superpowers — countries with the military might to control the world, or at least large portions of it. Throughout the Cold War, from about 1948 to 1991, they did manage to avoid another world war, but their power struggle brought the world closer to obliteration than most people could have imagined.

Espionage

After World War II, Western countries had tried to convince themselves that the Soviets were still their allies. But U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt had lost confidence early.

In Yalta, Ukraine, in February 1945, the Allied leaders had agreed to respect prewar borders in Europe. Yet within a few months, the Soviet Union had put communist governments in place in the Eastern European countries it had liberated. Those governments answered only to Stalin. Roosevelt said, “We can’t do business with Stalin. He has broken every one of the promises made at Yalta.”

In both world wars, Russia had been attacked from the West. Were the Soviets just creating a buffer zone between Russia and the West? Or were they trying to conquer Europe?

Governments suspicious of the Soviets began gathering all the information they could find about their supposed ally. Espionage — secret intelligence gathering — became an essential tool for all countries involved in the Cold War. Spies gathered information about government policies, especially military production, capability, and movements.

Canada took part in the intelligence-gathering game as well. The defence department created a small agency called the Joint Intelligence Bureau, whose task was to create reports on topics of interest to the government. Among other projects, it set up a secret radio post at Alert, in the Northwest Territories, to eavesdrop on the Soviets.

Figure 13-2 Made in 1948, The Iron Curtain was a movie about Igor Gouzenko. Gouzenko was at the centre of a sensational spy scandal involving many Canadian civil servants. In the movie, he was portrayed as a man trying to escape the tyranny of the Soviet state to embrace democracy in Canada. How might this movie have influenced public opinion?
After-Effects of a Defection

If the conditions are right, a single event can have a ripple effect that steers the course of history in a particular direction. As you read what happened after the Gouzenko defection, think about what direction this event steered history in both the short and long term.

At 26 years of age, Igor Gouzenko was an insignificant clerk working for Soviet military intelligence in Ottawa after World War II. He shot to prominence by risking his life to defect — switch political allegiance — from the Soviet Union to Canada on September 5, 1945.

Gouzenko told about a vast Soviet spy network operating in Canada, Britain, and the United States. He claimed that the Soviets were preparing to fight the West in a third world war. The government was uncertain. Could their wartime ally be so two-faced? But Gouzenko had proof: more than 100 highly sensitive documents he had smuggled out of the Soviet Embassy. Canada granted him asylum on September 7.

Within a few weeks, 13 suspects were arrested. A month later, 26 more. For the first time during peacetime, the government used the War Measures Act to secretly detain and question suspects without charge. (This would be repeated in 1970, during the FLQ crisis.)

The royal commission set up to question the suspects set the tone of suspicion and paranoia that prevailed during the Cold War. The commission pressured suspects to reveal connections to the Communist Party. It was a model for the McCarthy-era persecution of communists in the United States — named for Senator Joe McCarthy, who led the attacks on anyone suspected of communism.

In 1948, the government eventually did convict 18 people, including a member of Parliament, of violating the Official Secrets Act. Canada woke up to the need for counter-espionage in Canada.

Perhaps most disturbing to the West, Gouzenko testified that Canadian spies had been giving the Soviets information on how to build a nuclear weapon. This revelation put an immediate end to United Nations (UN) plans to control nuclear arms. Instead, the United States would build an enormous arsenal of nuclear weapons and the Soviets would do the same. A 40-year arms race had begun.

Figure 13–3. After defecting in 1945, Gouzenko lived the rest of his life in Mississauga, Ontario, under an assumed name. This photograph, taken in 1954, was a publicity shot for a second movie about events from his life: Operation Manhunt. The two stars of the film — Iria Jensen and Harry Towes — pose with him.

Explorations

1. Make a three-column chart and list the immediate, short-term, and long-term consequences of the Gouzenko defection.

2. The Gouzenko Affair has been called the spark that ignited the Cold War. Do you think that's an exaggeration or a fair assessment? Why? Why might Canadians believe this event to be more historically significant than it merits? What other evidence would help you to answer this question?
Canada — A Middle Power

In the 1950s, Canada was a middle power. This term began as a description of Canada's military capability, which was no longer thought negligible. Because of its role in World War II, the world had noticed and appreciated that Canada’s contribution had been extraordinary, especially given its small population. By revealing that it was tough and committed, Canada had earned the world’s respect. Canadians were never under the impression that theirs was a powerful country. It did not hold a position of power militarily, but it had gained influence on the countries that did. This influence was key during the Cold War, when Canada tried to step in and help resolve difficult international disputes by seeking compromises. This gave a second level of meaning to Canada’s status as a middle power — it became a global mediator.

The Nuclear Arms Race

On September 23, 1949, the Soviet Union announced that it had exploded its first atomic bomb two months earlier. As a defence, some Western governments also decided to build large stockpiles of nuclear weapons. These were considered necessary to achieve mutual deterrence — having huge stockpiles of bombs to create a “peaceful,” stable situation in which countries would not attack each other out of fear of massive retaliation. Both sides reasoned that if one side used an atomic bomb, the other would respond by using its own atomic weapons. This policy came to be known as MAD — mutually assured destruction.

Historical Perspective: Write a brief comment on the policy of mutual deterrence or mutually assured destruction. How would you have advised Canadian politicians to respond to such a policy?
A Magazine Window into the Past

The magazine spread below was the beginning of an article about the weapons capability of the Soviet Union: "Has Russia the Atomic Bomb"?

In the article, a military analyst explains why that is unlikely. That may be interesting, but an historian is not just interested in the writer's argument. He or she also tries to figure out what the article tells us about the writer, the editor who assigned the piece, the artist hired to illustrate the piece, and the mood of the reading public.

In other words, we should treat a magazine article as we would any other artifact from the past. We ask what it is, who made it, for what audience, when, how, and why. We ask what it can tell us about the people who created it, used it, and saved it. We try to figure out how it fits in to the context of the period of history and the society in which it was created.

**Explorations**

1. Carefully examine the page spread, above. What do you see? What is its title? Who wrote it? What are his credentials? When was the article written? What magazine published it? Where was the magazine based? Who would have been the readers?

2. What words and phrases does the author use to qualify his answer to the title question? If he doesn't have proof, why is he writing this article?

3. The illustration depicts an imaginary scene. Describe precisely everything you see. What message is the artist trying to convey? How does the art evoke fear?

4. The editor of the magazine chose to commission this article and illustration. What can you infer about the editor? About the reading public?

5. What does your analysis of this magazine spread tell you about the role the media played in drumming up Cold War fears in the West?”

**SOVIET ATOM BOMB?**

might have been tested somewhere in Siberia — perhaps in the crater of the great 1908 meteorite. Foreign Minister Molotoff says Russia knows the secret of the atom bomb.

**Figure 13—6** An article in the March 1948 issue of the popular American magazine Mechanix Illustrated posed a question that many people were asking. How does the author answer the question? What other questions could this article answer for us?
International Defence Organizations

In February 1948, with the support of the Soviet Union, the communist party in Czechoslovakia seized power. Western European countries began to fear that the same thing could happen in Italy, France, or other close neighbours. These countries joined together to support each other in an agreement called the Brussels Treaty. Because their military forces were still not strong, they looked to the United States for help.

The Warsaw Pact

In 1954, NATO members voted to allow West Germany to join the alliance and rearm. In response, the Soviets created an alliance of countries to mirror NATO. In 1955, the Soviet Union and seven Eastern European countries met in Warsaw, Poland, to sign the Warsaw Pact.

As in NATO, these countries agreed to come to the aid of any other member that was attacked. Central command was in Moscow, and the Soviet Union effectively absorbed the military forces of all member states. Furthermore, members could not withdraw. When Hungary tried to break away in 1956, the Soviets crushed the revolution there.

Historical Perspective: Figure 13–7 shows how NATO and the Warsaw Pact divided the world into East and West, communism and capitalism. What might the nonaligned countries have thought of dividing up the world this way? Can organizations like these help maintain peace? List three points to support your response.
The Avro Arrow

After the Gouzenko affair, Canadian politicians became increasingly concerned about the possibility of a surprise attack from the Soviet Union. This fear inspired them to spend more on the military and defence than on any other budget item for the next 15 years.

In 1953, for example, the government agreed to pay for the development of a new aircraft for the Royal Canadian Air Force. The requirements were tough — only the best technology in the world would do. A Canadian aircraft company, A.V. Roe Canada, would use its experience to design and build a new, all-weather, supersonic jet interceptor — the Arrow, or CF-105. These fighter planes would be stationed all across Canada's North to be called into action if enemy aircraft were sighted.

On October 4, 1957, a huge crowd gathered at Malton, Ontario, for the presentation of the Arrow to the public and press. As it happened, the Arrow’s debut was overshadowed by the launch of the Soviet Union’s Sputnik 1, the first artificial satellite to be put into orbit around Earth. This caused a sensation because Western scientists believed that the same technology could lead to crewless ballistic missiles — which the Arrow was not designed to stop.

Grounded

In time, the Arrow’s costs began increasing, and on February 20, 1959, Diefenbaker cancelled the program. More than 15,000 A.V. Roe employees were laid off, and the company was ruined. Diefenbaker argued that all Canada needed were American Bomarx anti-aircraft missiles. But this program, too, was cancelled within two years.

To keep the air force flying, Diefenbaker eventually had to settle for used Voodoo fighter jets bought from the United States. By that time, many of A.V. Roe’s highly skilled employees had left the country. The completed Arrows had all been cut into scrap, and all technical drawings, models, photographs, and nearly every operating manual had been destroyed.

Recall... Reflect... Respond

1. Identify five examples of Canada's participation in the Cold War.
2. Choose one example from Question 1 and reflect on how it changed Canada's role in the world community. Explain how it was — or was not — good for Canada.
3. Imagine that you are a 1950s Canadian journalist reporting on your chosen example of Canada's role in the Cold War.

   a) Create an interview question to elicit a person's opinion about how this participation reflected on Canada.
   b) Record your interviewee's possible response.
   c) Ask a classmate the question and compare his or her response with that of your interviewee.
What Canada Lost with the Arrow

The cancellation of the Arrow program was most shattering to the more than 15,000 Avro employees who eventually lost their jobs. Here, three well-known Canadians reflect on what else was lost when the Arrow was abandoned.

ANDRÉ BELTEMPO was editor-in-chief of The Iron Warrior, the newspaper of the University of Waterloo Engineering Society, in 2004.

Although the Arrow was an incredible airframe, we should lament not so much about the loss of the particular aircraft, and more so about the loss of the best and brightest in Canada’s aerospace sector, at a time when Canada had the fleeting potential to actually take the lead in a world-class field.

In 1958, freelance journalist and author JUNE CALLWOOD witnessed and wrote about a test flight for the Iroquois engine—the engine destined for the Arrow.

It’s not that we weren’t proud of Canada’s audacity in building the world’s best combat airplane, superior to anything developed in the United States or the USSR. My point is that the Arrow didn’t seem a fluke. We thought it natural that Canadians would be among the best, if not the best, at anything we really tried to do.

On a CBC broadcast in 1997, Canadian author and historian MICHAEL BLISS argued that the costs of producing the Avro Arrow had spiralled out of control, so the government really had no choice but to cancel the program. He believes that the “mythologizing about the Arrow” is not based on historical fact.

What I think the [CBC] series [The Arrow, in 1997] actually represents is more Americanization in the country. We’re now thinking that we should play fast and loose with history the same way the Americans do. And that we should go and be tub-thumping chest beaters the way American jingoists are. Well, the country I was brought up in always turned up its nose at that kind of raw, rampant nationalism.

1. Which of the three speakers would agree with each of the following statements? Choose one phrase or sentence from each quotation to support your choice.
   a) Canada gained a legend that it can be the best in the world.
   b) Canada lost some of its modesty in favour of a louder patriotism.
   c) Canada lost the engineering design ability that could have made it an international leader.

2. Select one of the speakers. In small groups, prepare to role-play your speaker by recording some arguments you think he or she might use to respond to this statement: “All in all, Canada gained from its experience with the Avro Arrow.” Then conduct your roleplay.
What did Canada accomplish in the Korean War?

For nearly a century before World War II, Korea had been ruled by the Japanese. When Japan's empire evaporated after the war, the Soviet Union occupied the northern half of Korea and installed a communist government. The United States occupied the country south of the 38th parallel. While the Soviets wanted the country to be unified under a single communist government, the Americans wanted free elections. By 1950, Kim Il Sung, the North Korean leader, had laid claim to the entire country and wanted to invade South Korea. The Soviets, however, did not want to clash directly with the United States. Instead, they decided to arm the North Korean army and have it fight for them in a proxy war — a war fought by one country but for and in the interests of another.

Canada Joins the UN Mission

The North Koreans attacked on June 25, 1950. The South Koreans could not stand up to them and by September had been driven back to the tip of the Korean Peninsula. Even though the Soviets were not directly involved, American President Harry Truman saw the aggression as Soviet expansion. He called on the new UN Security Council to intervene, and a UN force was approved to "render every assistance" to South Korea. Though other UN members participated, 90 per cent of the troops were American. Many non-Europeans saw this as another imperialist war.

Canada's Secretary of State for External Affairs Lester Pearson supported aid to South Korea because he believed one of the UN's roles was to help weaker states defend themselves. The Canadian Army Special Force was formed to contribute to the UN mission. Canada eventually committed 27,000 military personnel — the third-largest contribution of the 22 nations that took part.

The Battle for Seoul

American General Douglas MacArthur led the UN operation, and within two months, it had recaptured Seoul, the South Korean capital. But to Pearson's dismay, MacArthur kept advancing north, almost to the border of the People's Republic of China.

The Chinese government had clearly stated that it would not tolerate Americans at its border, and soon the UN forces were fighting hundreds of thousands of well-armed Chinese troops. Within two months, the UN forces were driven out of North Korea, and Seoul was again in communist hands. UN forces in turn took Seoul.

Examine a current map of the Korean Peninsula in an atlas or online. What has changed? What has remained the same?

Up for Discussion

How would China's involvement in a war against Western powers help the Soviet Union?
Ed Oram — On Night Watch Far from Home

Ed Oram of Muskoka, Ontario, shipped out to Korea with the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry in February 1951. He served for 18 months and fought in the Battle of Kapyong. There, after other forces had retreated from the Chinese, the Canadians held their position despite being seriously outnumbered. Ed's regiment is the only Canadian unit to have received a U.S. Presidential Unit Citation for outstanding bravery.

Here is how Ed described what it felt like to serve at Kapyong.

I stare intently into the darkness trying to see down the side of the hill; something seems to move, but I know that the mind plays tricks... My heart starts to race, my chest is pounding... I'm scared...

This continues for four hours. My buddy takes over at four a.m. I try to sleep but being so tense for so long, sleep doesn't come. During one of my guard duties they did come, by the thousands; we were surrounded, they overran our hill, we brought down artillery fire onto our own positions. We fought them off, sometimes in hand-to-hand combat. Many of my buddies were killed. I will remember them; I try to forget, but I can't.

1. List words or phrases that give you an impression of Ed's experiences on night watch.
2. Conduct further research to find out why Kapyong was a key Korean War battle.
3. Compare Ed's experience as a Canadian soldier in Korea with that of a Canadian soldier during World War II. In what ways were they the same? Different?
4. How do Ed's comments help you understand the ways in which war affects the lives of soldiers?

The War Finally Ends
It took two more years before an armistice was reached on July 27, 1953. The Korean borders remained roughly where they had been before the war. But the communists had been kept out of South Korea. For this, 516 Canadians had died and 1000 had been wounded.

Recall... Reflect... Respond
1. What did Canada accomplish by getting involved in the Korean War? In your opinion, was the accomplishment worth the time, money, and lives lost? Explain your response.
2. Many U.S. and Canadian army recruits knew little about Korea or Asia when they shipped out to serve in the war. What might be the drawbacks of fighting in a part of the world you know little about?
Many believed that the “peace” achieved through mutual deterrence was not really peace at all. Canadian physicist and peace activist Dr. Ursula Franklin, for example, outlined the peace movement’s position: “Peace is not the absence of war. Peace is the absence of fear. Peace is the presence of justice.” Beliefs like these spurred on many Canadians — politicians and ordinary people alike — to pursue the cause of peace through nuclear disarmament.

**Historical Significance:** The nuclear arms race loomed over Canadian society during the Cold War. Read Voices on this page and examine Picturing Life with the Bomb on the next pages. Identify and discuss some of the effects of the arms race on the lives of ordinary people.

**The Pugwash Movement**

Bertrand Russell was a British mathematician, philosopher, and Nobel Prize winner who was also a social critic. In 1955, appalled by the buildup of nuclear arms, he published a manifesto with the help of other well-known and well-respected scientists and writers, including Albert Einstein. Their pamphlet, titled “Notice to the World,” sparked a huge campaign for nuclear disarmament.

By 1957, Russell had organized a conference of prominent scientists and public figures interested in reducing the risk of armed conflict. Canadian-born philanthropist Cyrus Eaton hosted the Conference on Science and World Affairs in Pugwash, Nova Scotia. It was the first of many conferences, and the Pugwash Organization earned the Nobel Peace Prize in 1995.

**Ethical Dimension:** Governments have had the capacity to destroy the human race for many decades. What safety checks do you think should be in place to stop governments from committing mass destruction?

---

**Figure 13-11** The cover of a manifesto issued in 1955 by Bertrand Russell and Albert Einstein. Einstein’s contributions to mathematics and science had laid the foundations for the atom bomb. Why would Einstein’s support be so valuable to the disarmament movement?
The Peace Movement in Canada

As the nuclear arms race gained momentum, many Canadians became fearful. And when Prime Minister Diefenbaker agreed to accept Bomarc missiles, discontent grew. Many Canadians did not want their country to acquire nuclear weapons.

In her May 1960 column in the Toronto Star, for example, Lotta Dempsey issued a direct call for women to band together: "I have never met a woman anywhere who did not hate fighting and killing." Many responded by forming an anti-nuclear group called the Voice of Women. As the movement grew, it attracted influential women such as Maryon Pearson, wife of future prime minister and 1957 Nobel Peace Prize winner Lester Pearson.

**Historical Perspective:** In your experience, do all women hate fighting and killing? What other opinions might they have?

---

**PICTURING LIFE WITH THE BOMB**

**Figure 13-13** Canadian artist John Collins chose Halloween as the setting for this cartoon in 1945. Why do you think he did this? How does his cartoon represent the feelings generated by the atomic bomb?

**Figure 13-14** In 1955, a teacher instructs her students in the approved "duck and cover" techniques in case of nuclear attack. Children all over North America were instructed in these methods. How well would "duck and cover" have protected a person in a nuclear attack?

**Figure 13-15** Cities like Toronto developed emergency evacuation plans, and Canada's governments put in place thousands of gigantic air raid sirens to warn Canadians in the event of an attack. How practical was it to expect urban dwellers to evacuate Canada's cities if they were attacked?
Canadian Scientists For Peace

By working through organizations such as Pugwash, many prominent Canadian scientists tried to make people understand that nuclear war would destroy the planet. Canadian physicist Ursula Franklin, for example, worked with the Voice of Women. Their work contributed to the international Limited Nuclear Test Ban Treaty of 1963, which banned above-ground testing of nuclear weapons. In 1992, Franklin was made a Companion of the Order of Canada and still works to educate people in the cause of peace.

Continuity and Change: What global issues today have sparked the same sort of activism as the nuclear arms race? How are these movements similar to or different from peace movements in the 1950s? Do they have more in common, or are the differences greater?

Figure 13–16 Ursula Franklin at Massey College, University of Toronto. Franklin is a distinguished scientist, professor, and feminist who was a key figure in the peace movement in Canada.

Figure 13–17 Torontonians catch up on the latest news on the arms race. Two months earlier, the Russians had successfully launched Sputnik — the first artificial satellite to orbit Earth. The news headlines proclaim the failure of the Americans to do the same. “Ike’s Sputnik Is Dudnik” read one. “Ike” was President Dwight D. Eisenhower. Were the media just reporting events — or adding to the general fear?

Figure 13–18 Fear of nuclear war inspired survivalist Bruce Beach of Hastings Mills, Ontario, to spend 20 years building an underground bomb shelter. He buried 42 school buses under 4 metres of earth, then cemented them together to create 900 square metres of connected corridors and rooms. Was this a reasonable response to the nuclear threat? If not, what would have been a reasonable response?

Editorial