"PHYSICALLY WE ARE A MIGHTY NATION, NATIONALLY WE ARE CHILDREN" – CONSCRIPTION AND IDENTITY IN CANADA, 1940-1945

By

Mercedes Miranda DuBois

B.A., University of Northern British Columbia, 2013

THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF ARTS
IN
HISTORY

UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN BRITISH COLUMBIA

August 2016

Abstract:

Throughout the Second World War, over 150,000 men were compelled to arms under Canada's National Resources Mobilization Act, but these men could not be sent overseas unless they volunteered for front-line service. Their status as conscripts led many contemporaries to construct them as disloyal and unpatriotic foreigners because they were not willing to subscribe to ideas surrounding patriotism and voluntarism. These constructions speak to the profound disquiet that the conscription issue triggered for the nation.

This thesis explores contemporary ideas about conscripts, as well as the perspectives of compulsory recruits themselves, to argue that Canadians were unsettled by waning British imperialism, emerging ideas interconnected with the rise of the welfare state, and the country's lack of its own sense of self. These conclusions provide a more nuanced understanding of conscription and identity outside of the high-level political approach that dominates the historiography.

Acknowledgements:

This thesis was possible owing to the support and generosity of a number of people. First, I am pleased to recognize the guidance and advice provided by my supervisor, Professor Jonathan Swainger, whose tireless efforts and keen eye to detail made this project what it is today. He spent countless hours reading drafts and offering suggestions for improvement despite many other demands on his time. I would also like to extend my gratitude to UNBC's History Department, and especially Dr. Ted Binnema and Dr. Dana Wessell-Lightfoot, both of whom encouraged me to pursue graduate studies and kept constant faith in my abilities and research.

I would further like to thank Kelsey Wiebe at Heritage Park Museum; Ramona Rose at the Northern British Columbia Archives; John Frederick at the University of Victoria Special Collections; Paul Marsden, Michel Brideau, Josée Bélisle, Gilles Bertrand, Emily Crowe, Stephanie Speroni, and Suzanne Lemaire at Library and Archives Canada; Jeremy Heil and Heather Home at Queen's University Archives; and Mary Bertulli at UNBC's Geoffrey R. Weller Library. I would also like to acknowledge my fellow UNBC graduate students, Larissa Clotildes and Alauna Brown, for their comments on earlier drafts. Thank you also to Darryl Colley for providing copious amounts of free coffee during the course of my research and writing.

This project would not have been possible without the support of my parents, Maxine and Warren DuBois, and my partner, Dagan Ducharme. I am thankful above all for their unwavering encouragement, understanding, and patience.

This thesis is much better for the efforts of all those named above, but all remaining errors or omissions are my own.

Table of Contents:

Abstract…….....ii

Acknowledgements…….…..iii

Table of Contents…….....iv

List of Figures.....…….....v

Introduction:
"The Story of the 'Zombies' Who Stayed at Home"…….....1

Chapter One: "Is that what democracy stands for?"
The Image of the 'Zombie' in English Canada…….....30

Chapter Two: "We have not developed a true and strong sense of nationhood"
Military Constructions of the Compulsory Recruit…….….58

Chapter Three: "A lot of bad feeling and unnecessary trouble"
Canada's Conscripts in the Second World War…….....……...95

Conclusion:
Conscription and Identity in Second World War Canada……..…....128

Bibliography……...……131

List of Figures:

Figure 1: "Down with Conscription," 25 November 1944.....2

Figure 2: "Zombies Strike Back," 25 November 1944.....4

Introduction:
"The story of the 'Zombies' who stayed at home"

The climax of Canada's Second World War conscription crisis came in November 1944, when Prime Minister William Lyon Mackenzie King ordered 16,000 home defence conscripts overseas.[1] From the outset of the war, the Prime Minister demonstrated a keen commitment to handle the conscription issue more delicately than had been the case during the Great War, promising that his administration would not conscript men for service abroad.[2] However, owing to rapid German advances in Europe, the government soon escalated the country's wartime commitments by enacting the National Resources Mobilization Act (NRMA), which established compulsory military service. Those compelled under its powers served in defensive roles in Canada, enabling substantive numbers of voluntary recruits to mobilize for the front lines. King repeated his assurances that he would not compel men overseas, but by 1944, the situation had again changed. The Canadian Army reported shortages of trained infantrymen, and despite the Department of National Defence's best efforts to bolster voluntary enlistments, King announced that several thousand NRMA recruits would soon serve on the front lines, pointing to the April 1942 plebiscite that released his government from earlier pledges. To the surprise of many, the first large demonstrations against conscription came not in Quebec, but in British Columbia, and not from French Canadians, but from English-speaking home defence troops stationed at Vernon.[3] Reports of the large scale of that demonstration sparked half-a-dozen further anti-

[1] Peter A. Russell, "BC's 1944 'Zombie' Protests against Overseas Conscription," *BC Studies* no. 122 (Summer 1999): 49.

[2] Brereton Greenhous and W.A.B. Douglas, *Out of the Shadows: Canada in the Second World War* (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1996): 252.

[3] Russell, "BC's 1944 'Zombie' Protests": 49.

conscription protests at Chilliwack, Courtenay, Port Alberni, Nanaimo, Prince George, and Terrace.[4]

Figure 1:
"Down with Conscription"

Troops at Terrace make their feelings against conscription known during the 25 November 1944 parade. LAC, RG 24, Vol. 2654, HQS-35-45, File 5, Image C-140121.

Across the province, the most common response among conscripts was to assemble within the confines of their respective military camp and to march through the nearest town to protest the recent order-in-council. In some locations, demonstrations deteriorated into drunken brawls pitting the recruits against military and civilian police, while elsewhere, the destruction of property was all too common.[5] At Terrace, events escalated quickly to become

[4] *Ibid*.

[5] Library and Archives Canada (hereafter LAC), Record Group (hereafter RG) 24, Volume 2655, HQS-35-45, File 7, "Court of Inquiry – Unauthorized assembly of troops in the Vernon area," 27 November 1944: 2; Volume 2655, HQS-35-45, File 6, "Proceedings of a Court of Inquiry assembled at A6 C.E.T.C., Chilliwack, BC," Appendix B, 5 December 1944; Volume 2655, HQS-35-45, File 7, "Court of Inquiry – Disturbances Prince George BC," 14 December 1944: 2; and Volume 2655, HQS-35-45, File 6, Major General G.R. Pearkes to Secretary DND, "NRMA Demonstrations," 5 December 1944: 3. In Vernon, one intoxicated officer insulted the troops as they marched past, and was subsequently assaulted, while in Chilliwack, inebriated demonstrators engaged in fisticuffs with police. In Prince George, troops burned a Canadian Red Ensign during their demonstration, while recruits in Courtenay smashed a window of the local Canadian Legion hut because of the organization's pro-conscription stance.

an outright mutiny, characterized by one military historian as "the largest-scale mutiny over the longest period of time ever to occur in the Canadian Army."[6] There, members of Les Fusiliers du Saint-Laurent, one of four units stationed at the Terrace Military Camp, first engaged in disobedient behaviour in refusing to turn out on parade.[7] Later that evening, the troops ransacked the unit's armory, pilfering some 50,000 rounds of rifle ammunition, 13,000 rounds of submachine gun ammunition, and four boxes of grenades.[8] By the following day, news of Les Fusiliers' refusal to parade spread rapidly throughout the camp, along with the armaments they procured, which were soon distributed among men of the other units. Over the course of the next week, discipline had broken down completely and control of the camp was firmly in the hands of the NRMA recruits. Events intensified further when troops marched through the town of Terrace armed with rifles, all the while carrying banners inscribed with "Down with Conscription" and "Zombies Strike Back" (Figures 1 and 2). For much of the war, home defence troops were known pejoratively as 'Zombies' because they supposedly lacked the intelligence and will to serve overseas, and while the term was intended to be an insult, the demonstrators took it up as something of a badge.[9] Insurgent troops also halted military vehicles and attempted to commandeer a speeding train as rumours abounded that troops had mounted anti-tank guns in their lines.[10] It seemed as though little could be done to quell what could "only be considered as mutiny."[11] Eventually,

[6] Reginald H. Roy, "From the Darker Side of Canadian Military History: Mutiny in the Mountains – the Terrace Incident," *Canadian Defence Quarterly* 6, no. 2 (Autumn 1976): 53.

[7] Russell, "BC's 1944 'Zombie' Protests": 49.

[8] LAC, RG 24, Volume 2654, HQS-35-45, File 5, "Proceedings of a Court of Inquiry Assembled at Terrace, BC," 3 December 1944: 2, 11, and 14.

[9] Russell, "BC's 1944 'Zombie' Protests": 52 note 10. In addition to the "Zombies Strike Back," inscription, other slogans used by demonstrators included "Hurrah for Zombies" and "We'll Be Zombies Forever."

[10] Directorate of History, File 746.009 (D8), "Prince Albert Volunteers, Reports on Disturbances," 20 December 1944, quoted in Roy, "From the Darker Side": 51.

[11] LAC, Manuscript Group (hereafter MG) 26, J-13, W.L.M. King, "The Diaries of Prime Minister William Lyon Mackenzie King," 28 November 1944: 8.

however, the camp's senior officer, noticeably absent to this point, returned to Terrace from Vancouver and immediately made plans to restore discipline. He halted the men's pay until further notice, ensured that all troops were aware of Section 7 of the Army Act informing them of the consequences for mutiny, and ordered all parades to resume within the men's huts, rather than in the more public spaces of the drill hall or parade grounds.[12] In the demonstration's aftermath, few recruits were charged with participating in mutiny or were punished for their actions. Instead, many received orders to embark for overseas service.

Figure 2:
"Zombies Strike Back"

Demonstrators at Terrace can be seen taking back the 'Zombie' label. As this photo demonstrates, the recruits carried their weapons during their parade through the streets of Terrace.
LAC, RG 24, Vol. 2654, HQS-35-45, File 5, Image C-140122.

[12] "Proceedings of a Court of Inquiry Assembled at Terrace," Exhibit N, 28 November 1944.

British Columbia's anti-conscription demonstrations of 1944, and especially the mutiny at Terrace, were the intellectual genesis for this thesis. The latter incident is relatively well-documented, if anecdotally, in popular histories such as Nadine Asante's *The History of Terrace*, Floyd Frank's *My Valley's Yesteryears*, and the Terrace Regional Historical Society's *20th Century Anecdotes from the Terrace Area*.[13] In addition, two scholarly articles shed light on events at Terrace. Reginald H. Roy narrated the mutiny in "From the Darker Side of Canadian Military History: Mutiny in the Mountains – the Terrace Incident," set within a timeframe beginning in 1942 with the arrival of troops in Terrace. He also detailed the campaign to 'convert' home-defence oriented conscripts into volunteers willing to serve on the front lines, as well as the officer corps' perceptions of the quality and morale of conscripted troops.[14] Although his treatment is interpretively timid, Roy notes that some officers were inclined to dismiss their troops as being "of mediocre quality," because they believed their men to be "of Central European descent."[15] In narrating the mutiny, Roy concludes that its "origins were political, not military, in nature."[16] On the other hand, historian, Peter A. Russell, examined how military officers responded to the demonstrations at Vernon and Terrace respectively in "BC's 1944 'Zombie' Protests against Overseas Conscription." He contends that, in both instances, senior officers "commonly resorted to ethnic characterizations linked to the issue of loyalty," to explain the conscripts' resistance to

[13] Nadine Asante, *The History of Terrace* (Terrace, BC: Totem Press, 1972): 164-70; Floyd Frank, *My Valley's Yesteryears* (Victoria: Orca Book Publishers Ltd., 1991): 121-29; and Terrace Regional Historical Society, *20th Century Anecdotes from the Terrace Area* (Terrace: Totem Press Ltd., 2002): 31-43. Also see: Karen Keuchle, "The Terrace Mutiny" (Unpublished Manuscript, District of Terrace, 1984); Mark Bourrie, *The Fog of War: Censorship of Canada's Media in World War Two* (Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 2011): 234-55, and Daniel German, "Press Censorship and the Terrace Mutiny: A Case Study in Second World War Information Management," *Journal of Canadian Studies* 31, no. 4 (Winter 1996): 124-142.

[14] Roy, "From the Darker Side": 43-45.

[15] *Ibid*: 45.

[16] *Ibid*: 53.

service overseas.[17] In Vernon, officers evidently believed their men to be British, and therefore loyal, and downplayed the severity of the demonstrations there. In Terrace, however, Russell argues that:

> high command uncritically passed on to its superiors the most exaggerated rumours of an armed mutiny. The explanation for the difference between the senior officers' actions probably lay in their perceptions of the troops' ethnic origins and these troops' earlier behaviour…The home defence soldiers at Terrace were assumed to be French Canadians or Central Europeans. Resistance there confirmed the officers' prejudices concerning who was and who was not loyal.[18]

These interpretations rooted in ethnicity stand out in the scholarly treatment as a convenient, if too simple an explanation, for the widespread disobedience in November 1944.

A variety of primary sources related to the demonstrations – such as war diaries, courts of inquiry, military reports, news stories, and other correspondence – made it obvious that ethnic characterizations were not the only means by which civilian Canadians and military commanders attempted to understand the conscripts. While the nation was, indeed, under the impression that most NRMA personnel were French Canadians or Central Europeans, the conscripts were also constructed as being 'non-British' in attitude and outlook, uneducated about democracy, foreign to other Anglo-Canadian ideas and values, and otherwise lacking in the outlook of 'right-thinking' Canadians. That these images existed and were not strictly speaking consistent or entirely compelling hinted at the value of an amended inquiry centred on Canadian ideas about conscription, the substance of the 'Zombie' conscript's imagined characteristics, and the NRMA recruits' sense of themselves. In effect, the provincial anti-conscription demonstrations provided a platform centred on a different and, in its realization, a deeper inquiry.

---

[17] Russell, "BC's 1944 'Zombie' Protests": 71.
[18] *Ibid*: 49.

The present study thus explores how the nation discussed and represented the 'Zombie' conscripts in the general public, in military circles, and among the recruits themselves. To what degree did the conscript factor into the wartime *mentalité* of Canadians, and how sensitive was that worldview to real and imagined differences between compulsory and voluntary recruits? Why did the overseas participation of NRMA recruits matter so deeply to civilians and the military? Why did Canadians construct NRMA personnel in such anxious and condemnatory terms? And perhaps most importantly, what do these depictions of conscripts reveal about Canada's national identity and sense of self? Despite the attention paid to conscription within the framework of the nation's wartime experiences in the first half of the twentieth century, historians have not yet pursued these questions. Further, in exploring the social construction of conscription during the Second World War, the present study also illuminates the perspectives and experiences of those who were compelled to serve. Quite simply, why did conscripts refuse to serve overseas? Did they see themselves as standing apart from their compatriots in opinion and outlook? Were ethnic minorities, in fact, overrepresented in the ranks of the NRMA? How did they conceive of their responsibilities to the state, and what was their definition of civic duty? Finally, what does the conscript perspective reveal about Canada in the 1940s? The historical record relating to conscription is rife with intriguing possibilities for (re)interpretation.

It became apparent, in attempting to ground these new directions in the historiography, that historians of conscription in Canada have employed a top-down approach to the topic. In part, the clamor over conscription in the Great War established a legacy against which scholars have viewed compulsory service in the Second World War. Broadly, the conscription crisis of 1917 has been told through the lens of politics and especially the split within Wilfrid Laurier's Liberal Party and the orchestration of Sir Robert

Borden's pro-conscription Unionist government.[19] As a result, when historians turned to the Second World War, they seemed to assume that the subject was one of high-level politics. Rather than view the 1939-45 conflict in its own light, the historiography merely defaulted to the Great War approach. Of course, the problem therein is that two decades had passed, and in the intervening years, the nation had changed as Canadians explored novel ideas about the public's relationship to the government and the nation's identity and sense of self within the broader Empire.

While historians acknowledge that Canadian opinion on conscription during the Second World War was neither ubiquitous nor fixed, the dominant approach has been to employ a perspective centred on the highest level of government, or alternatively, to compare and contrast conscription policy in the two world wars. Further, historians' reliance on Prime Minister King's public and private records along with those of his Cabinet colleagues has underpinned a particular construction of wartime events when examining the politics of conscription.[20] Yet, outside of Parliament, everyday Canadians engaged in visceral discussions about compulsory service and struggled to make sense of the NRMA men. For many, the conscripts remained an enigma. Having withstood pressure to enlist as front-line volunteers willing to make the ultimate sacrifice, their status whispered of uncertain loyalties. Ultimately, they were a source of profound unease. Under the NRMA, over 157,000 men were compelled to undergo training or serve in home defensive roles, a figure that represents

[19] For example, see: John W. Dafoe, *Laurier: A Study in Canadian Politics* (Toronto: Thomas Allen, 1922); A.M. Willms, "Conscription 1917: A Brief for the Defence," *University of Toronto Press Journals* 37, no. 4 (December 1956): 338-51; W.R. Graham, *Arthur Meighen: The Door of Opportunity* (Toronto: Clarke, Irwin, and Co., 1960); Desmond Morton, "French Canada and War, 1868-1917: the Military Background the Conscription Crisis of 1917," in *War and Society in North America*, edited by J.L. Granatstein and R.D. Cuff (Toronto: T. Nelson,1971): 84-103; Elizabeth Armstrong, *The Crisis of Quebec, 1914-1918* (Montreal-Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1974); and J.L. Granatstein and J.M. Hitsman, *Broken Promises: A History of Conscription in Canada* (Toronto: University of Oxford Press, 1977).

[20] Daniel Byers, *Zombie Army: The Canadian Army and Conscription in the Second World War* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2016): 3.

15 per cent of Canada's armed forces during the Second World War.[21] Nearly 60,000 NRMA recruits went on to volunteer for overseas service, representing 10 per cent of all volunteers during the conflict. Another 60,000 served on defence posts across the country, releasing an equal number of volunteers to proceed overseas.[22] Given these figures, it is not surprising that the conscripted men received such close attention from their Canadian compatriots, their colleagues in uniform, and their officers. However, few studies have considered the development of ideas and attitudes towards conscription during the war, or the experiences of the NRMA recruits themselves.

In the aftermath of the Second World War, historians immediately set out to assess Canada's role in the conflict. The country mobilized one out of every 11 citizens, and the task of describing the enormous sacrifices and accomplishments of the Canadian people fell to the service of the Army's official historians.[23] The proximity of writers to events, and the fact that many of these historians served in the war in some capacity, meant that these early portraits function better as primary sources rather than scholarly treatments. Indeed, owing to authorial inclinations and postwar retrenchments, these contemporary works tended to emphasize overseas efforts and the theatres of war rather than the home-front peculiarities.[24] For example, C.P. Stacey's *The Canadians in Britain*, Joseph Schull's *The Far Distant Ships: An Official Account of Canadian Naval Operations in the Second World War*, and G.W. Nicholson's *The Official History of the Canadian Army in the Second World War*, all detailed the heroic efforts of Canadians on the battlefield while offering only cursory glances to

[21] C.P. Stacey, *Arms, Men and Governments: The War Policies of Canada, 1939-1945* (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1970): 599-601.

[22] Byers, *Zombie Army*: 3.

[23] Tim Cook, *Clio's Warriors: Canadian Historians and the Writing of the World Wars* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2006): 130.

[24] *Ibid*.

events at home.[25] Theirs was a perspective of the war as something that had occurred in distant lands.

The next generation of Canadian scholars sought to redress this imbalance and turned their gaze to the Canadian home front. Beginning with Bruce Hutchison's biography of Prime Minister King, domestic politics of the Second World War assumed a rising profile. As a well-known journalist and parliamentary reporter, Hutchison witnessed many key events in Ottawa firsthand and drew upon conversations with important participants in his account of King as Canada's war leader.[26] In addition to his own recollections, Hutchison relied on the Prime Minister's personal diaries to sketch a vivid portrait of his career through the Depression and Second World War. His work, *Mackenzie King: The Incredible Canadian*, was perhaps the first book to include a discussion, however brief, of conscription, and in so doing, he highlighted King's perspective on issues of manpower and military reinforcements. Of particular interest is Hutchison's emphasis on King's belief that he was "betrayed by the military mind," when his military advisors threatened to resign over the conscription issue, thus forcing him to compel troops overseas in November 1944.[27] Hutchison's sympathetic portrayal of the man who led the nation through a successful prosecution of the war set the stage for historians to consider the conscription issue, and his treatment of the subject

---

[25] C.P. Stacey, *The Canadians in Britain , 1939-1944* (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1945); Joseph Schull, *The Far Distant Ships: An Official Account of Canadian Naval Operations in the Second World War* (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1950); and G.W. Nicholson, *The Official History of the Canadian Army in the Second World War* (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1956). Stacey's work includes: *Canada's Battle in Normandy: The Canadian Army's Share in the Operations* (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1946); *The Canadian Army, 1939-1945: An Official Historical Summary* (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1948); *From Pachino to Ortona: The Canadian Campaign in Sicily and Italy, 1943* (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1946); and *Official History of the Canadian Army in the Second World War* (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1955). Although no one was as prolific a writer as was Stacey, other examples include G.N. Tucker's *The Naval Service of Canada: Its Official History* (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1952) and the Historical Section's series on *The R.C.A.F. Overseas* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1944).

[26] Daniel Byers, "Mobilizing Canada: The National Resources Mobilization Act, the Department of National Defence, and Compulsory Military Service in Canada, 1940-1945" (PhD Dissertation, McGill University, 2000): 3.

[27] Bruce Hutchison, *Mackenzie King: The Incredible Canadian* (Toronto: Longmans, Green and Co., 1953): 345.

sparked a debate among historians seemingly intent on placing blame for the conscription crisis of 1944.[28]

In response to the descriptions of the 'generals' revolt' alleged in Hutchison's work, several authors quickly emphasized the involvement of political and military actors involved in the conscription crisis, rather than the wider effects of conscription on the country. Historian and political economist R. MacGregor Dawson, for example, began interviewing key cabinet ministers and army officers to draft what would become *The Conscription Crisis of 1944*.[29] Dawson quickly dismissed the notion of a military coup, although his account remained critical of senior army commanders for openly supporting compulsory measures, and with that, privileging front-line reinforcements over national unity, an action that apparently offended Dawson's strict and liberal notions of civil-military relations.[30] Coincident with Dawson's interviews, E.L.M. Burns published *Manpower in the Canadian Army* in which he offered a re-examination of "how the Canadian Army used the manpower at its disposal during the second [sic] World War."[31] As a former military officer, Burns possessed firsthand knowledge of the challenges associated with allocating resources, and he thus questioned how the army's management of manpower may have contributed to the 1944 political crisis. Yet despite this inquiry, Burns forthrightly assigned blame: "manpower problems arise when the government does not assume the power to compel each man to serve

[28] A.R.M. Lower was the first to respond to the controversial 'general's revolt' in his book review of Hutchison's biography. See: A.R.M. Lower, "The Incredible Canadian," *Queen's Quarterly* 59 (Winter 1952-53): 562.

[29] Dawson's personal notes and interviews can be found in LAC, MG 26, J-17, Volume 6, "Memoirs Project: Notes and Interviews on Conscription Crisis 1944 by Macgreor [sic] Dawson."

[30] See: R. MacGregor Dawson, *The Conscription Crisis of 1944* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1961): 85-86 and 104-05. Dawson passed away before completing his monograph, resulting in a one-sided account that often lacks nuances. For a discussion of Dawson's views, and his passing, see: Stacey, *Arms, Men and Governments*: 451 and Byers, *Zombie Army*: 4.

[31] E.L.M. Burns, *Manpower in the Canadian Army 1939-1945* (Toronto: Clarke, Irwin & Company, 1956): 7.

where he is most needed."[32] Ralph Allen, a journalist and former war correspondent, also took up the debate on complicity and responsibility. To a far greater degree than other writers of the era, Allen appreciated the implications of conscription for the men compelled to serve under the NRMA and describes in great detail the frictions existing between volunteers and conscripts within the army.[33] He was also more even-handed in his discussion of the crisis and notes that the tensions surrounding conscription were the product of both government and military mismanagement. To that end, the former "was committed to two propositions, each the exact opposite of the other… Canada could not wait for the war to reach its shores, but must send men abroad to intercept it [and] No man should be sent abroad unless he wanted to go," while senior military officers further aggravated the situation by allowing discrimination and harassment in their units even though it contravened official policy.[34] The intrigue of political games and skullduggery combined with competition among scholars helped to explain why the historical treatment centred on politics and complicity.

Conscription became an increasingly prominent topic of inquiry in the three decades following the end of the war and, as a later study identified, the period produced a consolidation of historical writing.[35] Perhaps the most thorough overview of the Canadian Army in the Second World War at home and overseas appeared in Stacey's *Arms, Men and Governments: The War Policies of Canada, 1939-1945*. Having served as an official Canadian historian since the war's end, Stacey turned his attention to the war effort at home. Yet, his impressive overview of compulsory service remained one aligned with the army.

---

[32] *Ibid*: 5.

[33] As a war correspondent, Allen witnessed the discriminatory treatment of conscripts and eventually penned two novels that detailed the pressures on conscripts to volunteer for the front lines. See: Ralph Allen, *Home Made Banners* (Toronto: Longmans, Green and Co., 1946): 38-75 and *The High White Forest* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1964): 170-94.

[34] Ralph Allen, *Ordeal by Fire: Canada, 1910-1945* (Toronto: Doubleday Canada Limited, 1961): 393-94.

[35] Byers, "Mobilizing Canada": 8.

Stacey's chapter on conscription synthesized the problems the military faced in administering compulsory service as well as the war overseas while, at the same time, criticized King and his Cabinet-level mismanagement.[36] Ultimately, his argument on conscription was threefold. The causes of the conscription crisis were almost wholly political; senior army commanders provided proper and constitutional advice to the Cabinet concerning the dire need for reinforcements overseas; and that King imagined a 'revolt of the generals' as a justification of his about-turn on conscription.[37] Like much writing of the era that emphasized the political aspects of conscription, Stacey dedicated little attention to the effects of conscription policy on those to whom it applied or to popular impressions from average Canadians.

J.L. Granatstein, Stacey's colleague in the historical section at Ottawa and fellow former Army officer, began his own research on conscription. Granatstein's interest in the issue eventually spanned his career and his first foray came in the form of *Conscription in the Second World War: A Study in Political Management*. Through a chronological narrative of events, Granatstein compared Prime Minister Borden's mishandling of the conscription issue in 1917 with the 1942 and 1944 crises and, in so doing, emphasized King's role. Specifically, he argued that "the political gifts and compromising skills of Prime Minister Mackenzie King, a politician of extraordinary receptivity to the moods of Quebec, held the fabric of national unity together," despite it being "a task of enormous difficulty."[38] According to Granatstein, that "there can be no doubt that the conscription crises of the Second World War

[36] Stacey, *Arms, Men and Governments*: 428, 431, 447, 459-75, and 481-82.
[37] *Ibid*: 470.
[38] J.L. Granatstein, *Conscription in the Second World War: A Study in Political Management* (Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1969): viii.

were not as damaging" as had been the case during the conscription crisis of the Great War, was largely attributable to King's efforts.[39]

Granatstein expanded these arguments in *Broken Promises: A History of Conscription in Canada*, a book co-authored with another former army historian, J.M. Hitsman. They begin their history with an examination of compulsory military service in New France and concluded with the Cold War debates over conscription. This broad chronological scope produced only a cursory survey of the issues, although conscription during the Second World War remained a primary concern. Thus, the authors offer a more thorough and detailed account of the 1939-45 conflict than they do of any other period in Canadian history. Their study centred on why conscription was such a potent weapon in the hands of politicians, whether conscription was ever a political necessity, and why King's handling of the issue was so successful.[40] While arguing that, "No single issue has divided Canadians so sharply as conscription for overseas military service in time of war," Granatstein and Hitsman nonetheless downplayed the severity of the crisis while presenting King's actions in a favourable light and criticizing the military for building up enormous forces that could only be reinforced through a resort to conscription.[41] Their treatment also moved beyond the Cabinet by discussing the machinery used to mobilize civilian and military manpower and briefly assessing public opinion on the issue. Despite these efforts and consistent with the patterns established in the early 1950s, the book never grapples with the conscripts' lived experiences.

Other historians continued to rely on this top-down interpretive approach common among the postwar generation. Perhaps the most notable of these was Reginald H. Roy, who

[39] *Ibid*: 73.
[40] Granatstein and Hitsman, *Broken Promises*: 2.
[41] *Ibid*: 1.

began his work on the Canadian Army in Canada after having previously published regimental histories and several accounts of the Canadians at battle.[42] A Second World War veteran-come-historian, Roy provided the first accounts of conscription outside of the nation's capital, and in turning his attention to the effects of the conscription crisis in British Columbia, he primarily focused on the career of Major-General George R. Pearkes, a Victoria Cross recipient and the General Officer Commanding-in-Chief of Pacific Command.[43] While Roy ultimately rejects the 'revolt of the generals' introduced by Hutchison in the late 1940s, he was consistent with the earlier generation of militarily-trained writers in that he openly sided with Pearkes and his role in administering the conscripts and advising the Minister of National Defence. In his own words, Roy wanted:

> to show something of the background to the events leading up to the conscription crisis of 1944 west of the Rocky Mountains. One of the central figures in that crisis, and one whose name has frequently been connected with the so-called 'Revolt of the Generals', was Major-General G.R. Pearkes. He is frequently depicted in a number of books and articles as the prime mover in an attempt to undermine government policy with respect to both conversion and conscription… The record shows that this was not true. No man worked harder or more consistently to bring about the results the government desired.[44]

[42] For recorded interviews about Roy's life in the army and his career as an historian, see: Reginald H. Roy, interviewed by William S. Thackray, 6 and 15 August 1980, interviews 1 and 2, University of Victoria Special Collections, Canadian Military Oral History Collection, Victoria, British Columbia. For further information about Roy's life, see: Christopher Petter, "Reg Roy's Legacy for Canadian Military History," *The Ring*, https://ring.uvic.ca/ culture/reg-roys-legacy-canadian-military-history, 22 February 2013; and "Dr. Reginald H. Roy – Obituary," *Times Colonist*, http://www.legacy.com/obituaries/timescolonist/obituary.aspx?pid=162777510, 2 February 2013. For Roy's regimental and battle histories, see: *Sinews of Steel: The History of the British Columbia Dragoons* (Kelowna: British Columbia Dragoons, 1965); and *The Seaforth Highlanders of Canada, 1919-1965* (Ottawa: Seaforth Highlanders of Canada, 1969). Roy returned to these topics later in his career and published such works as: *D-Day! The Canadians and the Normandy Landings, June 1944* (Ottawa: CEF Books, 2001); and *Ready for the Fray: The History of the Canadian Scottish Regiment (Princess Mary's)* (Vancouver: Bunker to Bunker Publishing, 2002).

[43] Pacific Command was a formation of the Canadian Army tasked with defending Canada's Pacific coast. Headquartered in Esquimalt and later Vancouver, it was comprised largely of home defence units who were scattered throughout British Columbia, Alberta, the Yukon Territory, and parts of the Northwest Territories.

[44] Reginald H. Roy, "Major-General G.R. Pearkes and the Conscription Crisis in British Columbia, 1944," *BC Studies* 28 (Winter 1975-76): 72.

He thus openly sided with Pearkes and his role in administering the conscripts and advising the Minister of National Defence. At the same time, Roy moved the interpretive line on the crisis by attacking the notion of a conspiracy of military officers, and shifted his gaze toward military leadership closer to the ground. His article on the Terrace mutiny also represents the first attempt to examine conscription outside of Parliament, providing a new lens through which to view events. Despite this new angle, however, Roy continued to emphasize the high-level political aspect of conscription during the Second World War.[45]

By the late 1960s and into the 1970s, many Canadian historians turned to social history, and the dominant political and martial interpretation of conscription did not garner much attention. The failure of social historians to see the conscripts as everyday working Canadians – who at that time were attracting so much scholarly attention – is an intriguing oversight. In their haste to abandon military and political history in favor of history 'from the bottom up,' these social historians neglected to see the average soldier as a working person manipulated by the larger social, economic, political, and military superstructure. That they would do this in the era of Vietnam and the civil rights movements in Canada and the United States is ironic. Until the late 1990s, Canadian historians demonstrated little interest in revisiting compulsory military service, and the few exceptions tended to reiterate the earlier conclusions and perspectives.[46] While some credit the thoroughness of earlier accounts and the broad shift away from political history as being responsible for this waning interest, the

[45] Roy, "From the Darker Side": 53.

[46] For example, see: Reginald H. Roy, "Morale in the Canadian Army in Canada," *Canadian Defence Quarterly* 16 (Autumn 1986): 40-45; and J.L. Rea, "What Really Happened? A New Look at the Conscription Crisis," *The Beaver* 74, no. 2 (April/May 1994): 10-19. These articles represent a degree of forward movement in the historiography on conscription, but ultimately they remain true to the broader trends identified here. The former article examines morale in the Canadian Army – a commendable topic that sheds further light away from Ottawa – but the author's sympathetic views towards the military cannot be ignored. Despite its title, the latter article only offers a new look insofar as it examines Prime Minister King's Cabinet colleagues and their various stances on conscription, rather than simply pitting King against the Canadian Army and its General Staff. Its focus remains one of high-level politics.

trend had more to do with an interpretive blindness and a deference to the accepted politicized version of events that discouraged social historians from re-examining the topic.[47]

More recently – and perhaps influenced by several decades of social historical research – scholars returned to military and political history with fresh eyes and new questions. Changing trends in historical writing have led to a reinterpretation of war itself, and this new war-and-society historiography is frequently oriented towards investigating the place of the military within society, considering how wars shape societies more broadly, and writing the history of battles from the bottom up.[48] These efforts shed light on the experiences of individuals and groups of soldiers as opposed to more traditional aspects of politico-military history such as strategic leadership and decision-making.[49] Although historians of conscription have been comparatively slow to reinterpret compulsory service, this too is beginning to change.

Indeed, the more recent scholarship on compulsory service represents a new interpretive turn. Daniel Thomas Byers' work on the National Resources Mobilization Act is the first sustained attempt to "go below the political level to explore the actual role of the Canadian army in administering compulsory military training in the Second World War."[50] Byers is especially interested in General H.D.G. Crerar's role in administering the NRMA, and argues in *Zombie Army: The Canadian Army and Conscription in the Second World War*

[47] Byers, "Mobilizing Canada": 11; and Carl Berger, *The Writing of Canadian History: Aspects of English-Canadian Historical Writing, 1900-1970* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1976): 259-320.

[48] For example, see: Desmond Morton, *When Your Number's Up* (Toronto: Random House, 1993); Allan D. English, *Cream of the Crop: Canadian Aircrew 1939-1945* (Montreal-Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1996); Jonathan Vance, *Death So Noble: Memory, Meaning, and the First World War* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1997); Terry Copp, *Fields of Fire: The Canadians in Normandy* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004); Tim Cook, *At the Sharp End: Canadians Fighting the Great War*, *1914-1916* (Toronto: Viking Canada, 2007); and Tim Cook, *Shock Troops: Canadians Fighting the Great War, 1917-1918* (Toronto: Viking Canada, 2008).

[49] Byers, "Mobilizing Canada": 11-12.

[50] Byers, *Zombie Army*: 5.

that Crerar and his subordinates allowed many of their personal and professional ambitions to shape compulsory military training in Canada.[51] More intriguing is Byers' use of "statistical records and other sources that have been unknown or ignored until now" to explore "the history of all 157,841 men who served as conscripts between 1940 and 1945 – their ethnic, linguistic, religious, and occupational backgrounds, their experiences of compulsory training, the ways that army officials attempted to convince them to volunteer once they were in uniform, and the responses of conscripts themselves to those pressures."[52] Many Canadians assumed that conscripts were mostly French Canadian, or from other ethnic groups that did not share in the dominant Anglo-Canadian society's beliefs, but as Byers shows, "more than has been previously realized, these men tended to reflect the makeup of the country as a whole."[53] By exploring the origins and backgrounds of the conscripts and the effects of conscription legislation exerted on their lives, Byers' inquiry into the men called up under the NRMA makes *Zombie Army* a pioneering work in the field.[54]

Several new insights into the experience of home defence conscripts have similarly expanded our understanding of conscription. In "'My Darlin' Clementine?' Wooing Zombies for $6.50 a Night: General Service-NRMA Relations in Wartime Calgary," Dean Oliver, a senior historian at the Canadian War Museum, examined a July 1944 disturbance at Calgary's Currie Barracks in which 150 troops brandished bayonets after a night of drinking in the camp's wet canteen.[55] Arguing that contemporary newspaper accounts sensationalized the incident, Dean asserts that the disturbance was rooted in the bitter and longstanding divisions

[51] *Ibid*.
[52] *Ibid*: 6.
[53] *Ibid*.
[54] For Byers' examination of Canadian conscripts and their experiences, see: *Ibid*: 125-75; and "Les «zombies» du Canada: un portrait des conscrits canadiens et de leur expérience durant la Deuxième Guerre mondiale," *Bulletin d'histoire politique* 8, nos. 2-3 (hiver-printemps 2000): 184-204.
[55] Dean Oliver, "'My Darlin' Clementine'? Wooing Zombies for $6.50 a Night: General Service-NRMA Relations in Wartime Calgary," *Canadian Military History* 7, no. 3 (Summer 1998): 46-47.

between volunteers and conscripts.[56] The inference, of course, is that perceptions of NRMA recruits had genuine consequences 'on the ground.' Further, Oliver asserts that the Currie Barracks disturbance "represent[s] only the tip of the iceberg, a fleeting glimpse at the complexities of Canadian military life in the 1940s that cannot be charted on battle maps or followed in war diaries."[57] The possibilities for a sustained reinterpretation of conscription highlighting these complexities are intriguing, and Oliver's work offers a starting point to explore that which has escaped attention since the 1940s: what was the reaction to conscription outside of Parliament, what were the lived experiences of the conscripts, and what might this tell us about Canada in the 1940s? Only by shifting the emphasis away from King and his cabinet colleagues can we begin to discern some of the complexities. Viewed in concert with Russell's portrait of senior officers' assumptions about the conscripted men and their character, Oliver's study lends credence to the argument that the possible meanings and identities of being a conscript deserve closer attention. It is this goal, that of rendering a more human impression of the conscript identity and the extent to which it resonated with or was refracted by average Canadians, that forms the present study's key purpose.

In order to reinterpret conscription issue from an angle outside of high-level politics, a separate body of literature concerned with ideas and representation informs this thesis. R. Scott Sheffield, drawing on seminal cultural and ethnic studies such as Edward Said's *Orientalism* and Kay Anderson's *Vancouver's Chinatown: Racial Discourse in Canada, 1875-1980*, questions how First Nations people were discussed in public and administrative discourse in the twentieth century. In *The Red Man's on the Warpath: The Image of the "Indian" and the Second World War*, Sheffield investigates the complex framework of visual

[56] *Ibid*: 49-52.
[57] *Ibid*: 47.

imagery, stereotypes, and assumptions surrounding the country's 'Indian' population in order explain the place of First Nations in wartime society.[58] He examines "total war's impact on a society and culture, viewed through the window of the image of the 'Indian.'"[59] The Canadian public and administrators for the Indian Affairs Branch constructed a variety of stereotypes on which they could draw, including variations such as the 'noble savage,' the 'drunken Indian,' the 'Indian-at-war,' and the 'Indian victim.' By examining these representations, Sheffield demonstrates "how the threat of defeat or imminent victory, the extremes of war's emotional spectrum, seized the collective consciousness of the country," to argue that aboriginal people "presented a challenge to Canadians' sense of themselves, revealing the fallacy of nationalist mythologies touting tolerance, equality, and democracy."[60] In that fashion, Sheffield's approach informs the argument found herein that the discourse surrounding the nation's conscripts revealed Canadian notions of duty, ideas about government, and in a broader sense, national identity.

Employing Sheffield's work, the present study "presumes that the mental framework of knowledge and assumption was designed and created by the dominant society for its own consumption and to meet its own requirements," to enable "the members of this society to make sense of the world around them [and] to impose meaning and order on chaos."[61] To that end, Sheffield wonders about the "power, pedigree, and pervasiveness of the idea of the 'Indian' in English Canada and about how the dominant society imagined, represented, defined, and ruled First Nations people in the twentieth century." [62] Rather than illuminating

[58] R. Scott Sheffield, *The Red Man's on the Warpath: The Image of the "Indian" and the Second World War* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2004): 179-180.
[59] *Ibid*: 180.
[60] *Ibid*.
[61] *Ibid*: 9.
[62] *Ibid*. Also see: Mark Cronlund Anderson and Carmen L. Robertson, *Seeing Red: A History of Natives in Canadian Newspapers* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2011): 137-53, for their

indigenous peoples, cultures, and experiences, however, these perceptions enable us to understand the desires, anxieties, conceits, and assumptions of those constructing the image.[63] To apply Sheffield's terminology to those conscripted under the NRMA, in articulating an image of the conscript, Canadians were also defining themselves, and when delineating where the conscript fit within their society, Canadians were signifying the kind of society they believed they possessed or hoped to achieve.[64]

Amy J. Shaw builds upon similar notions in her chapter on images of conscientious objectors (COs) during the Great War. In light of the fact that many Canadians "viewed participation in the First World War as a national duty" and even a privilege, "[a]ngry derision" resulted from "the COs' unwillingness to join in the great national crusade."[65] Her study, *Crisis of Conscience: Conscientious Objection in Canada during the First World War*, thus "traces the evolving definition of who could be classified as a legitimate conscientious objector, follows the attempts made by various denominations to have their stance protected, and makes the argument that gaining exemption was closely connected to perceptions of a denomination's respectability."[66] Springing from that argument, Shaw suggests that COs "constituted a minority group at a severe disadvantage. Their views were unfamiliar to many Canadians, and the perceived need for greater unity during wartime also increased the distrust engendered by their alternative reading of religious obligations." [67] In turn, their alternative perspective on conscience, citizenship, and national duty exacerbated the

---

examination of how colonial imagery in newspaper reportage continued to inform Canadian perceptions of aboriginal peoples in the post-Second World War period of reconstruction.

[63] Sheffield, *The Red Man's on the Warpath*: 10.

[64] *Ibid*.

[65] Amy J. Shaw, *Crisis of Conscience: Conscientious Objection in Canada during the First World War* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2009): 120

[66] *Ibid*: 14.

[67] *Ibid*: 160.

stereotype of the objector as cowardly, obstinate, and uneducated.[68] Although religion was not the primary ground on which conscripts tended to voice their objection to military service during the Second World War, their views and understanding of the obligations of citizenship were far different from those of the dominant society.

Shaw's *Crisis of Conscience* offers a number of arguments that can inform an interpretation of the historical record on conscription. First, she recognizes that the experience of COs is a useful lens into the developing relationship between Canadians and their government, expectations of appropriate masculine behaviour, personal freedom and identity, and questions of voluntarism and obligation in a democratic society.[69] In the same way, we can discern a great deal about Canadian society and its identity during the Second World War by thinking about the place of the 'Zombies' within that society. In articulating their beliefs about conscripts, Canadians differentiated between those engaged with the war effort and those who were not. In turn, this process reveals much about Canadian expectations, obligations, and identity. Second, Shaw notes that, "war typically intensifies the perceived need for a scapegoat and for an 'other' to define oneself against; thus, a consideration of the reaction to the COs offers a fresh perspective on Canadian self-perception during the war."[70] The discourse surrounding objectors (or conscripts) therefore provides a lens through which we can discern Canadians' understanding of who they were, what they were fighting for, and the qualities they believed integral in their sense of self. Finally, while conscientious objectors' experiences in the First World War occurred before the 'rights revolution,' their assertion of their right to not serve in the military was nonetheless

[68] *Ibid*.
[69] *Ibid*: 3.
[70] *Ibid*: 7.

part of that transformation in the discourse of citizenship.[71] In the same way, conscripts' experiences and their alternate understanding of civic duty and expectations of government are indicative of a transformation in Canadian identity, and of a citizen's relationship with and obligations to the state.

This thesis also draws on several historical examinations of postwar development, not because the events examined therein are germane, but because the arguments about identity offer an interpretive basis to explore evolving wartime relationships. The first of these is Jonathan Swainger's recent inquiry into newsprint constructions of teenagers in northern British Columbia, the perceived rise in juvenile delinquency, and the ensuing "moral panic" that played out in overheated and exaggerated reportage related to teenage culture.[72] As Swainger writes in "Teen Trouble and Community Identity in Post-Second World War Northern British Columbia," in the early Cold War period, the *Prince George Citizen* staked out what it believed to be the community's most pressing issue by reporting on "a litany of assaults, threats, and drunkenness [that] left little question that juvenile delinquency and an allied gang problem could be ignored no longer."[73] While newspaper commentary and scholarly discourse inclined towards broad explanations that place teenagers within a number of categories, Swainger suggests that these ascriptions render an incomplete story.[74] Instead, he argues that while the crisis had its roots in emerging generational identities, early Cold War angst, and media portrayals of a society allegedly on the verge of collapse, for parents and community leaders, the longstanding unease over the community's reputation as a

[71] *Ibid*.
[72] Jonathan Swainger, "Teen Trouble and Community Identity in Post-Second World War Northern British Columbia," *Journal of Canadian Studies* 47, no. 2 (Spring 2013): 150-151.
[73] *Ibid*: 151.
[74] *Ibid*: 153.

disorderly lumber town provided the crucial backdrop for these broader factors.[75] Swainger further recognizes "the newspaper hyperbole and the subsequent waves of hysteria for what they were," while, at the same time, noting that "the anxiety and upset associated with teen trouble in [the] 1950s were none the less genuine expressions of the deeply felt concerns for the future of families, communities, and nation."[76] Thus, while residents of Prince George perceived a rise in juvenile delinquency and believed that the town was becoming unhinged, their concerns point to deeper anxieties related to community identity. Given the extent to which home defence conscripts represented a perceived threat to the successful prosecution of the war, and in a less literal sense to notions of democracy and obligation, these concerns warrant deeper inquiry.

Across the border, Leerom Medovoi's work on youth identity during the Cold War further provides a starting point to interpret the meaning behind the 'Zombie' ascription. *Rebels: Youth and the Cold War Origins of Identity* examines the figure of the young rebel in postwar American culture to argue that youth rebellion and its avatars, such as Elvis Presley, Chuck Berry, and James Dean, emerged as a result of the ideological production of the United States as the "leader of the free world."[77] As Medovoi artfully demonstrates, these young rebels soon came to represent America's emancipatory character in relation to the Soviet Union, emerging Third World nations, and even its own suburbs. Alongside the young rebel, Medovoi argues that contemporary notions of "identity" emerged in Cold War-era America to define collective selves in the politicized manner that is recognizable today – in terms such as "national identity" and "racial identity." Accordingly, the:

---

[75] *Ibid*: 150.
[76] *Ibid*: 172.
[77] Leerom Medovoi, *Rebels: Youth and the Cold War Origins of Identity* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005): 12.

> emergence of identity discourse in the United States was conditioned not only by postwar decolonization of the globe but also by the rapid transformations of everyday life within the nation's borders. While decolonization led to an intensified rhetoric of American freedom, the emerging postwar culture of consumption called forth a more complicated response in the United States, one that was often self-congratulatory, but at times also included palpable fears that Americans were becoming more passive and unfree. The identity concept spoke directly to these fears that plagued the social arrangements of postwar life.[78]

This interpretative lens of identity is well suited to an inquiry of social constructions of Canadian conscripts in the Second World War.

Indeed, while Medovoi suggests that identity discourse emerged in the United States out of the Cold War, Canadian historians have long asserted that the period leading up to and including the Second World War was fundamental in shaping Canada's sense of self.[79] On one hand, the crippling decade-long depression that preceded the conflict provoked new thinking about the reciprocal responsibilities of the government and its citizens.[80] Many Canadians felt that the government had failed to provide adequate relief in the interwar period, and consequently there was no great rush to the colors as there had been at the outbreak of the Great War.[81] The notion that citizens had an unthinking commitment to make the ultimate sacrifice therefore existed uneasily. Moreover, as several other historians demonstrate, the nation moved slowly but inexorably away from Britain during the course of

---

[78] *Ibid*: 25.

[79] For example, see: Desmond Morton and J.L. Granatstein, *Victory 1945: Canadians from War to Peace* (Toronto: HarperCollins, 1995): 211, 219, 221, and 225; J.L. Granatstein and Peter Neary, eds., *The Good Fight: Canadians and World War II* (Toronto: Copp Clark, 1995): 1-14; Robert Bothwell and J.L. Granatstein, *Our Century: The Canadian Journey* (Toronto: McArthur & Company, 2000): 128-35; Margaret Conrad and Alvin Finkel, *Canada: A National* History (Toronto: Pearson, 2007): 368-69; Jonathan Vance, *Maple Leaf Empire: Canada, Britain, and Two World Wars* (Don Mills, ON: Oxford University Press, 2012): 3-4 and 147; Jonathan Vance, "An Open Door to a Better Future: The Memory of Canada's Second World War," in *Canada and the Second World War: Essays in Honour of Terry Copp* (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2012): 461-62 and 475; and Neville Thompson, *Canada and the End of the Imperial Dream: Beverley Baxter's Reports from London through War and Peace, 1936-1960* (Don Mills, ON: Oxford University Press, 2013): 3-5.

[80] Sheffield, *The Red Man's on the Warpath*: 16; Alvin Finkel, *Social Policy and Practice in Canada: A History* (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2006): 125 and 143; Pierre Berton, *The Great Depression: 1929-1939* (Toronto: Doubleday Canada, 2012): 9 and 12-14.

[81] Granatstein and Neary, *The Good Fight*: 1.

the conflict and longstanding notions of Canadian imperialism soon waned.[82] By war's end, many Canadians desired that the remaining emblems of colonialism be removed, and symbols of independent nationhood – a distinctly Canadian flag and national anthem, for example – substituted. [83] An obvious accompaniment was the Canadian Citizenship Act of 1946, which conferred citizenship on those previously classified as British subjects. Framed in this context, the 'Zombie' ascription and the perspectives of NRMA recruits emerge as one part of identity discourse and nation building.

Situated in this manner, this thesis examines contemporary ideas about conscription, arguing that the issue points to deep and significant concerns about Canadian national identity, government responsibility, and a citizen's obligations in wartime. Chapter One explores the image of the 'Zombie' conscript in English-Canadian public discourse. Given that contemporary notions of military service and citizenship held that the defence of the country was a duty incumbent on all male citizens inasmuch as Canadians believed that the war in Europe represented a defence of Canada and the ideals for which it stood, conscripts soon became disloyal and unpatriotic 'others' in the Anglo-Canadian public mind. While the 'Zombie' ascription was a feeble-minded explanation for the NRMA personnel's resistance to overseas service, these constructions spoke to the profound disquiet that the conscription issue triggered for the nation. As this chapter demonstrates, how Canadians understood the 'Zombies' represented both an apotheosis and a fundamental break with notions of a citizen's rights and responsibilities. Throughout the Second World War, many Canadians continued to

[82] Carl Berger, *The Sense of Power: Studies in the Ideas of Canadian Imperialism, 1867-1914* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1970): 3-11 and 260-65; Jennifer Hamel, "A Brief History of the Writing (and Re-Writing) of Canadian National History" (Master's Thesis, University of Saskatchewan, 2009): 25; Vance, *Maple Leaf Empire:* 3-4 and 147; and Thompson, *Canada and the End of the Imperial Dream*: 3-5.

[83] Citizenship and Immigration Canada, "Towards the Canadian Citizenship Act," Forging Our Legacy: Canadian Citizenship and Immigration, 1900-1977, http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/resources/publications/ Legacy/ index.asp (last revised 1 July 2006).

believe that the nation was duty bound to aid the Empire and its interests. However, the upset and unease of the interwar years led many to question the seeming touchstones of Anglo-Canadian life, and the anxiety that this triggered was unleashed on the nation's conscripts – an easy and immediate wartime target – in order to defend the values that many viewed as integral in their sense of Canadian identity. Of course, opposing visions of civic obligation found resonance in Canadian newspapers as well, and the counter-narrative reveals the degree to which emergent ideas had shaken assumptions. Regardless of the overheated and exaggerated tone of stories, editorials, and letters-to-the-editor, reports about the 'Zombies' provided an opportunity to explore the ways in which Canadians deployed, negotiated, and contested the rights and responsibilities of citizens and government, and the nation's wartime identity.

Chapter Two sharpens the interpretative gaze by examining Canadian military discourse and questioning why the nation's military officers came to believe that the majority of NRMA recruits were disloyal foreigners, ignorant French Canadians, and those otherwise unworthy of citizenship. For many, military service was understood as both the highest honour and the most profound duty for any young man because it demonstrated a willingness to assume the most demanding and dangerous obligations of citizenship, and voluntarism marked the pinnacle of a democratic and freely undertaken right to choose. In conjunction with the military ethos of ordering and hierarchy, and the fact that a voluntary recruit was inherently more useful because he could serve anywhere in the world, military officers resolutely viewed the conscripts as an aggravation at odds with the nation's higher ideals. Troubled by the NRMA resistance to overseas service, the military resorted to opportunistic and simple-minded attempts to explain why conscripts did not share in a similar sense of duty. On the surface, these ascriptions reinforced the pro-enlistment willingness to fight and

attempted to explain why others were not similarly motivated. Framed in the context of place and identity in the Second World War, however, these portrayals suggest that inasmuch as many officers desired distinct and concrete forms of Canadian nationhood, their views of conscripts were actually rooted in historic concerns about Canadian imperialism and national identity.

Finally, while both civilian and military reactions tended towards broad explanations of the NRMA recruits drawing upon ethnicity, gender, loyalty, and patriotism, these notions render an incomplete story of the nation's conscripts; they do little to capture the experience of being a conscript during the Second World War. Chapter Three thus explores why NRMA personnel chose to stand apart from their compatriots during the Second World War. Naturally, there was great variation in their reasons for remaining on home soil. Some preferred to serve on home soil because of family ties and religio-ethical beliefs, while others refused to 'go active' to protest coercive recruiting tactics and the treatment they received in the army as conscripts. Still others articulated something of a *quid pro quo* mindset rooted in politics; Canadians had tentatively been moving towards a reconsideration of their relationship to the government throughout the 1930s, and while duty had once been the driving force behind wartime enlistment, such expectations had begun to falter. Thus, a significant number wished to hold the government accountable by forcing it to implement conscription for overseas service rather than place undue pressure on individual men to fill the ranks on the front lines. While they may not have had the language to express it in such terms, these men were early contributors to rights and identity discourse, and they further expressed concerns about the reciprocal responsibilities of a democratic government and its citizens. These perspectives underscore the irony of the constructed 'Zombie' stereotype.

Taken collectively, the discourse surrounding the conscripts and compulsory service is significant. While the historical treatment tends to focus on the political dimensions of conscription, this thesis reconstructs how contemporaries conceived of compulsory service, how they represented it, and how it factored into their *mentalité*. While the political aspects of conscription are important, an examination of popular constructions of the 'Zombies,' as well as a discussion of these men in their own right, provides a more nuanced and compelling understanding of the conscription issue in the Second World War that has been previously overlooked. In conclusion and in the words of one contemporary observer, attempting to understand Canada's valiant overseas war effort and domestic politics on the home front is insufficient without "the story of the 'Zombies' who stayed at home."[84]

[84] "Analysis of Canada's War Effort Urged," *Winnipeg Tribune*, 25 October 1944: 11.

Chapter One:
"Is that what democracy stands for?" – The Image of the 'Zombie' in English Canada

Throughout the Second World War, many Canadians believed that there was no greater national duty than serving one's country on the front lines. Yet, for those men who found themselves compelled to serve under the National Resources Mobilization Act (NRMA) of 1940, the decision to enlist involved a complex assortment of contradictory notions and perspectives. The federal government placed limits on the terms of service for the NRMA men, meaning that insofar as conscripts fulfilled their *legal* duties by answering their call-up notices, undergoing military training, and staffing defence posts on home soil, they could not be sent overseas against their wills. Yet as much as overseas service was contingent on voluntarism, conscripts were not exempt from pressure to conform. In fact, these men were subject to intensive internal military recruitment campaigns, ongoing social pressure, and government propaganda encouraging a change in status to enable front-line service. As a result, many conscripts eventually 'went active' and agreed to serve in overseas theatres of war. However, approximately 70,000 men remained steadfast and, in turn, the English-language press represented them in increasingly anxious and condemnatory terms.[1]

Owing to popular ideas of a citizen's responsibilities in wartime, the resistance of the NRMA troops to overseas service troubled the nation. Inasmuch as these men had answered their call-up notices in order to defend the nation's borders, they had not voluntarily accepted service in the armed forces. Despite being law-abiding citizens, their status as conscripts indicated that they did not share in the dominant society's conception of duty. Notions of

[1] According to contemporary Department of National Defence statistics, later compiled by C.P. Stacey, 64,115 of the 157,841 men called up under the NRMA 'went active' or volunteered for service in the armed forces, leaving 93,726 conscripts in the ranks. Contemporary news sources reported that roughly 70,000 NRMA men remained stationed on home soil in late 1944. Owing to discharges and desertions, this estimate is probably accurate. See: C.P. Stacey, *Arms, Men and Governments: The War Policies of Canada, 1939-1945* (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1970): 599-602.

military service and citizenship held that the defence of the country was a duty incumbent on all male citizens to the degree that Canadians believed that the war in Europe represented a defence of Canada and the ideals for which it stood.[2] For many Canadians, then, an individual's willingness to serve in the armed forces indicated one's loyalty to the nation. The public therefore responded to the thousands of fit, young men who were trained for combat but stationed on home soil by constructing them as disloyal and unpatriotic 'others.' In so doing, Canadians embraced feeble-minded explanations for the NRMA personnel's resistance to overseas service that, in turn, gave rise to an equivocal image of the conscript. Having adopted the 'Zombie' epithet from popular horror films of the era, the English-language press zealously applied the label to those individuals who seemingly were without the motivation or intelligence to volunteer for service abroad.[3] In time, the 'Zombie' label broadly encompassed a range of undesirable traits, charging the NRMA recruit with an undemocratic spirit, cowardly behaviour, and effeminacy. While seeming comical or overdrawn in hindsight, in its contemporary context, the label and its menace were genuine. As content in the pages of the English-language press demonstrates, these constructions spoke to the profound disquiet that the conscription issue triggered for the nation.

In many respects, how Canadians understood the 'Zombies' represented both an apotheosis and a fundamental break with notions of a citizen's rights and responsibilities.[4] On one hand, as demonstrated by historian James A. Wood, military service had long been

[2] James A. Wood, *Militia Myths: Ideas of the Canadian Citizen Soldier, 1896-1921* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2010): 274.

[3] Some examples of these films include *White Zombie* (1932), *Revolt of the Zombies* (1936), *The Ghost Breakers* (1940), and *King of the Zombies* (1941). The genre proved to be extremely popular, and a host of 'Zombie films' appeared in the 1940s, including *Revenge of the Zombie* (1943), *I Walked with a Zombie* (1943), *Voodoo Man* (1944), *Zombies on Broadway* (1945), *Face of Marble* (1946), and *Valley of the Zombies* (1946).

[4] I borrow here the language employed by James A. Wood in his cultural study of Canada's amateur military tradition and its ideological transformation during the Great War. See: Wood, *Militia Myths*: 272-73.

featured in the nation's discourse as a primary duty of citizenship.[5] Throughout the Second World War, many Canadians continued to believe that the nation was duty bound to aid the Empire and its interests.[6] However, the upset and unease of the interwar years spurred new ideas about the reciprocal responsibilities of citizens and their governments, and as a result, an assortment of seemingly unquestioned touchstones of Anglo-Canadian life were opened to scrutiny.[7] The anxiety that this triggered was unleashed on the nation's conscripts – an easy and immediate wartime target – in order to defend the values that many viewed as integral in their sense of Canadian identity. Of course, opposing visions of civic obligation found resonance in Canadian newspapers as well, and the counter-narrative reveals the extent to which emergent ideas had shaken assumptions. Regardless of the overheated and exaggerated tone of stories, editorials, and letters-to-the-editor, reports about the 'Zombies' provided an opportunity to explore the ways in which Canadians deployed, negotiated, and contested the rights and responsibilities of citizens, their relationship with their government, and the nation's wartime identity.

Public Opinion and the Conscription Issue, 1939-42

Conscription has long been featured in Canadian public discourse. In large part, this was owing to the memories of the clamor over compulsory service in the Great War. It was the decisive issue in the 1917 federal election in which Robert Borden's pro-conscription Unionist Party emerged victorious over Wilfrid Laurier's Liberal Party. Borden's Military

[5] *Ibid*: 212.

[6] "Canada's Paramount Interest," *The Globe and Mail*, 13 March 1939: 6; Stephen Leacock, "Canada and Monarchy," *Atlantic Monthly* (June 1939): 735; Ralph Allen, *Ordeal by Fire: Canada, 1910-1945* (Toronto: Doubleday Canada Limited, 1961): 392; Carl Berger, *The Sense of Power: Studies in the Ideas of Canadian Imperialism* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1970): 235-6; J.L. Granatstein and Peter Neary, eds., *The Good Fight: Canadians and World War II* (Toronto: Copp Clark Ltd., 1995): 1.

[7] Pierre Berton, *The Great Depression, 1929-1939* (Toronto: Anchor Canada, 2001): 9 and 12-14; and Alvin Finkel, *Social Policy and Practice in Canada: A History* (Waterloo, ON: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2006): 125 and 143.

Voters Act and Wartime Elections Act helped to decide the outcome of the election in favor of the coalition government. The former enabled servicemen to vote in a constituency assigned by the government, and the latter act enfranchised selected white women – wives, widows, mothers, and sisters of soldiers overseas – while disenfranchising 'enemy aliens.' The election exposed fault lines along linguistic, cultural, and regional divides, the most prominent of which was that between English and French.[8] Quebec, under the ideological leadership of Henri Bourassa, was the most outspoken opponent of compulsory service and likened the implementation of conscription to an attempt to impose the will of the majority on a minority populace.[9] Other groups, such as labor unions and western farmers, were initially lukewarm to conscription but soon withdrew their support when it became obvious that wealth would not be conscripted and farmer's sons would not be exempt from the call to arms.[10] Following the election, conscription legislation provoked outrage. Violent rioting in Quebec City ensued, resulting in over 150 civilian and military casualties, as well as four deaths after soldiers opened fire on the rioters.[11] The conscription crisis nearly tore the country apart in 1917, leaving a deeply scarred legacy against which the events of the Second World War played out.

With war looming in 1939, William Lyon Mackenzie King's government initially dedicated itself to a limited war effort and eschewed conscription for overseas service to avoid the mistakes of nearly thirty years earlier.[12] Remarkably, given the recent history,

---

[8] Tim Cook, *Shock Troops: Canadians Fighting the Great War 1917-1918, Volume Two* (Toronto: Penguin Group, 2008): 370.

[9] J.L Granatstein and J.M. Hitsman, *Broken Promises: A History of Conscription in Canada* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1977): 60.

[10] Cook, *Shock Troops*: 370.

[11] Martin F. Auger, "On the Brink of Civil War: The Canadian Government and the Suppression of the 1918 Easter Riots," *Canadian Historical Review* 89, no. 4 (December 2008): 503.

[12] Dominion of Canada, *Official Report of Debates of the House of Commons*, William Lyon Mackenzie King, 8 September 1939 (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1940): 36.

reactions in Canadian newspapers to compulsory military service were relatively placid leading up to and immediately following the declaration of war. Some carried stories that reminded the nation of King's pledges not to introduce conscription, while others editorialized about the events of 1917.[13] In a small number of English-Canadian newspapers, letters-to-the-editor called for total conscription, citing equality of sacrifice or expressing fears about foreign-born contributions to the war effort. These, however, were rare and apparently failed to garner much attention.[14] In French-Canadian commentary, news writers lamented the country's entry into another European conflict but nonetheless encouraged francophone support for the war effort.[15] Broadly, French Canada placed its faith in Ernest Lapointe, King's French-Canadian lieutenant and Minister of Justice, who assured his constituents that he would not support a conscriptionist federal government.[16]

Throughout late 1939, conscription scarcely made headlines. Following the German invasion of Poland, the war in Europe entered the so-called Phoney War period with its marked absence of major military offensives. The calm was short lived and in the spring and summer of 1940, Denmark, Norway, Holland, Belgium, and France rapidly fell to invading Nazi forces. As the tides of war began to favor the Axis powers, British expectations increasingly turned to dominion military participation and, with that shift, the minor and

[13] On commentary relating to the government's conscription pledge, see: Gary Turgeon, "Thoughts from Parliament," *Cariboo Observer*, 15 April 1939: 2; and "Les projects de recrutement du minister de la Défense," *Le Devoir*, 12 September 1939: 2. For discussions of conscription in the First World War, see: "Should We Have Conscription?" *The St. Maurice Valley Chronicle*, 26 January 1939: 2; and "The Conscription Issue," *Globe and Mail*, 19 September 1939: 6.

[14] "The Conscription Issue," *Globe and Mail*, 19 September 1939: 6; Keith C. Macleod, "Conscription to Save Us," *Globe and Mail*, 10 November 1939: 6; and 'Waiting,' "Foreign-Born Slackers," *Globe and Mail*, 5 October 1939: 6.

[15] "La guerre détestable," *L'Avenir du Nord*, 24 March 1939: 1; "C'est la guerre!," *Le Devoir*, 4 September 1939: 1; "L'Europe en guerre – Le Canada suit – Blocus anglais du Reich," *Le Devoir*, 4 September 1939: 1; and "Le Canada Est En Guerre," *L'Action Populaire*, 14 September 1939: 1.

[16] John Macfarlane, *Ernest Lapointe and Quebec's Influence on Canadian Foreign Policy* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999): 4-5.

passive role that King intended for Canada was soon in retreat.[17] The question of increased Canadian participation horrified the Prime Minister because of the possible political consequences; he recognized that any expansion of the war effort would create significant political instability on the home front.

Despite the government's initial efforts to limit Canada's war effort and later to reassure Canadians (and especially English Canadians) that they were doing their share, conscription soon became a prominent topic of conversation. Public demands to enact compulsory service rose steadily in number and exponentially in volume.[18] In response to home-front angst to increase Canadian participation, Parliament passed the National Resources Mobilization Act on 21 June 1940. As a statutory mobilization of all necessary resources for the war effort, the NRMA permitted the government to enforce national registration, control employment, seize property, and conscript able-bodied men into the Canadian military.[19] In keeping with longstanding promises against conscription, however, Section 3 of the NRMA specified that these emergency powers could not compel persons to serve outside of Canada's borders and territorial waters.[20] In effect, those drafted became members of the home defence army, whose duty was to defend the nation on home soil. In this role, conscripted men gradually began to replace general service volunteers who mobilized for overseas service.

---

[17] Peter A. Russell, "BC's 1944 'Zombie' Protests Against Overseas Conscription," *BC Studies*, no. 122 (Summer 1999): 51.

[18] Granatstein and Hitsman, *Broken Promises*, 141.

[19] C.P. Stacey, *The Canadian Army 1939-1945: An Official Historical Summary* (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1948): 28. Men were initially called up for a thirty-day training period before returning to civilian life. In February 1941, this duration of service was increased to four months of service on top of training, and after April 1941, NRMA recruits were retained for the duration of the war.

[20] Dominion of Canada, "The National Resources Mobilization Act, 1940," *Acts of the Parliament of the Dominion of Canada* (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1940): 43.

To a remarkable degree, the NRMA compromise seemed to unite Canadians in support of the war. While there were some cries of dissent, the dual-system of conscription for home defence and voluntary enlistment for overseas appeared to be an acceptable solution to the problems presented in Western Europe.[21] If home defence conscription was not uniformly popular in 1940, it was viewed as a wartime necessity.[22] Moreover, French Canadians enlisted voluntarily in record numbers throughout the rest of 1940 and 1941, suggesting a measure of demonstrable support from the country's francophone population.[23] King continued to reiterate his promise that "no measure for the conscription of men for overseas service will be introduced by the present administration," and he further commended the nation for performing its duties admirably.[24] In English Canada, the discourse was generally positive. Many commentators applauded the government for taking action in support of the British Empire. For example, an article in the *Toronto Daily Star* praised the policy, declaring, "It is the right step at the right time," and encouraged all Canadians to cooperate fully with the government's compulsory measures.[25] Still, some critics insisted that further steps were necessary. Claiming the perspective of "loyal British subjects who firmly believe that Canada is morally bound to go to the aid of the Motherland

[21] One such cry was raised in Quebec. Montreal mayor Camilien Houde called upon French Canadians to refuse obligatory service, but he was immediately interned and there was little support for his protest. See: Russell, "BC's 1944 'Zombie' Protests," 51-52; and Allan Levine, *King: William Lyon Mackenzie King: A Life Guided by the Hand of Destiny* (Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 2011): 313. Also see Chapter Two of the present study.

[22] "À Ottawa - Le gouvernement impose le service militaire obligatoire au pays." *Le Devoir*, 19 June 1940: 1; André Laurendeau, *André Laurendea: Witness for Quebec*, edited by Philip Stratford (Toronto: Macmillan, 1973): 43-44; Granatstein and Hitsman, *Broken Promises*: 143-44; Brian Nolan, *King's War: Mackenzie King and the Politics of War, 1939-1945* (Toronto: Random House, 1988): 48-51; J.L. Granatstein, *Canada's War: The Politics of the Mackenzie King Government, 1939-1945* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990): 101-2; Russell, "BC's 1944 'Zombie' Protests,' 51; and Levine, *King*: 313.

[23] Terry Copp, *A Nation at War, 1939-1945* (Waterloo: Laurier Centre for Military, Strategic and Disarmament Studies, 2004): 181.

[24] Dominion of Canada, *Official Report of Debates of the House of Commons*, William Lyon Mackenzie King, 18 June 1940 (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1940): 854.

[25] "Conscription for Home Service Only," *Toronto Daily Star*, 19 June 1940: n.p. (accessed via the Canadian War Museum's "Democracy at War" newspaper database).

when she is the victim of unprovoked aggression," one editor dismissed the NRMA as "defective and inadequate." He went on to argue: "We cannot crush Hitler by remaining in North America… Any bird will defend its own nest."[26] In part, the partisan nature of the press played its role; the *Globe and Mail* was a leading Conservative newspaper quite willing to criticize Liberal policy. At the same time, the difference of opinion evident in two of Toronto's major dailies reveals the difficulty of the situation and the razor-thin margins that distinguished popular opinion. Of course, as both stories attest, English Canadians tended to favor compulsory measures. The question that remained was not the degree to which Canadians were obliged to support the war effort – most Canadians agreed to make wartime sacrifices – but rather, what form would that obligation take?

Still, for the time, the NRMA scheme placated the public. Provided the means to serve without going overseas, 32,000 compulsory recruits answered their call-up notices in the first two years following the NRMA, while three infantry divisions mobilized for active service in Europe.[27] Apart from the early flurry of commentary, compulsory service attracted little anxious debate; information about who was liable for call up and what the recruits ought to expect of training was common, whereas editorial comment was rare.[28] Notwithstanding the fact that the government committed itself to two finely balanced strategic goals – sending volunteers on the offensive in Europe and conscripting men in the event that hostilities

[26] "Mobilizing for Home Defence," *Globe and Mail*, 19 June 1940: 6.

[27] Terry Copp and Richard Nielsen, *No Price Too High: Canadians and the Second World War* (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson Limited, 1996): 82.

[28] "First Drafts for Home Defence Are Now Being Called," *Cariboo Observer*, 28 September 1940:1; "29 Training Centres Will Be Open Thursday," *Ottawa Citizen*, 19 March 1941: 3; "Canda's [sic] Reserve Army Has Home Defence As First Duty In Case of Attack," *Cariboo Observer*, 24 May 1941; "The Policy is Voluntary Enlistment," *Toronto Daily Star*, 18 June 1941: n.p. (accessed via the Canadian War Museum's "Democracy at War" newspaper database); and "Trainees Will Be Retained for Home Defence," *Blairmore Enterprise*, 18 July 1941: 7.

materialized on home soil – the initial response to the NRMA was generally favorable.[29] The nation was secure, recruitment numbers held strong, and the wartime economy prospered.

Still, there were dark days ahead. In December of 1941, the Imperial Japanese Navy launched simultaneous attacks against British Malaya, Hong Kong, the Philippines, and Pearl Harbor, the swiftness and ferocity of which stunned the Allied Forces.[30] The possibility of attack on Canada's westernmost province loomed, and there was widespread public clamor in British Columbia for military intervention.[31] Japan's entry into the fray heightened demands for an increased war effort outside of western Canada as well, especially from the nation's Conservative Party. Arthur Meighen, the party's leader, initiated a review of enlistment numbers and concluded that overseas conscription was necessary based, in part, on Quebec's proportionately lower enrollment numbers.[32] Although there were sufficient numbers of volunteer soldiers to form five divisions overseas, Meighen argued that the NRMA's restrictions impeded the war effort writ large.[33] The Conservatives were not alone in voicing

---

[29] Granatstein and Hitsman, *Broken Promises*: 143.

[30] Timothy Wilford, "The Enemy Within and the Pacific Threat: Canadian Security Intelligence in British Columbia, 1942–45," *Intelligence and National Security* 27, no. 4 (August 2012): 531. That an expansion of the national war effort increased as a direct result of developments in the Pacific is unremarkable considering that Canadian soldiers first committed to battle in the defence of Hong King as part of Britain's Far East Command. The entire contingent (which included some 1,975 Canadian soldiers) suffered severe casualties before surrendering on 24 December 1941, only to become prisoners-of-war. The battle of Hong Kong had symbolic significance for Canada as it was the first time the nation's troops engaged in combat in the Second World War.

[31] W. Peter Ward, *White Canada Forever: Popular Attitudes and Public Policy towards Orientals in British Columbia*, Third Edition (Montreal-Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002): 143-44 and 148; Patricia E. Roy, *The Oriental Question: Consolidating a White Man's Province, 1914-1941* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia, 2003) : 87 and 230; Patricia E. Roy, *The Triumph of Citizenship: The Chinese and Japanese in Canada, 1941-1967* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2007): 16-66; and Bill Rawling, "Only If Necessary: Canada's War against Japan, 1941-45," in Greg Donaghy and Patricia E. Roy, eds., *Contradictory Impulses: Canada and Japan in the Twentieth Century* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2008): 106.

[32] Granatstein and Hitsman, *Broken Promises:* 160. There were myriad reasons for the low enlistment numbers from Quebec, not the least of which was a lack of able officers in the province's military district. Many military administrators also tended to view the Quebecois as being backward and uneducated, and thus believed them to be unsuitable for RCAF, RCN, and technical corps of the army, as well as any commissioned rank.

[33] Stacey, *The Canadian Army*: 50; and J.L. Granatstein, *Conscription in the Second World War 1939-1945: A Study in Political Management* (Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1969): 33.

such concerns. With the change in fortunes on the battlefield, King was soon under attack from all sides for his refusal to implement a total war strategy. Criticisms surfaced within his own party, voiced primarily by his ministers for defence, finance, and naval services – J.L. Ralston, J.L. Ilsley, and A.L. Macdonald, respectively – that the compulsory measures were insufficient to ensure an effective prosecution of the war.[34]

Alarmed by these critiques, King decided to hold a plebiscite to ask Canadians whether they would free the government from its promises against overseas conscription. In the event that the response was favorable, it would ease the way for the adoption of such a policy if it became desirable or necessary without compelling the government to act.[35] On 27 April 1942, King asked Canadians in his somewhat convoluted but always careful style if they were "in favour of releasing the Government from any obligations arising out of any past commitments restricting methods of raising men for military service?"[36] A series of Gallup polls, the first in Canada, predicted that English Canada would vote overwhelmingly in favor of absolving the government from its pledge, but that French Canada would not. The actual results proved the polls to be all too accurate. Nationally, 63 per cent of Canadians voted yes while 37 per cent voted no. An overwhelming majority of the Anglophone population – 83 per cent – believed in the merits of conscription whereas only 27.5 per cent of French Canadian voters were in favor.[37] Notwithstanding the linguistic and cultural fractures, Bill 80, which removed the geographical limitations on where conscripts might be

[34] Levine, *King*: 329.
[35] Stacey, *The Canadian Army*: 50.
[36] Daniel Byers, *Zombie Army: The Canadian Army and Conscription in the Second World War* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2016): 107. Also see: Dominion of Canada, "The Dominion Plebiscite Act, 1942," *Acts of the Parliament of the Dominion of Canada* (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1943): 3-7. Notably, the plebiscite did not contain the term "conscription," nor did it suggest that compulsory service would be implemented if Canadians voted in favor.
[37] Levine, *King*: 332; and Granatstein and Hitsman, *Broken Promises*: 169.

obliged to serve, received assent in August 1942.[38] In practice, and largely in response to French-Canadian sensibilities, the government was able to delay ordering conscripts overseas until such a point that King and his advisors deemed it necessary.[39]

It soon became obvious that the Prime Minister did not intend to implement overseas conscription, despite having obtained permission to do so, and the 'spectre of conscription' continued to weigh on the public mind. In a somewhat ironic development, the conscripts themselves came to dominate English-Canadian public discussions. Notably, in French-speaking parts of Canada, compulsion for overseas service enjoyed little support and the stereotypes associated with conscripts were noticeably absent in francophone newsprint discussions.[40] By contrast and as demonstrated in the pages of the English-language press, English-Canadians were more apt to fashion and then employ coded language concerning conscripts. Although these newspapers were not the only source or repository of public opinion, they did represent an evolving discourse that, with rising literacy and readership, captured a broad middle of Canadian opinion.

The 'Zombie' in the Public Imagination: A Defence of Ideals, 1943-45

By late 1942, the compulsory recruits were known across the country as 'Mother's Boys' (for their refusal to leave behind their families at home), 'Maple Leaf Wonders' (after the maple leaf-shaped badge that adorned the conscripts' uniforms in place of a regimental

[38] Granatstein and Hitsman, *Broken Promises*: 171.

[39] Peter Neary and J.L. Granatstein, eds., *The Veterans Charter and Post-World War II Canada* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1999): 5. King infamously declared of the plebiscite that it was "not necessarily conscription, but conscription if necessary," a line that Allan Levine notes that he borrowed from an earlier *Toronto Star* editorial. See: Levine, *King*: 333.

[40] A survey of French-language newspapers suggests little to no discussion of the conscripts themselves. Instead, French-Canadian editorials continued to argue against conscription for overseas service, while news stories tended to discuss the conscription issue at the highest levels of government. For example, see: "Un Gouvernement d'Union méne [sic] à la Conscription," *Le Canada Français*, 1 February 1940: 1; "Québec, la conscription, et les autres provinces," *Le Temps*, 11 July 1941: 1; "Grand ralliement de la jeunesse contre la conscription," *Le Devoir*, 17 March 1942: 1; "La conscription," *La Patrie*, 30 May 1942: 35; "'La conscription, cette catastrophe,' déclaré M.A. Crête," *La Patrie*, 13 June 1942: 18; and "L'impérialisme militaire et financier et sa conséquence, la conscription pour service outre-mer," *Le Devoir*, 9 July 1943: 6.

badge), and 'R-Men' (a term that highlighted the conscripts' restricted home-duty status).[41] However, by far the most pejorative and widely used term for these men was 'Zombie.'[42] The expression gained traction within Canadian military circles after Royal Air Force cadets applied it to Canadian conscripts following training in the United States in the spring of 1942.[43] Before long, Ralph Allen, a well-known Canadian war correspondent, introduced the term to the Canadian public, noting that it was the army's "newest name for a draftee who hasn't volunteered for overseas service."[44] Applied intermittently by the Canadian public after its introduction, the term 'Zombie' became increasingly common as the war continued and eventually became synonymous with compulsory recruits who refused the change in status that would allow them to serve overseas.

Throughout 1943 and 1944, contemporary news sources spent a great deal of time defining the term 'Zombie' for their readership. "The name 'Zombi' [sic]," according to the *Toronto Daily Star*, was "little known but apt. Webster defines it: 'A soulless human corpse, still dead, but taken from the grave, and endowed by sorcery with a mechanical semblance of life. It is a dead body which is made to walk and act and move as if it were alive.'"[45] On the west coast, the *Prince Rupert Daily News* remarked, "With the word 'Zombie' appearing very prominently in the Canadian news these days, an explanation of the origin of the word might

---

[41] Allen, *Ordeal by Fire*: 394.

[42] Notably, this type of labelling is seen elsewhere, too. In the Australian context, the country similarly fielded two armies: an all-volunteer force (which could serve anywhere in the world) and the partly conscripted Militia (comprising troops on defensive duty.) The latter were deemed "chocolate soldiers" or "chockos" based on the perception that they would melt in the heat of battle. Alternatively, conscripted troops and militiamen were called "koalas," because under Australian law, the animals could not be shot at or exported. The two forces coexisted uneasily, and conscripts and militiamen were viewed as inferior when compared to volunteer soldiers. See: Peter Stanley, *Invading Australia: Japan and the Battle for Australia, 1942* (Victoria, AUS: Penguin Books, 2008): 134.

[43] On the term's origins in American popular culture, see: "RAF Grads Take Back US Slang," *Globe and Mail*, 1 April 1942: 7. For its use in Canada, see: Allen, *Ordeal by Fire*: 394; Granatstein and Hitsman, *Broken Promises*: 197; Russell, "BC's 1944 'Zombie' Protests": 52; and Byers, *Zombie Army*: 6.

[44] Ralph Allen, "Mostly Incidental," *Globe and Mail*, 12 October 1942: 20.

[45] "The Term 'Zombie," *Toronto Daily Star*, 6 November 1944: n.p. (accessed via the Canadian War Museum's "Democracy at War" newspaper database.)

prove of interest, especially as the term does not appear in most modern dictionaries."

Accordingly, the term:

> was originated by the American author William Seabrook, famous for his first-hand stories of native cult rites and superstitions in Haiti and the primitive areas of the Belgian Congo, Nigeria, and the Gold Coast. According to him, a 'Zombie' is a person who has lapsed into a weird sort of existence, being neither alive nor dead and completely without an independent mind or soul. The state of 'Zombiism' [sic] is said to be brought about through a curse or 'hex' upon the subject by a witch in Haiti or a medicine man or witch doctor in Africa.[46]

Notably, the origin of the 'Zombies' in West African voodoo hinted at links with people of color. Certainly, Canadian commentary shied away from highlighting this particular association, but the assumption that being white was inherently preferable to being a person of color existed as an unquestioned truth. As historian Graham Reynolds argues: "The practice of Jim Crow superseded all other social distinctions including class, occupation and even country of origin" during the 1940s.[47] Thus, there seemed to be little worse in the white Canadian public mind than a close association with being black. Given its broadly negative connotations, the 'Zombie' label soon became the "ideal name and meaning" for popular perceptions of the conscripts and, as the flurry of definitions and commentary attests, the term had taken hold of the English-Canadian imagination.[48]

---

[46] "Zombie…," *Prince Rupert Daily News*, 27 June 1944: 2. For other definitions of 'Zombies,' see: James C. Anderson, "Zombie Army: What Front-Line Soldiers Say," *Winnipeg Tribune* 11 July 1944: 6; Jack Brayley, "Question of Home Army's Future is Unanswered," Charlottetown Guardian, 6 November 1944: 1; "Zombies Send Letters to MPs," *Charlottetown Guardian*, 23 November 1944: 1; "Would Expunge Word 'Zombie,'" *Globe and Mail*, 2 December 1944: 2; "Editorial Notes," *Charlottetown Guardian*, 5 December 1944: 4; 'Old Soldier With 2 Sons Overseas,' "Zombie Defense," *Winnipeg Tribune*, 9 December 1944: 5; and Douglas Green, "Ottawa News Letter," *Western Star*, 9 December 1944: 3.

[47] Graham Reynolds with Wanda Robson, *Viola Desmond's Canada: A History of Blacks and Racial Segregation in the Promised Land* (Halifax: Fernwood Publishing, 2016): 54.

[48] E. Thuman, "People Will Not Risk Loss of Present Rights," *Globe and Mail*, 1 December 1944: 6. In time, Canadians tended to agree that the 'Zombie' label was one of the worst insults meted out in wartime Canada. For example, see: "2 Wounded Vets Fined For Action," *Ottawa Citizen*, 12 July 1944: 19; "Fined for Jeer at Reservists," *Globe and Mail*, 14 July 1944: 2; "Leopold Canal Battle Grim Saga of Bravery," *Globe and Mail*, 18 September 1944: 1; "'Come on, you Zombies,' Shouts German Soldier at Canadians," *The Maple Leaf*, 19 September 1944: 3; Ralph Allen, "Nazis Taunt Canadians with 'Come on, Zombies,'" *Winnipeg Tribune*, 20 September 1944: 1; "Says Officers Can't Resign Over Policy," *Globe and Mail*, 11 November 1944: 3;

The public catalogued a litany of insults in an attempt to explain the conscripts' aversion to service overseas, and in many ways, these responses were predictable. In their refusal to wage war on the front lines, the compulsory recruits were frequently vilified as lacking the courage that the nation's soldiers ought to display. "There has developed a natural contempt for the Zombies," wrote a *Globe and Mail* correspondent, because the country, "deplore[s] mass cowardice."[49] Such allegations painting the conscripts as dastardly were common. Many Canadians were apt to label the NRMA recruits as "yellow rats," remark on their "firm determination not to risk their lives" for the nation and its ideals, or argue that conscripts did not have the "guts" to volunteer for overseas service.[50] Deficient in fortitude and bravery, compulsory recruits further had to contend with challenges to their masculinity. According to one writer, NRMA troops did not adhere to the course of action advocated by their peers based on their "lack of manhood."[51] Even worse than being accused of lacking proper masculine qualities, conscripts were portrayed as holding what were then traditional domestic roles held by women. In 1944, for example, a group of Toronto women petitioned

---

"Reservists Nettled by 'Zombie' Taunts," *Winnipeg Tribune*, 11 November 1944: 14; 'Canadian Mother,' "Job Preference," *Winnipeg Tribune*, 11 November 1944: 24; "Broke Window With Rifle," *Globe and Mail*, 29 November 1944: 3; "Soldier Smashes Window as Girl Yells, 'Zombie,'" *Winnipeg Tribune*, 29 November 1944: 7; "Not a Racial Issue," *Globe and Mail*, 23 January 1945: 6"German Scorns Zombie Uniform," *Hamilton Spectator*, 22 February 1945: n.p., quoting *Khaki* magazine (accessed via the Canadian War Museum's "Democracy at War" database); and "Zombie Label Fatal," *Globe and Mail*, 6 March 1946: 3.

[49] "Not a Racial Issue," *Globe and Mail*, 23 January 1945: 6.

[50] On the supposed cowardice of conscripts, see: J.H. Elmsley, "Zombie, Neither Soldier Nor Civilian," *Globe and Mail*, 21 July 1944: 6; "Zombies Are Blamed for the Faults of Others," *Globe and Mail*, 24 July 1944: 6; "Draftees Say," *Calgary Herald*, 28 July 1944: 1; "Zombies Send Letters to M.P.s," *Charlottetown Guardian*, 23 November 1944: 1; 'Good Canadian,' "Home Defense Troops," *Winnipeg Tribune*, 25 November 1944: 3; Leslie Roberts, "These Are The Zombies," *Le Canada*, 25 January 1945: 4; "Former Newspaper Carrier Boy Becomes a Gallant Soldier," *Globe and Mail*, 9 March 1945: 6; and E.B. Lowndes, Untitled Letter to the Editor, *Didsbury Pioneer*, 11 October 1945: 6.

[51] "Zombies Send Letters to M.P.'s," *Charlottetown Guardian*, 23 November 1944: 1. On gendered ideas of conscripts, also see: J.V. McAree, "Zombies Are Blamed for Faults of Others," *Globe and Mail*, 24 July 1944: 6; "Some Thoughts on a Casualty List," *Winnipeg Tribune*, 15 September 1944: 6; "There Is Only One Answer," *Globe and Mail*, 7 October 1944: 6; "Result of a Two-Faced Policy," *Globe and Mail*, 26 October 1944: 6; 'White Waterlily,' "More Stimulus," *Globe and Mail*, 22 November 1944: 11; "Ottawa Policy 'Halfway Plan,'" *Globe and Mail*, 2 December 1944: 1; "'Five Year Men,'" *Winnipeg Tribune*, 16 February 1945: 6; and "Canadian Unity," *Winnipeg Tribune*, 21 March 1945: 6.

the government to allow them to serve on the front lines, "provided that Prime Minister King will release a sufficient number of draftees to keep the home fires burning until the women return."[52] Having failed to behave like men, the compulsory recruits were supposedly suited to perform women's roles on the home front. Furthermore, because they did not comply with dominant conceptions of hegemonic and patriotic masculinity, Canadians further admonished the NRMA recruits because their status as conscripts was surely "a reflection of the[ir] patriotism."[53] The NRMA soldiers were also constructed as a subversive threat on par with the enemy. Many Canadians drew parallels between the 'Zombies' and the "Germans" and "saboteurs" with whom they were at war.[54] Most explicitly was a letter to the editor of a Winnipeg newspaper. "Until lately I have always understood that a zombie was a living dead man, something in the same class as were wolves [sic] and vampires," wrote one civilian, but instead:

> it seems that a zombie is a physically perfect man, living, but dead from his ears up. He can do what he is commanded, but is not capable of thinking for himself or of feeling for someone else. A typical Nazi sounds like that. Under the present setup there are two forces at war and only two—the force of evil, represented by Germany and her cohorts, and the force of good, represented by every decent man and woman in the world. You are one or the other…[55]

---

[52] "Women Ready for Front Lines If Draftees Can 'Keep House,'" *Globe and Mail*, 17 November 1944: 15.

[53] "Decision Is Rightly Ottawa's," *Edmonton Journal*, 25 April 1944: n.p. (located in Library and Archives Canada (hereafter LAC), Manuscript Group 27, III, B11, Volume 81, "Recruiting for Overseas – Newspaper Clippings"). Also see: "Repeat Pleas to Home Army," *Hamilton Spectator*, 28 April 1944: n.p. (accessed via the Canadian War Museum's "Democracy at War" newspaper database).

[54] Jack McLaren, "Draftees in Clash at Fort Frances," *Winnipeg Tribune*, 4 December 1944: 1; "High School Girls Hurt as Vets Fight Draftees," *Toronto Daily Star*, 4 December 1944: n.p. (located in LAC, Record Group 2-14, Volume 5996, "Press, Censorship, BC Disturbances, Disturbances at Valcartier, MPs Conscription Stances"); "Girls Injured When Draftees In Street Row," *Globe and Mail*, 5 December 1944: 13; and "H.D.'s and Service Men Fight—Zombies Battle With Veterans and Citizens in Fort Frances," *Prince Rupert Daily News*, 14 December 1944: 1. Also see: 'A Zombie Sympathizer,' "Zombie Sympathizer," *Winnipeg Tribune*, 9 December 1944: 5. While sympathetic, the latter source draws attention to the fact that compulsory recruits had to contend with being labelled as Germans and saboteurs.

[55] Scotty, "Two Forces," *Winnipeg Tribune*, 27 October 1944: 7.

Given the high ideals for which the war was being waged – a defence of democracies, freedoms, and liberalism in the face of tyranny and authoritarianism – the apparent undemocratic nature of conscripts equated them with the enemy.[56] In a highly charged wartime environment, Canadians were forced to clarify who they were and why they were fighting and almost as important, who was with them and who was against them.[57] While wartime rhetoric emphasized unanimity of purpose in support of the war effort – however elusive it might be in practice – compulsory recruits existed in the public mind outside of the imagined consensus; they were the disloyal and unpatriotic 'other.'

Canadians held in high esteem the men who were willing to fight for the Allied cause and to defend the ideals for which Western civilization stood, but the NRMA men could claim none of the attributes that characterized the nation's front-line forces overseas.[58] As such, the country struggled to make sense of the conscripts and their refusal to embrace willingly the tropes of patriotism, loyalty, masculinity, and so on – characteristics that many believed were vital in their sense of Canadian identity. Inasmuch as the discourse is heavy-handed and often shrill, it is a testament to how unsettling the refusal to volunteer was for many Canadians. The public searched for an explanation that allowed them to avoid the alternate possibility that Canadians were not united behind the war effort, that there was no

[56] On the undemocratic nature of NRMA recruits, see: "Why Should Zombies Let Their Brothers Do Their Fighting?," *The Canadian Statesman*, 13 July 1944: 2; "Bowmanville Paper Asks Why Zombies Let Others Do Their Fighting," *Globe and Mail*, 19 July 1944: 6; A.V. Belward, "Let 'Equal Treatment' Include Overseas Service," *Globe and Mail*, 22 September 1944: 6; "Women Ready for Front Lines if Draftees Can 'Keep House,'" *Globe and Mail*, 17 November 1944: 15; and J.W. Boyd, "Artillery Unit Becomes Infantry," *Globe and Mail*, 29 November 1944: 6.

[57] R. Scott Sheffield, *The Red Man's on the Warpath: The Image of the "Indian" and the Second World War* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2004): 63.

[58] Jonathan Vance, *Death So Noble: Memory, Meaning, and the First World War* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1997): 136. On the use of the 'Zombies' as a foil against which the brave, patriotic, and self-sacrificing soldiers overseas could be favorably compared, see: J.V. McAree, "Zombies Are Blamed for Faults of Others," *Globe and Mail*, 24 July 1944: 6; "There Is Only One Answer," *Globe and Mail*, 7 October 1944: 6; "Result of a Two-Faced Policy," *Globe and Mail*, 26 October 1944: 6; 'White Waterlily,' "More Stimulus," *Globe and Mail*, 22 November 1944: 11; and "'Five Year Men,'" *Winnipeg Tribune*, 16 February 1945: 6.

consensus surrounding the meaning of wartime duty, and that the seeming touchstones of Anglo-Canadian life were no longer an unquestioned truth. The constructed 'Zombie' became an outlet for the dominant society to defend its values and its understanding of a citizen's duty in wartime, and these ascriptions indicate the degree to which Canadians were disturbed about the possibility that one's affiliation with and connection to the state was something other than what the broad middle of Canadian society imagined.

Furthermore, the construction of the 'Zombie assumed widespread social implications. As R. Scott Sheffield argues in his study of the image of the 'Indian' in Canada during the Second World War, "the mental framework of knowledge and assumption was designed and created by the dominant society for its own consumption and to meet its own requirements. It enables the members of this society to make sense of the world around them, to impose order and meaning on chaos." Moreover, there were certain advantages to be had from "imagining the other as inferior and subordinate." It was simply the first step in realizing their subjugation and control.[59] Viewed in this sense, Canadians employed the 'Zombie' imagery as one method for defending their values and ensuring that others conformed to the behaviour expected of patriotic and 'right-thinking' Canadians.

A candid editorial supports this interpretation of the image of the 'Zombie.' Sardonically titled, "Not a Bit of Coercion!" the writer noted:

> It has become a truism that our so-called system of voluntary enlistments for the army is based on back-door methods. Men are called for the home defense army in the hope that they will go active. Those who remain in the home army… are so often insulted, browbeaten and coerced into going active… This system is based on shaming, stigmatizing and coercing men to go active… [S]evere measures [are] taken to impress men into active service.[60]

[59] Sheffield, *The Red Man's on the Warpath*: 9.
[60] "Not a Bit of Coercion!" *Globe and Mail*, 29 April 1944: 6.

Another account, and one far less sympathetic, provided counsel on how to treat the conscripts. "Give all these people [conscripts] a lesson where it will hurt: Ostracize them. Tell your friends to shun them until such time as they vindicate themselves, and the only solution is that they go overseas forthwith."[61] In other words, conscripts deserved contempt until they agreed to serve on the front lines. If these men would not do 'the right thing' voluntarily, then they must be shamed into such behaviour. As Carl Berger writes in his seminal study of Canadian imperialism, many Anglo-Canadians were certain of their identity, their affiliation with and connection to Britain, and their duties to the state and the empire, and they exerted much effort trying "to bring reality into alignment with their vision."[62]

Early in the conflict, civilian women had been keen to attend social activities alongside soldiers of any rank or status, regardless of whether the soldiers had been recruited under the NRMA. According to Daniel Byers, who examines the experiences of compulsory recruits in the first NRMA training camps in 1940, dances "provided one of the few occasions when women were permitted to enter military camps." In some instances, women were even bussed in to act as escorts.[63] This, however, changed once the public became aware of visual cues to distinguish the conscripts. As Granatstein notes in *Canada's Army: Waging War and Keeping the Peace*:

> There were differences in the uniform, an Active soldier wearing a Canada Volunteer Service Medal, a Canada flash, and the cap badge of the corps to which he was to be posted. The NRMA soldier had nothing on his chest, a maple leaf badge on his cap, and no shoulder flashes. The public, in other words, soon learned to differentiate between volunteers and conscripts.[64]

---

[61] W.J. Reid, "Dribbles for Army Reinforcement Will Not Meet Immediate Need," *Globe and Mail*, 30 November 1944: 6.

[62] Berger, *The Sense of Power:* 265.

[63] Byers, *Zombie Army*: 149.

[64] J.L. Granatstein, *Canada's Army: Waging War and Keeping the Peace* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002): 191. Notably, a soldier had to complete 18 months of voluntary service before he was entitled to wear the Canada Volunteer Service Medal. Even after receiving the Volunteer Service Medal,

This allowed civilians to participate in exclusionary behaviors. In addition, volunteers were also eligible to wear the General Service (GS) badge on their uniform, which indicated that they had voluntary enlisted in the army. Conscripts, on the other hand, did not receive the GS badge. A national advertising campaign coincident with a recruiting drive for overseas volunteers in mid-1944 brought the badge to the attention of the Canadian public and heightened awareness of who was, and who was not, a volunteer.[65]

In northern British Columbia's Skeena Valley, one resident recalled how the community's female population used the GS badge to distinguish between conscripts and volunteers. "If you joined up voluntarily, well you got a GS, and if you didn't join up, volunteer, well you had no GS. And the zombies would come and ask you to dance, and we would say 'where's your GS?' 'Haven't got one,' 'forget it."[66] In the province's central interior, another woman stated of the NRMA recruit: "If he hasn't volunteered to go overseas, we didn't associate with them. It was just hopeless for them to go to dances, the girls just wouldn't dance with them."[67] Similarly, one man remembered that, "the girls were told to stay away from the [conscripted] soldiers" although, he added, there was never any "trouble."[68] Elsewhere, another man believed that the conscripts in his town "were uptight"

---

volunteers continued to wear the GS badge until they proceeded overseas. See: "'G.S.' Badge of Honor: Innocent-Looking Sleeve Appendage Has Significant Meaning," *Prince Rupert Daily News*, 28 June 1944: 1.

[65] Some examples of the propaganda surrounding the GS Badge include: "Canada's Badge of Honor," *Strathmore Standard*, 10 August 1944: 3; "GS and Victory," *Prince Rupert Daily News*, 5 September 1944: 2; "You're Darned Right I Signed GS," *Prince Rupert Daily News*, 12 September 1944: 2; "Victorious Canadians Enter Berlin," *Cariboo Observer*, 16 September 1944: 3; and "GS and Peace," *Crag and Canyon*, 8 December 1944: 2. Most often, this type of propaganda appeared as a quarter-page spread with a catchy slogan, an image of a Canadian sporting the badge in some capacity, and information on how to enlist for service overseas.

[66] Debra Newman, interviewed by Mia Reimers, Prince Rupert, B.C., 22 October 1997, quoted in Mia Reimers, "The Glamour and the Horror: A Social History of Wartime Northwestern British Columbia, 1939-1945" (Master's Thesis, University of Northern British Columbia, 1996): 33.

[67] Donna Clarke, interviewed by Mia Reimers, Prince George, B.C., 26 February 1998, quoted in *Ibid*.

[68] Lawrence "Bud" Kirkaldy, interviewed by Marilyn Crombie and Neil Weber, Terrace, B.C., 26 October 1978, Terrace Mini-Museum Aural History Programme, Heritage Park Museum.

because "they weren't allowed in the bars."[69] Increasingly, civilian women scorned compulsory recruits in favour of the uniformed men whom they saw as exhibiting honourable wartime conduct. By 1944, as an article in the *Prince George Citizen* attests, entire communities came to treat NRMA recruits antagonistically. The *Citizen* reporter noted that the "attendance of girls at the Knights of Columbus Hut took a sudden drop… The boycott [of conscripts] is extending to socials and dances."[70] As much as women refused to dance or associate with NRMA recruits, "Repercussions among townsfolks [sic]" were even more widespread. Many of the town's citizens "pointedly ignor[ed] the zombies."[71] These shaming and shunning behaviors played out in interactions across the country. In Toronto, one newspaper noted, "Nice girls do not dance or dine with them [and] 'G.S.' personnel object to being associated with them under any circumstances."[72] Although anecdotal, the evidence suggests that their unwillingness to assume the burden of citizenship meant that NRMA recruits were denied the benefits reserved for those with their loyalty intact.[73]

As the 'Zombie' ascription demonstrates, many Canadians 'bought into' and deployed the rhetoric of patriotism in order to express their conception of a citizen's responsibilities and to defend the values they believed integral in their sense of Canadian identity. Concerned with the nature and extent of patriotic duty, the nation engaged in exclusionary social practices because the men called up under the NRMA did not seem to share in the dominant society's conception of duty. Of course, the attention lavished on the conscripts and the

---

[69] Charles Houlden, interviewed by Marilyn Crombie and Judy Dimmerman, Terrace, B.C., 26 July 1978, *ibid*.

[70] "'Grievances' Parade by Zombies," *Prince George Citizen*, 30 November 1944: 1.

[71] *Ibid*.

[72] J.H. Elmsley, "Zombie, Neither Soldier Nor Civilian, Victim of Government Policy," *Globe and Mail*, 21 July 1944: 6.

[73] The extant historiography supports this interpretation. See: E.L.M. Burns, *Manpower in the Canadian Army, 1939-1945* (Toronto: Clarke, Irwin & Company Limited, 1956): 119-120; Stacey, *Arms, Men and Governments*: 399; Granatstein and Hitsman, *Broken Promises*: 145-6; and Reimers, "The Glamour and the Horror": 34.

breadth of how they were constructed suggests that the Canadian public was 'grasping at straws' to explain the NRMA personnel's aversion to service on the front lines. On the surface, these ascriptions centred on the act of defending the nation by way of soldiering overseas, but the underlying debate was much more diverse. At a most basic level, military service and the act of taking up arms represents one's relationship with and obligations to the state. The conscription debate during the Second World War reveals that many Canadians continued to defend staunchly old notions that one had to take up arms regardless of one's relationship to the state. However, as the counter-narrative demonstrates, others were prepared to question this notion of unthinking patriotism and unflinching commitment.

"Decent young men who have obeyed the law" – Contesting Wartime Duty, 1944-45

Although in no way as insistent as the dominant image of the conscripts, the more sympathetic portrayals suggest that some Canadians wondered about the price paid for home-front recruiting tactics and the other supposed truisms that were employed to measure the conscripts. As pervasive as was the dominant narrative, the mindless rush to the colors troubled some Canadians. According to Sheffield, many Canadians revealed a willingness to turn the scrutiny inward by late 1944. This willingness to look within:

> developed out of the nation's desire to create a new order, a better Canada in the wake of the Great Depression and the Second World War. Many people believed that changes were needed and that it was not enough to return to the pre-war status quo. In envisioning the new order, Canadians were forced to think hard about the kind of country they desired and to clarify the principles upon which it should be based. Such debate was… sincere because these were the same principles for which the country was fighting a total war and for which its sons and daughters were dying.[74]

With the immediate task of winning the war seemingly well at hand, the world began to turn its attention to the future and shape of the postwar world. In Canada, wartime production peaked, full employment had been reached, and Canadians began to aspire for a new

[74] Sheffield, *The Red Man's on the Warpath*: 105.

beginning out of the ashes of the war. Driving this agenda were anxieties related to the legacy of the Great War experience and the lingering sense of dissatisfaction with its aftermath – inadequate provisions for veterans, widespread social unrest, and a crushing worldwide depression.[75] The interwar period and the Second World War become a watershed era that scarred and transformed the nation, its understanding of duty, and most importantly, its sense of self.[76]

Having lived through a decade of depression and then expected to make the ultimate sacrifice for a nation that seemed to have failed them, some Canadians came to believe that they owed the nation and its government nothing more than what they were duty-bound to do before the law. This perspective placed a far greater onus on the government to lead, rather than to rely on the nation's sense of obligation to 'paper over the cracks.' Thus, one of the more prominent means of defending the conscripts was by casting them as victims of government policy, insofar as this shift in thinking required better governance. As J.H. Elmsley argued in his letter to the editor of the *Globe and Mail*, the compulsory recruits were "not cowards or men lacking in ordinary courage, but are informed individuals that the Government, in playing a cat-and-mouse game… has manoeuvred into the humiliating position where they are now rapidly losing their self-respect and the esteem of the public."[77] Likewise, a Toronto columnist suggested that conscripts "were not born as zombies [but] were created thus," and urged readers to direct "any abuse…at those who made the zombie army," rather than the 'Zombies' themselves.[78] The uneasy coexistence of the voluntary and compulsory systems provoked the ire of a *Winnipeg Tribune* editorial as well. The writer

[75] *Ibid*: 85.
[76] Berton, *The Great Depression*: 9.
[77] J.H. Elmsley, "Zombie, Neither Soldier Nor Civilian," *Globe and Mail*, 9 November 1944: 6.
[78] J.A. McAree, "Circle Bar Fourth Column," *Globe and Mail*, 9 November 1944: 10.

believed the system was "unfair to the draftees themselves since it shouldered upon them the responsibility which the government have borne." More pointedly, "It is not the Zombies who are the real cowards, but the Dominion government."[79] The NRMA recruits had merely chosen an option made available by governmental policy and then fulfilled their legal obligations by donning the military uniform and protecting Canada's borders. "When Canada was in danger of invasion, these same Zombies were good enough to stand on guard day and night to protect us from the enemy," suggested one Manitoba resident, "But the minute that Canada was out of danger, these same boys are run down, called 'yellow rats.' Is that what democracy stands for?"[80] The observation was telling. The nation's conscripts had "acted admirably" in defending the North American continent, risking their lives in the process, yet Canadians negated their efforts and constructed them as cowards who did not possess any sense of national obligation.[81] Indeed, had it not been for the NRMA presence on the west coast, one correspondent was prepared to assert that the Japanese would have established themselves in the Aleutian Islands "a long time ago."[82] While the dominant response to the war was to espouse moral obligation, patriotism, and the spirit of self-sacrifice, the sympathetic responses to conscripts suggest that at least some Canadians were troubled by the notion that every able-bodied man ought to be willing to make the ultimate sacrifice.

---

[79] "Mr. King Sets the Issue," *Winnipeg Tribune*, 7 April 1945: 6. Also see: J.V. McAree, "Zombies are Blamed for Faults of Others," *Globe and Mail*, 24 July 1944: 6; "Bracken Says People of Quebec Were Deceived," *Charlottetown Guardian*, 30 October 1944: 1; and "Speaking of 'Guts,'" *Ottawa Citizen*, 28 July 1944: 4.

[80] 'Good Canadian,' "Your Opinions: Home Defense Troops," *Winnipeg Tribune*, 25 November 1944: 3.

[81] "The Week in Ottawa," *Cariboo Observer*, 9 December 1944: 2.

[82] "Cut Out Zombie Distinction," *Winnipeg Tribune*, 28 February 1945: 7. Also see: "Kiska Seizure Lessens Threat to West Coast," *Globe and Mail*, 25 August 1943: 2; 'Another Canadian Wife,' "Your Opinions: Respect," *Winnipeg Tribune*: 18 November 1944: 4; and "Ottawa News Letter," *Western Star*, 9 December 1944: 3.

According to another letter to the editor, "The draftees are decent young men who have obeyed the law as it stands, and have been taken from civilian jobs or schooling at the same inconvenience as any one [sic] else, and accepted the training prescribed for them."[83] The conscripts were not 'Zombies' who shirked their patriotic duty, but young men who fulfilled their legal duties to the nation-at-war. From such a perspective, the supposed rhetoric of patriotism that was driving the war effort was artifice. As a Portage la Prairie woman wrote, "Home Defense soldiers have had their lives much more disrupted and their contribution has been greater than a sizeable percentage of Canadians relatively undisturbed by the war, who sit back and demand so much of others."[84] The idea that seemingly patriotic Canadians were not actively contributing to the war effort was a recurring theme. It was a perspective adopted in one rural Albertan editorial arguing that "all sections of Canada have given the poor old Zombies an awful beating," yet "there are many people, well able to, but who do not do their share in purchasing bonds. Why are these people not labelled as 'Slackers' or 'Zombies' [and] insulted and sneered at in the daily press?"[85] The proposition was intriguing; while many had self-righteously argued that compulsory recruits were undemocratic and unpatriotic, these critics had seemingly failed to demonstrate either character or valour.

As much as many Canadians questioned the recruits' integrity, their defenders countered that the conscripts had demonstrated the "courage of their own convictions," even in the face of underhanded and coercive recruiting tactics.[86] Following this course, a

[83] K. Roy Edwards, "A Word for 'Draftees': They Obeyed the Law," *Globe and Mail*, 18 November 1944: 6.

[84] Another Canadian Wife, "Your Opinions: Respect," *Winnipeg Tribune*, 18 November 1944: 4.

[85] "The Other Side of the Story," *Staveley Advertiser*, 10 November 1944: 8.

[86] H. Croney, "Objects to Getting White Feather," *Globe and Mail*, 10 July 1944: 6. On recruiting practices, see: "Coercion by Subterfuge," *Globe and Mail*, 9 October 1941: 6; "Recruiting is Placed on a White Feather Basis," *Toronto Telegram*, 29 July 1944: n.p. (accessed via Canadian War Museum's "Democracy at

Hamilton Review editorial argued that, "it takes a good deal [of] courage to answer an army call-up in Canada today and remain a zombie, detested and scorned among your fellows."[87] Another reporter, having observed a NRMA training exercise, came to believe that arguments against voluntarism were not without merit. He interviewed one conscript who refused to serve overseas because he had seen three of his brothers mobilized for overseas service and needed to care for his aging father. He alone could assume familial responsibilities. Another conscript was the eldest of 15 children and declined to enlist to provide for his younger siblings.[88] In such instances, one's sense of personal obligations might take precedence over any arguments rooted in patriotism or civic duty. While these notions once existed as an unquestioned truth, the distinctions between legal and patriotic duty were rapidly becoming important.

Likewise, another commentator believed, "A great many draftees have refused to go active as a matter of principle—it's not a question of courage or bravery or the lack of same. It seems to me it takes a great deal more courage to stand up for your principles and face public scorn, contempt and sneers, such as the Zombies are not doing, than to go active."[89] That some recruits refused to convert on principle is an important point suggesting that at least some Canadians were willing to contest commonly held notions of martial honor and obligation. Inasmuch as citizens of democratic nations have certain responsibilities to the state in return for protection of certain rights, those responsibilities and rights must be

---

War" newspaper database); "Found Wanting," *Prince George Citizen*, 30 November 1944: 2; "Conscience Not Public Arbiter in Matter of Wartime Duty," *Toronto Telegram*, 20 December 1944: n.p. (accessed via Canadian War Museum's "Democracy at War" newspaper database); and "Army Absentees Told of Possible Penalties," *Globe and Mail*, 23 January 1945: 3.

[87] "Political Soul-Searching," *Hamilton Review*, 20 November 1944: n.p. (accessed via Canadian War Museum's "Democracy at War" newspaper database). Also see: "What is H.D. Character?," *Prince Rupert Daily News*, 29 November 1944: 2.

[88] "10-Hour Field Day for NRMA's," *Globe and Mail*, 19 August 1944: 7.

[89] "The Other Side of the Story," *Staveley Advertiser*, 10 November 1944: 8.

reciprocal in nature.[90] For some, however, front-line military service was an exaggeration of this democratic principle. One loquacious editorial piece suggested that:

> the most respectful and responsible of citizens do not volunteer to pay more taxes than the Government demands. If they pay what they are asked to pay they are considered to have done their bit; to pay more would not suggest patriotism but lunacy. Why should they be more Catholic than the Pope? Why should they be more loyal than the King? If the Government says that they [conscripts] are not needed overseas, why should they volunteer for overseas service, disrupting their careers, risking their lives for an object which their own Government says is not necessary, for duties which the Government says are being performed adequately by the men now overseas?[91]

Others were equally forthright. Despite having sent two sons into battle, one father believed, "If this is a democratic country then let the one who wants to fight, fight."[92] Another letter to the editor argued that the conscripts "have not had a fair deal. I say if we have a free Canada let everybody do as they think best. Those that wanted to fight enlisted."[93] Equally important, the more even-handed approaches to conscripts dictated that regardless of one's willingness to serve, citizens of a free, liberal, and democratic state ought to be entitled to respect.[94] Even among those who did not necessarily agree with the conscripts' decision to remain on home soil, at least some Canadians believed that the nation "must overlook their faults… to build a better country. Canada needs the best that we can give. There will be no time for us to squabble with those who have served at home." More pointedly, the nation needed to "smother the present flame of hatred and foster a more amiable feeling" among all

[90] Timothy A. Canova, "Democracy's Disappearing Duties," in *Democratic Citizenship and War*, edited by Yoav Peled, Noah Lewin-Epstein, Guy Mundlak, and Jean Cohen (Abingdon, UK: Routlege, 2011): 199.

[91] J.V. McAree, "Zombies Are Blamed for Faults of Others," *Globe and Mail*, 21 July 1944: 6.

[92] 'Father of Two Volunteers,' "Your Opinions: Overseas Service," *Winnipeg Tribune*, 27 November 1944: 7.

[93] 'Reader,' "Your Opinions: Defends Zombies," *Winnipeg Tribune*, 27 November 1944: 7. Also see: 'A Zombie Sympathizer,' "Your Opinions: Zombie Sympathizer," *Winnipeg Tribune*, 9 December 1944: 5.

[94] 'Another Canadian Wife,' "Your Opinions: Respect," *Winnipeg Tribune*, 18 November 1944: 4.

Canadians.[95] Only then could the nation re-emerge from the ashes of the war and forge ahead toward a promising future.

Conclusion: Patriotic and Political Responsibility in Second World War Canada

In answering their NRMA call-up notices, conscripts were assured that they would not serve on the front lines. Yet despite this accommodation, there was a great deal of pressure to enlist as volunteers. The men who successfully resisted were viewed as points of weakness at a time when popular opinion was broadly in favor of an unflinching commitment to the war. Because the refusal to volunteer whispered of uncertain loyalties, these men became a source of profound anxiety for many Canadians. The exploration of how Canadians viewed and treated the nation's compulsory recruits reveals very different conceptions of patriotism and civic duty. For some, conscripts were the most undesirable element of wartime society because they were unwilling to take on similar front-line military service as their fellow citizens. In differing from the vast majority of their compatriots in their definition of political responsibility, the nation's NRMA recruits were often vilified as having no sense of duty whatsoever. Indeed, Canadians ascribed onto these men certain characteristics, such as cowardice and effeminacy, and far worse, rendered them undemocratic, disloyal, and unpatriotic. The nation further deployed notions of patriotism by attempting to coerce them into enlistment, or otherwise excluding those who did not conform to dominant conception of duty from their social circles. As Timothy A. Canova notes in his study of democratic citizenship, civic obligations were widespread, meaningful, and essential for victory to many during the Second World War.[96]

[95] M.E. Chesher, "Defending Zombies," *The Maple Leaf*, 8 November 1944: 4.
[96] Canova, "Democracy's Disappearing Duties": 199.

Still others contested this interpretation of patriotic and political responsibility. While their opinions were a comparatively faint rejoinder to those who scorned the conscripts and labelled them 'Zombies,' the counter-narrative deserves acknowledgement. For some, the distinction between legal and patriotic duty was important. The conscripts' willingness to answer their call-up notices in the defence of Canada demonstrated that these men were loyal and law-abiding citizens who deserved some measure of respect. For a significant portion of the public, ideas about the NRMA recruits were rooted in the degree to which Canadians embraced the pervasive rhetoric of patriotism and the allied notion that military service was a prime component of good citizenship. That these perspectives echoed concerns initially voiced during the conscription crisis of 1917 is unsurprising but there is reason to wonder if unsettling concerns over the depth of Canadian identity also informed the shrillness of the response to those who preferred not to volunteer for overseas service. As the following chapter will demonstrate, as much as the Canadian military drew upon similar themes in their attempts to understand the conscript mindset, their response was, in its own way, even more frustrated and disbelieving than was the general public's.

Chapter Two:
"We have not developed a true and strong sense of nationhood" – Military Constructions of the Compulsory Recruit

According to Canadian military reports of the Second World War, considerable numbers of the nation's armed forces constituted disloyal foreigners, ignorant French Canadians, and those otherwise unworthy of citizenship because they did not subscribe to dominant ideas about civic responsibility in a liberal democracy. This perception of deviance specifically applied to the 157,841 men conscripted under the 1940 National Resources Mobilization Act (NRMA).[1] Not only were these men allegedly an affront to the country's Anglo-Canadian sensibilities, but they seemed to be beyond the reach of any civic education that could transform them into 'right-thinking' Canadians. As a result, military commanders portrayed these supposed delinquents in internal correspondence in contradistinction to 'real' Canadians and cast them against the men who voluntarily answered the call-to-arms. These officers tended to emphasize the degree to which the conscripts, or at least their underlying values, were 'non-British.' This portrayal of the compulsory recruit became widespread throughout 1943 and 1944 in response to both the wider war and local circumstances.

Owing to the restrictions set out under the NRMA, the country's conscripts could not be sent abroad against their will.[2] The men who volunteered for military service, on the other hand, comprised Canada's front-line fighting forces. This division within the Canadian military – between home defence conscripts and overseas volunteers – had its roots in the

[1] C.P. Stacey, *Arms, Men and Governments: The War Policies of Canada 1939-1945* (Ottawa: The Queen's Printer, 1970): 599. Of those conscripted, nearly 60,000 went on to volunteer for overseas service, comprising ten per cent of all volunteers during the conflict, while another 60,000 served on defence posts across the country for much of the conflict, releasing an equal number of volunteers to proceed overseas. Also see: Daniel Byers, *Zombie Army: The Canadian Army and Conscription in the Second World War* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2016): 3.

[2] Section 3 of the NRMA stated explicitly, "The powers conferred by the next preceding section may not be exercised for the purpose of requiring persons to serve in the military, naval or air forces outside of Canada and the territorial waters thereof." See: Dominion of Canada, "The National Resources Mobilization Act, 1940," *Acts of the Parliament of the Dominion of Canada* (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1940): 43.

troubles over conscription in the First World War, with its attendant threats to national unity.[3] The limitations placed upon the conscripts' service were a means to avoid the tumult associated with overseas conscription while ensuring a sufficient mobilization of all national resources and an effective prosecution of the war.

Historian R. Scott Sheffield argues that serving one's country in wartime was understood as both a profound duty and the highest honor for any young man because it demonstrated a willingness to assume the most demanding and dangerous obligations of citizenship. Voluntarism marked the pinnacle of a democratic and freely undertaken right to choose.[4] In conjunction with the military ethos of ordering and hierarchy, and the fact that a voluntary recruit was inherently more useful because he could serve anywhere in the world, military officers viewed the conscripts as an aggravation at odds with the nation's higher ideals.[5] When the NRMA recruits came under intense pressure to enlist as volunteers – to 'convert' or 'go active' in the parlance of the day – most refused the change in status that would facilitate their deployment to overseas theatres of war.[6] The military, troubled by the NRMA resistance, resorted to opportunistic and simple-minded attempts to explain why conscripts did not share in a similar sense of duty. On the surface, these ascriptions

[3] Historians emphasize the degree to which the conscription issue divided the country along linguistic, cultural, and economic lines. They point to the gerrymandered federal election, the violent rioting in the province of Quebec, widespread desertion and evasion of the law that followed conscription, and general anti-conscription sentiment in French Canada. See: J.L. Granatstein, *Conscription in the Second World War, 1939-1945* (Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1969): 9; J.L. Granatstein and J.M. Hitsman, *Broken Promises: A History of Conscription in Canada* (Toronto: Copp Clark Pitman Ltd., 1985): 1; Daniel Byers, "Mobilising Canada: The National Resources Mobilization Act, the Department of National Defence, and Compulsory Military Service in Canada, 1940-1945," *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association* 7, no. 1 (1996): 175; and Tim Cook, *Fighting to the Finish: Canadians in the Second World War 1939-1945, Volume Two* (Toronto: Penguin Books, 2015): 363-64.

[4] R. Scott Sheffield, *The Red Man's on the Warpath: The Image of the 'Indian' and the Second World War* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2004): 96.

[5] Mia Reimers discusses this military ethos in "The Glamour and the Horror: A Social History of Wartime Northwestern British Columbia, 1939-1945" (Master's Thesis, University of Northern British Columbia, 1999): 16-17 and 104.

[6] E.L.M. Burns, *Manpower in the Canadian Army* (Toronto: Clarke, Irwin, 1956): 118-121.

reinforced the pro-enlistment willingness to fight and attempted to explain why others were not similarly motivated.

This chapter proceeds through three sections that examine how the Canadian military conceived of compulsory recruits and their relationship to the nation's volunteer forces. The discussion begins with the implementation of the NRMA compulsory training program in 1940 to examine the military's desire to educate conscripts about their supposed civic responsibilities within a liberal democracy. Army administrators soon came to believe that if the compulsory recruits were properly educated about their wartime responsibilities, they would recognize that their duty rested overseas and thus 'go active.' Next, the chapter details the responses of military officers and commanders towards the conscripts following the initial training period. At the war's midway point, and within the context of localized training and the wider war effort, the military's attention was initially diverted from attempts to 'convert' or 'educate' the conscripts in favour of training them to the high standards required of modern troops serving in the overseas theatres. The conscripts' laudatory home front performance encouraged a sense of hope that they would 'answer the bell' for overseas service. Yet, when faced with the call-to-arms in 1944, few NRMA recruits were willing to take up the Allied cause on the front lines. Officers thus began to search for an explanation as to why these men were not motivated to defend the ideals underpinning the war. In their increasingly desperate attempts to elucidate the conscripts' resistance, military staff concluded that conscripts must have been foreign to British and Anglo-Canadian history, traditions, and ideals. A cursory glance suggests that these constructions suggested much about French and foreign-born Canadians, but framed in the context of place and identity in the Second World War, these ascriptions were actually rooted in historic concerns about Canadian imperialism and national identity.

Conscription, Conversion, and Civic Education, 1940-41

Military service has long been held as a means to promote better citizenship and foster a sense of democracy as part of one's civic responsibility.[7] From the time that the first civilians were called up under the NRMA to begin their compulsory training, army administrators framed compulsory military service as an integral part of civic duty. Enacted in the dark days of June 1940, the NRMA was the Dominion government's response to public cries for a greater war effort in response to rapid German advances into Western Europe. Within weeks, France fell to Nazi Germany and Canada stood as Britain's largest military ally. The Act's intent was to mobilize the nation's resources, human and material, to ensure the effective prosecution of the Allied war effort.[8] It provided the government with the power to control employment, enforce national registration, seize property, and most importantly, conscript men. The recently appointed Chief of the General Staff, H.D.G. Crerar, had not yet returned to Canada from England to assume his position as senior military advisor to the government, and the position of Minister of National Defence remained vacant following Norman Roger's death in an airplane crash on 10 June 1940.[9] Lacking these key administrators, development of conscription policy fell to the House of Commons and, in particular, C.G. 'Chubby' Power, acting Defence Minister and Member of Parliament for Quebec South.[10] Power and his staff initially considered an eight-week training program, the minimum considered necessary to teach basic martial skills to raw recruits but, under pressure owing to staff, equipment, and ammunition shortages, the schedule was shortened to

[7] James A. Wood, *Militia Myths: Ideas of the Canadian Citizen Soldier, 1896-1921* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2010), 1-18 and 199; Anders Ahlbäck, *Manhood and the Making of the Military: Conscription and Masculinity in Finland, 1917-1939* (Farnham, U.K.: Ashgate, 2014): 2-6; Sonya O. Rose, *Which People's War? National Identity and Citizenship in Wartime Britain, 1939-1945* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004): 160.

[8] Dominion of Canada, "The National Resources Mobilization Act, 1940": 43.

[9] Granatstein, *Conscription in the Second World War*: 30.

[10] Byers, *Zombie Army*: 52-53.

six weeks. By the time the first recruits arrived at training centres in the fall of 1940, the training period was just 30 days.[11]

Within four months of the passage of the NRMA, unmarried men between the ages of 21 and 24 began to receive call-up notices requiring them to undergo a medical examination before presenting themselves at one of nation's 39 basic training centres.[12] These compulsory recruits were subject to the fundamentals of drilling, marching, discipline, weaponry training, and military education.[13] Upon completion of basic training, the NRMA recruit was then posted to the Canadian Army Reserve Force unit nearest to his home. Formerly the Non-Permanent Active Militia (NPAM), these reserve forces could be made available in the event that the military required their services.[14] With the arrival of NRMA personnel into the ranks of the NPAM, militiamen and reservists could bolster the pool of reinforcements for the European theatre by enlisting for service overseas.

Responses to the 30-day training scheme, especially among politicians and bureaucrats, were generally unfavourable. At the highest political level, the most vocal critic was R.B. Hanson, the interim leader of the Conservative Party, following leader Robert Manion's electoral defeat in the Dominion election of March 1940. Hanson charged that political, rather than military concerns, motivated the decision to shorten the training period

---

[11] *Ibid*: 54.

[12] "First Drafts for Home Defence Are Now Being Called," *Cariboo Observer*, 28 September 1940:1; and Granatstein and Hitsman, *Broken Promises*: 146. For a map identifying the locations of these training centres, see "Figure 1: Thirty-Day Training Centres, October 1940" in Byers, *Zombie Army*: xiv. Notably, farmers, Doukhobors, Mennonites, and conscientious objectors could apply in writing to the National War Service Board to postpone their military training.

[13] An overview of the basic training syllabus can be found in the following war diaries: Library and Archives Canada (hereafter LAC), Record Group (hereafter RG) 24, Volume 17290, War Diary of No. 131 Canadian Army (Basic) Training Centre (hereafter CA(B)TC), Camrose, 16 July 1940; Volume 17200, War Diary of No. 41 CA(B)TC, Huntingdon, 1-2 September 1940; and Volume 17225, War Diary of No. 47 CA(B)TC, Valleyfield, 20 September 1940. Also see: Byers, *Zombie Army*: 62; and Reginald H. Roy, *Ready for the Fray: (Deas Gu Cath): The History of the Canadian Scottish Regiment (Princess Mary's) 1920-1955* (Vancouver: Evergreen Press Limited, 1958): 139.

[14] There was no system in place for ensuring that NRMA trainees who entered the NPAM reported for weekly training sessions. See: Granatstein and Hitsman, *Broken Promises*: 145 and 147.

and, further, that the Liberal Party had failed to implement a more extensive training program befitting a nation at war.[15] According to Hanson, "the 30-day plan could never produce trained soldiers and was merely a hasty improvisation" by the Liberals.[16] Moreover, the brief training scheme signalled only "moderate participation" on Canada's part, despite the present conflict being "a struggle unprecedented in world history" that surely required a greater Canadian commitment. Indeed, if the situation "weren't so serious," Hanson would be inclined to describe the 30-day program "as a joke."[17] J.G. 'Jimmy' Gardiner, former Premier of Saskatchewan and Minister for the Departments of Agriculture and National War Services, also voiced discontent with the compulsory training scheme. He believed that 30 days' training resulted in "half-trained non-soldiers," and further criticized the government's mismanagement of industry. Dislocating tens of thousands of men from work on farms and in factories for such superficial training suggested, to Gardiner's mind, out-of-step governmental priorities.[18]

Public reception of the 30-day training scheme was mixed. *Saturday Night* called the NRMA program a "tragic joke" that would only produce men "who can just manage to form threes and shoulder arms if not barked at too ferociously."[19] The *Toronto Telegram* published an indictment that touched on similar concerns. Thirty days' training was, in the words of one editorialist, "much too short to produce a force ready for the defense of this country. It is three times shorter than it ought to have been, and twelve times shorter than is considered

[15] LAC, Manuscript Group (hereafter MG) 26, J4, Reel H-1538, Volume 365, "National Resources Mobilization Act," Clippings from Ottawa Journal and Ottawa Citizen, 1940; and Reel H-1532, Volume 353, "Conscription," Clipping from Montreal Gazette, 12 October 1940.

[16] "Service Should Be Continuous," *Hamilton Spectator*, 4 February 1941: n.p. (accessed via the Canadian War Museum's "Democracy at War" newspaper database).

[17] "Conservative Leader Scoffs at 30-Day Military Training Scheme," *Ottawa Evening Citizen*, 2 August 1940: 16

[18] Provincial Archives of Saskatchewan, J.G. Gardiner Papers, J.G. Gardiner to W.L.M. King, 7 November 1940, quoted in Granatstein and Hitsman, *Broken Promises*: 148.

[19] "Thirty-Day Soldiers," *Saturday Night* (October 1940): 3.

necessary in the United States." Foreshadowing the defence of conscripts mounted by some commentators later in the war, the *Telegram* editor believed that the program was nothing but a "political sideshow designed to put up a front of doing something without arousing any ill-feeling on the part of those who are called up."[20] A later editorial labelled the 30-day training period as "a farcical program for a nation at war." The country had apparently anticipated "a plan which would provide a greater army than could be raised by voluntary enlistment" but received "less in the way of an effective army than could have been secured by a wide open recruiting campaign."[21] At the same time and as demonstrated in Chapter One, public opinion was far from unanimous. The *Cariboo Observer* lauded the program as a "remarkable achievement" that reflected "the ever-increasing tempo of Canada's war effort," while a *Hamilton Spectator* news story labelled the conscripts as the "Dominion's young defenders," and expected that in 30 days' time, conscripts would become knowledgeable about "soldiering and barrack life."[22]

From within the ranks, military officers and administrators tended to agree that 30 days' time was simply not enough time to produce fully trained troops.[23] The recently returned Crerar was less than impressed when he observed that, "the Government is happily committed to compulsory training and, indeed, service but with a very superficial scheme for training and utilizing the man-power so called up."[24] Nevertheless, army administrators recognized an unanticipated benefit of the scheme, one that would continue to drive the

[20] "Department of War Services Too Politically Sensitive," *Toronto Telegram*, 8 October 1940: n.p. (accessed via the Canadian War Museum's "Democracy at War" newspaper database).

[21] "Ottawa's 'Comic Capers' and Compulsory Service," *Toronto Telegram*, 16 October 1940: n.p. (accessed via the Canadian War Museum's "Democracy at War" newspaper database).

[22] "First Drafts for Home Defense Are Now Being Called," *Cariboo Observer*, 28 September 1940: 1; and "Dominion's Young Defenders Commence Training Wednesday," *Hamilton Spectator*, 4 October 1940: n.p. (accessed via the Canadian War Museum's "Democracy at War" newspaper database).

[23] Granatstein and Hitsman, *Broken Promises*: 148.

[24] LAC, MG 30, E157, Volume 1, "CGS files 1940-1941 – Personal Correspondence," H.D.G. Crerar to A.G.L. McNaughton, 9 September 1940.

NRMA training program for the rest of the war. "[T]he short training period," according to Crerar, "enabled a larger number of young Canadians to gain a proper conception of their national obligations within a given time."[25] Indeed, military commanders began to envision a comprehensive program that would both prepare troops militarily and instill the idea that they were duty-bound to serve the nation overseas. Ultimately, it is difficult to gauge the degree to which the 30-day program convinced hesitant NRMA troops of their responsibility to king and country, or if the immersion in military training and ongoing social pressure actually factored into a conscript's decision to enlist following the training period. Nonetheless, historians of conscription seem prepared to assert that the program was an effective means to show young men that they were, as Canadian citizens, obliged to serve in the armed forces in time of war.[26]

Following J.L. Ralston's appointment to the National Defence portfolio, army planners revisited the NRMA program in the hopes of instilling in the compulsory recruits the idea that martial service was an important obligation for male citizens. That military service was a duty incumbent on young men was not a new conception of citizenship, but the notion had largely been in abeyance since the end of the First World War.[27] While it was too late to change the basis of the training scheme before the first recruits began compulsory

[25] LAC, MG 30, E157, Volume 35, "General Crerar's Personal Papers – Addresses and Memoranda by General H.D.G. Crerar," H.D.G. Crerar, Speech to Canadian Club, 23 October 1940.

[26] For example, see: Burns, *Manpower*: 117; Byers, *Zombie Army*: 70; and Granatstein and Hitsman, *Broken Promises*: 148.

[27] Liberal pacifism re-emerged in the interwar period out of the widespread disillusionment with war, and by the early 1930s, various religious and political groups in Canada constituted a wider peace movement. While a large segment of the population continued to advocate for military education and universal peacetime conscription, the larger current was that citizenship ought not to be contingent on martial service. See: Lara Campbell, Michael Dawson, and Catherine Gidney, eds., *Worth Fighting For: Canada's Tradition of War Resistance from 1812 to the War on Terror* (Toronto: Between the Lines, 2015): 3 and Michiel Horn, *The League for Social Reconstruction: Intellectual Origins of the Democratic Left in Canada 1930-1942* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980), especially145-174. The League of Social Reconstruction, whose membership included many prominent Canadian intellectuals, was broadly pacifist, opposed imperialism, and deplored the lingering constitutional subordination of Canada to Britain.

service, the top commanders revisited the program with an eye to increasing its efficiency at home and overseas. To the degree that the shortened program elicited a sense of duty in the conscripts and thus transformed them into willing volunteers, the military believed that a longer training period might also instill a sense of civic responsibility. In February 1941, the training period for recruits was extended from 30 days to four months. By April of that year, the scheme was again revised and conscripts were no longer released after four months but trained continuously for the duration of the war.[28] When it came time to make public the decision to extend the training scheme to the war's end, the Prime Minister framed the decision in the rhetoric of duty. "It has always been recognized that thirty days training would not fit a man to take his place in a fighting unit," he declared, "but it was felt that the short training period would give a large number of Canadians a conception of their national obligations, and a basis for more intensive training, should that become necessary."[29] He went on to state that he hoped the result of the extended program, "will be that every young man, at the time of his coming of age, will recognize and prepare himself for his responsibilities."[30] Those called up under the NRMA would still complete their basic training, but would then proceed to advanced training centres, and finally to operational units in the Canadian Army rather than to reserve units.

The military worked towards a compulsory training scheme that would hold troops to

[28] Military planners advocated prolonged service in the military for a number of reasons. In order to maintain Canadian units following casualties in Europe, they believed the NRMA men constituted a large body of possible reinforcements. By training for a period of four months (or longer), the length of time necessary to produce fully trained modern soldiers, any NRMA personnel who decided to volunteer was ready for service overseas. The longer period of service also reduced the disruption to industry because it meant calling up fewer men, meaning that the country could continue to expand its industrial contributions to the war effort even as it built up its forces. See: Byers, *Zombie Army*: 77-79.

[29] LAC, MG 27, III, B11, Volume 71, "National Resources Mobilization Act 1942 Period of training increased from 30 days to 4 months," William Lyon Mackenzie King, Draft Statement re: Compulsory Training, n.d. [3 February 1942?]: 1.

[30] *Ibid*.

the highest standard of training while also devising policies that dictated the 'conversion' of conscripts to volunteers. On one hand, the most recognizable demonstration of civic responsibility in young men was voluntary enlistment. On the other, convincing conscripts to 'go active' ensured a steady stream of reinforcements for overseas. While there had been no system for taking enlistments under the 30-day scheme or any attempt to compile a list of those who expressed interest, the military realized that those compelled to serve "constitute[d] perhaps the most fruitful source of volunteers" for overseas service.[31] Owing to this belief, army administrators instructed officers of training centres to encourage conscripts to 'go active' rather than become members of the home defence army. Military planners initially came to believe that the NRMA training scheme would elicit voluntarism, instill a military ethos, and otherwise turn troops into highly motivated and gallant soldiers. As a result, "The comparatively minor change of status" from conscript to volunteer "should not be difficult to arrange," assured Adjutant-General B.W. Browne, commander of the military's administrative services. He believed this to be especially true once the conscripts' prospects of returning to civilian life became more remote, and their prospects for lucrative wartime employment diminished.[32]

Consequently, by mid-1941, compulsory recruits were the subject of intense appeals to volunteer, especially as civilian recruiting campaigns faltered and the numbers of volunteers declined. Officers soon began to exert a great deal of effort in their attempts to 'convert' the conscripts, and by extension, to turn the compulsory recruits into patriotic and

[31] Granatstein and Hitsman, *Broken Promises*: 148; and LAC, MG 27, III, B11, Volume 68, "Compulsory Training – NRMA pressure on recruits to go active. April 1941 – March 1942," Adjutant-General to District Officers Commanding, Military Districts Nos. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 10, 12, 13, "'R' Recruits," 12 August 1941.

[32] *Ibid*.

self-sacrificing soldiers akin to their general service comrades.[33] Commanding officers of the nation's military districts were tasked with "clearly explaining" to the compulsory recruit "beyond any possibility of doubt" that it was his duty to enlist in the Active Army.[34] Over the course of a year, the Department of National Defence issued dispatches concerning the education and 'conversion' of the conscripts. Officers were encouraged to use any means short of coercion to entice the compulsory recruits to sign up for active service.[35] In particular, they needed to stress to the conscripts "the desirability of fighting Canada's war overseas rather than following the unhappy example of many European nations who [sic] have held off to the last, finally being forced to fight over the ruins of their own country."[36] From such a perspective, it was not enough to defend Canada from within her borders, but to prevent the war from reaching her shores. To do otherwise risked the ideals for which the nation stood. Other strategies including staging competitions between companies to see which could produce the most 'conversions,' and offering the entire unit additional leave if all men volunteered. On a more personal level, officers could choose to conduct interviews with their men to discern why they would not volunteer, the ultimate goal being to convince them otherwise by negating their views. Chaplains were also encouraged to incorporate the importance of obligation, spirit, and voluntarism into their sermons, thus entwining one's civic and religious duties. At the same time, officers could rely on the civilian population to exert pressure on the NRMA recruits by publicly recognizing those who volunteered.[37]

---

[33] For example, see the various instructions, correspondence, and memorandum contained in LAC, MG 27, III, B11, Volume 68, "Compulsory Training – NRMA pressure on recruits to go active. April 1941 – March 1942."

[34] Adjutant-General to District Officers Commanding, "'R' Recruits," 12 August 1941.

[35] LAC, MG 27, III, B11, Volume 68, "Compulsory Training – NRMA pressure on recruits to go active. April 1941 – March 1942," Adjutant-General to All District Officers Commanding, "Enlistment 'R' Recruits," 4 November 1941.

[36] *Ibid*.

[37] *Ibid.*

Evidently, the training centres with the best recruiting results owed a great deal to public spectacle, going so far as to organize community-attended parades to celebrate the men who enlisted, equating military service with the debt of gratitude that Canadians owed the armed forces.[38]

Whether attributable to ongoing pressure or military education, it was clear that 'conversions' were occurring in the training camps. Many units, and in some cases, entire training camps, reported that 100 per cent of NRMA enlisted for overseas service during basic or advanced training. In Cornwall, Ontario, all recruits in two successive months 'converted' to volunteers in the summer of 1941, and a year later, all but one trainee volunteered from another group.[39] At the Peterborough camp, all compulsory recruits agreed to serve overseas in July 1941, while Chatham, Newmarket, and Kitchener camps boasted 90 per cent, 98 per cent, and 98 per cent 'conversion' rates respectively between July and November 1941.[40] Military staff at the Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island camp reported that all but six conscripts agreed to go overseas in October 1941, while entire platoons at the Brantford, Ontario military camp volunteered for general service earlier that year.[41] In total, approximately 20 per cent of all conscripts 'went active' during their basic training, while a further 16 per cent went on to volunteer during advanced training, thus entering the

[38] LAC, MG 27, III, B11, Volume 68, "Compulsory Training – NRMA pressure on recruits to go active. April 1941 – March 1942," Adjutant-General to All District Officers Commanding, G.O.C.-in-C Atlantic Command, G.O.C.-in-C Pacific Command, "'R' Recruits," 17 July 1941.

[39] LAC, RG 24, Volume 17189 , War Diary of No. 31 CA(B)TC, Cornwall, 2-5 July and 11 August 1941; and Volume 17190, War Diary of No. 31 CA(B)TC, Cornwall, 21 April 1942 and 23-24 January 1941. Also see: Byers, *Zombie Army*: 165.

[40] LAC, RG 24, Volume 17195, War Diary of No. 32 CA (B) TC, Peterborough, 11 July 1941; Volume 17149, War Diary of No. 12 CA(B)TC, Chatham, 26 November 1941; Volume 17168, War Diary of No. 23 CA(B)TC, Newmarket, 26 July 1941; and Volume 17145, War Diary of No. 10 CA(B) TC, Kitchener, 16 September 1941. Also see: Byers, *Zombie Army*: 165.

[41] LAC, RG 24, Volume 17252, War Diary of No. 62 CA(B)TC, Charlottetown, 23 October 1941; and Volume 17156, War Diary of No. 20 CA(B)TC, Brantford, 6 March 1942. Also see: Byers, *Zombie Army*: 165.

reinforcement stream for overseas service.[42] The remaining conscripts who did not volunteer for overseas service upon completing basic training joined home-front infantry or artillery units.

The Burdens of War: The Conscript as Canada's Defender, 1942-43

By the end of 1941, while the policies governing compulsory service were well established, the war's wider context also came to bear on the military's approach to the conscripts. Naturally, responding to the war abroad took precedence. In December 1941, the swiftness and ferocity of simultaneous Japanese attacks at strategic points in the Pacific stunned the Allied Forces and brought the war closer to Canada's shores.[43] Rumours of wireless espionage and reports of offshore sightings of submarines became widespread in British Columbia, and the situation only worsened in the aftermath of nuisance raids on Estevan Point and the Japanese occupation of two Aleutian Islands.[44] As public clamor for greater security increased, west coast defence became a top priority, and military planners began to mobilize home defence units for British Columbia in unprecedented numbers.[45] Even as the majority of those selected for defensive duties in British Columbia were NRMA personnel, army planners decided that defending the nation was a more pressing concern than strengthening reinforcement numbers through conscripts going active.

Certainly, the summer of 1942 was tense. Major-General G.R. Pearkes, the General

---

[42] Byers, *Zombie Army*: 79.

[43] Timothy Wilford, "The Enemy Within and the Pacific Threat: Canadian Security Intelligence in British Columbia, 1942–45," *Intelligence and National Security* 27, no. 4 (2012): 531. For an overview of the Pacific War and Canadian participation, see: Nathan M. Greenfield, *The Damned: The Canadians at the Battle of Hong Kong and the POW Experience, 1941-1945* (Toronto: HarperCollins, 2011).

[44] LAC, RG 24, Volume 14718, War Diary of the 5th Field Company, 2 June 1942; and Wilford, "The Enemy Within": 533. Also see: T. Murray Hunter, "Coast Defence in British Columbia, 1939-1941: Attitudes and Realities," *BC Studies,* no. 28 (Winter 1975-76): 3-27.

[45] Major-General G.R. Pearkes, interviewed by Reginald H. Roy, 8 August 1966, interview 37, University of Victoria Special Collections, Canadian Military Oral History Collection, Victoria, British Columbia.

Officer Commanding-in-Chief of Pacific Command, the country's westernmost military formation, committed his attention to the possibility of attack on the province.[46] Pearkes' task, as he later recalled, was to build up the divisions under his charge, and to provide the compulsory recruits with the highest possible standard of training in case of invasion.[47] Consequently, local officers emphasized arms and weaponry instruction, discipline, drilling and marching, and physical education, while, at the same time, adapting the training syllabus to the local terrain and conditions in which troops might have to fight.[48] In effect and as noted by one war diarist, the military stressed "the advisability of training keen soldiers irrespective of their willingness to go overseas."[49]

Crucial to any understanding of the conscripts in the latter war years is the awareness of how they factored into military reports midway through the conflict. Throughout 1942, the conscript scarcely appeared in military correspondence emanating from active home defence units, certainly in contrast to the condescending manner that would later dominate the discourse. Instead, local officers spent time detailing the activities and training procedures of their units with scant references to personnel. On the rare occasion that the conscript appeared in the historical record, brief references were the norm: "Three reinforcements H.D. [Home Defence] arrive."[50] The same held true for any mention of the voluntary recruit: "One reinforcement, active, arrived."[51] More common were concise entries about the daily regimen

[46] *Ibid*. Although Pearkes recalled that there was a serious possibility of threat, military commanders and the government alike were not initially concerned until later in the year when American naval intelligence broke Japanese codes and learned that a large Japanese task force was en route towards Midway and the Aleutian Islands. Also see: Galen Roger Perras, "Canada as a Military Partner: Alliance Politics and the Campaign to Recapture the Aleutian Island of Kiska," *The Journal of Military History* 56 (July 1992): 426.

[47] Pearkes, interviewed by Roy, 8 August 1966; and Reginald H. Roy, "Major-General G.R. Pearkes and the Conscription Crisis in British Columbia, 1944," *BC Studies* no. 28 (Winter 1975-79): 54.

[48] LAC, RG 24, Volume 15291, War Diary of the Winnipeg Grenadiers, 16 September 1942.

[49] *Ibid*. Also see: LAC, RG 24, Volume 15131, War Diary of the Oxford Rifles, 7 October 1942.

[50] LAC, RG 24, Volume 15291, War Diary of the Winnipeg Grenadiers, 23 August 1942.

[51] *Ibid*, 24 August 1942.

of the troops, training, furloughs, camp administration and conditions, weather, and recruits' health.[52]

As efforts were underway to build up and train the forces in British Columbia, Pearkes suggested to the United States Western Defense Command that Canadians could participate in combat alongside American forces in the Aleutian Islands.[53] Pearkes was enthusiastic about training the conscripted troops in British Columbia for possible use later in the Pacific theatre, and he assigned a home defensive unit primarily comprised of NRMA recruits to the task of recapturing the Alaskan island of Kiska from the Japanese.[54] Throughout the operation, Canadian officers were quick to praise the conscripts for their service as defenders of the North American continent. During Pearkes' inspection of Canadian troops at Kiska, he reported, "Discipline has been excellent and the morale of the troops still remains high… they are proud of the fact that they have done a good job… [and] they would willingly come back again if there was a chance of meeting the enemy."[55] Other records relating to the operation contain similar acclamations. The war diarist for No. 96 Light Aid Detachment placed emphasis on the disposition of the troops. "The morale of the

[52] For examples of these entries, see: LAC, RG 24, Volume 15091, War Diary of the King's Own Rifles of Canada, 4, 5, 6, 13, 17, 18, 24 June 1942; Volume 15291, War Diary of the Winnipeg Grenadiers, 3 and 27 June 1942; Volume 15131, War Diary of the Oxford Rifles, 17 October 1942; Volume 15118, War Diary of the Midland Regiment, 12 October 1943; Volume 14718, War Diary of 5th Field Company, 12 June 1942 and 25 July 1942; Volume 15069, War Diary of the Fusiliers du St. Laurent, 21, 22, 27, 30, 31 October 1943; and Volume 15143, War Diary of the Prince Albert Volunteers, 3 June 1943.

[53] LAC, RG 24, Volume 2921, HQS-9055-1, "General Staff Report on Greenlight Force from Inception to Despatch to Adak," 19 April 1943: 1-4; Galen Roger Perras, *Stepping Stones to Nowhere: The Aleutian Islands, Alaska, and American Military Strategy, 1867-1945* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2003): 139; Roy, "Major-General G.R. Pearkes": 54-55; and C.P. Stacey, *The Canadian Army 1939-1945: An Official Historical Summary* (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1948): 304-7.

[54] Roy, "Major-General G.R. Pearkes": 54; and LAC, RG 24, Volume 15150, War Diary of the Prince of Wales Rangers, Appendix I, "Shorthand Transcription of Speech of G.O.C. in C.," March 1944. Following the April 1942 national plebiscite on conscription (in which 63 per cent of voters responded positively), Parliament passed Bill 80 which repealed geographical limitations on HD service, thus enabling Canadian conscripts to serve in the Aleutians.

[55] LAC, RG 24, Volume 2921, HQS-9055-1, File 4, G.R. Pearkes to K. Stuart, 16 November 1943.

men is exceptionally good," he advised, reiterating later, "Morale was never higher."[56] The brigade commander recorded similar praise, noting that it was a well-trained brigade group "with high morale, and the men were in fine physical condition and excellent health."[57] Although the Japanese retreated before the Canadian Forces were deployed, and while threats against British Columbia never materialized, the consensus was that the conscripted troops were an integral cog in the nation's war machine. The conscripts' laudatory performance on the home front seems to have led some to believe that these men would answer the call-to-arms when required for overseas service. Yet however hopeful the military may have been during the 1943 operations, this impression soon gave way to frustration that conscripts were not volunteering *en masse*.

Military Constructions of the Conscript, 1944

By the end of 1943, in no small part owing to shifting Allied fortunes, it became obvious to military planners and civilian observers alike that the large forces stationed in British Columbia were no longer necessary.[58] The diminishing threat from the Pacific meant that home-front defensive training stagnated, and many NRMA recruits came to view military life with apathy, desiring nothing more than to re-enter the lucrative civilian wartime

[56] LAC, RG 24, Volume 16312, War Diary of No. 96 L.A.D., 15 and 25 August 1943. The war diarist repeated these sentiments again on 3 and 17 September 1943 using nearly the exact same descriptors. In January 1944, he further noted that there were "very few derelicts" in the unit and that troops conducted work of "great magnitude" well.

[57] LAC, MG27, III, B11, Volume 50, "Macklin's (Brigadier) Report re recruiting in Pacific Command," Brigadier W.H. E. Macklin, "Mobilization of 13 Bde on an Active Basis," 2 May 1944: 1.

[58] Roy, "Major-General G.R. Pearkes": 53. Throughout 1943, the Allied Forces won major victories against Japan in the Battle of Midway, the Battle of the Coral Sea, and the Guadalcanal Campaign. Historians of the Pacific War generally concur that these successes collectively represented a turning point for the Allies. For example, see: James B. Wood, *Japanese Military Strategy in the Pacific War: Was Defeat Inevitable?* (New York: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2007): 120-1; Mark Stille, *Midway, 1942: Turning Point in the Pacific* (Botley, UK: Osprey Publishing Ltd., 2010); Mark Stille, *The Imperial Japanese Navy in the Pacific War* (Botley, UK: Osprey Publishing Ltd., 2014): 9; George M. Watston Jr., "Midway: The Turning Point," in *The Pacific War: The Story of the Bitter Struggle in the Pacific Theatre of World War II*, edited by Bernard C. Nalty (London: Pavilion Books, 2015): n.p., accessed 2 September 2015, https://books.google.ca/books?id=gIABCgAAQBAJ; and Francis Pike, *Hirohito's War: The Pacific War, 1941-1945* (London: Bloomsbury, 2015): 565.

labor market.[59] The military, however, had different plans for these men. In the spring of 1944, the large formations of home defence conscripts were targeted by an intensive recruiting campaign for overseas service. In part, army administrators recognized the onerous fiscal and military burden of training soldiers who were not destined to fight in overseas theatres.[60] At the same time, ongoing pressure from Russia to expand a second front made deployment to Europe even more pressing. While emphatic calls went out for more volunteers, military planners looked to the large numbers of compulsory recruits who remained in Canada as a potential source of manpower for the European theatre.[61]

Recruitment campaigns were thus organized within the large formations of home-front troops in the spring of 1944. In Eastern Canada, acute pressure was felt among troops of the Dufferin and Haldimand Rifles (Sussex, New Brunswick), Le Regiment de Joliette (Rimouski, Quebec), and Le Regiment de Montmagny (St. John's, Newfoundland).[62] Officers delivered compelling speeches to rally the troops and met with individual conscripts to emphasize that their duty rested overseas.[63] Despite their best efforts, military staff could not convince hesitant NRMA men to cross the ocean. In the westernmost province, owing to the failure of the campaign in central and Atlantic Canada, NRMA recruits faced even more intense pressure to volunteer. In Vernon, in addition to the same measures undertaken in the east, three Victoria Cross recipients visited the camps to relay and glorify their experiences,

[59] Reginald H. Roy, "From the Darker Side of Canadian Military History: Mutiny in the Mountains – The Terrace Incident," *Canadian Defence Quarterly* 6, no. 2 (Autumn 1976): 45.

[60] LAC, RG 24, Volume 15183, War Diary of Le Régiment de Hull, 29 April 1944.

[61] Peter A. Russell, "BC's 1944 'Zombie' Protests Against Overseas Conscription," *BC Studies*, no. 122 (Summer 1999): 53.

[62] While Newfoundland remained a colony of Britain in 1944, Canadian troops were deployed here following the 1942 plebiscite on conscription. As noted in Chapter One, Bill 80 removed the geographical restrictions on where a NRMA recruit could serve. While these men did not see front-line service, conscripts served in a variety of locations in the western hemisphere.

[63] LAC, RG 24, Volume 15054, War Diary of the Dufferin and Haldimand Rifles, April and May 1944; Volume 15184, War Diary of Le Regiment de Joliette, April and May 1944; and Volume 15189, War Diary of Le Regiment de Montmagny, April 1944.

and camp padres once again received instructions to discuss the issue in their sermons.[64]

The 'gloves off' recruiting campaign was initially met with enthusiasm by Vernon's military staff. "[G]lad tidings from Ottawa were announced," reported the war diarist of Le Régiment de Hull. "It has been decided to give [us] a chance to go overseas… if sufficient NRMA personnel would enroll for active service. The campaign of enlightement [sic] is to start immediately. After nearly five years of anxious waiting it seems too good to be true."[65] The junior officer's ardent energy was all too evident at the outset of the campaign, but it quickly gave way to resentment because of the steadfast refusal of the conscripts to assume front-line service. Officers soon concluded that the troops' home defence mentality was "a hard nut to crack," and decided that the conscripts least likely to 'convert' – the camp's most "obdurate and recalcitrant souls" – ought to be transferred out of their barracks and into a nearby tent camp known derisively as "Tentville" or "Zombeeville [sic]."[66] While the Vernon camp reported some successes during the recruitment campaign, this was due to the fact that the pressure trickled down to nearly every unit stationed in British Columbia. Any conscript who volunteered for front-line service transferred to Vernon, and in turn, one of Vernon's unwilling conscripts assumed his place in his respective unit.[67] At the end of the recruiting drive, the 13th Infantry Brigade moved eastward and then overseas, but it had been a difficult

[64] LAC, RG 24, Volume 15183, War Diary of Le Régiment de Hull, April and May 1944; Volume 15032, War Diary of the Canadian Fusiliers, April 1944; Volume 15205, War Diary of the Rocky Mountain Rangers, April 1944; Volume 15292, War Diary of the Winnipeg Grenadiers, April 1944; and Volume 17332, War Diary of Headquarters, Vernon Military Camp, April 1944.

[65] LAC, RG 24, Volume 15183, War Diary of Le Régiment de Hull, 3 April 1944.

[66] *Ibid*, 5 and 10 April 1944.

[67] The pressure to produce recruits that would be transferred to Vernon is detailed in the following war diaries: LAC, RG 24, Volume 15131, War Diary of The Oxford Rifles, April 1944; Volume 16989, War Diary of A6 Canadian Engineer Training Centre, April 1944; Volume 15069, War Diary of Les Fusiliers du St. Laurent, April 1944; Volume 15092, War Diary of the King's Own Rifles of Canada, April 1944; Volume 15143, War Diary of the Prince Albert Volunteers, April 1944; Volume 15149, War Diary of the Prince Edward Island Highlanders, April 1944; Volume 15150, War Diary of the Prince of Wales Rangers, April 1944; Volume 15231, War Diary of the Royal Rifles of Canada, April 1944; and Volume 15294, War Diary of the Winnipeg Light Infantry, April 1944.

month for officers, many of whom grew disenchanted with those men who did not share the pro-enlistment perspective.

Within this context of increasing demands for European front-line troops, military officers set out to explain the conscripts' staunch resistance to overseas service. Increasingly, this discourse centred on ethnic characterizations linked to issues of obligation, loyalty, and nationhood. As historian Peter A. Russell writes, officers "used ethnicity to explain away the contradiction," they felt in what they saw as 'British disloyalty.' If the troops had been of British origin then they could not be so disloyal as to contradict their officers by refusing to volunteer to go overseas.[68] Officers thus inclined to represent the conscripts as being foreign to Anglo-Canadian norms, using ethnicity to explain the NRMA recruits' apparent disloyalty to their king and country.

In spite of the fact that men of non-British ethnic backgrounds were called up under the NRMA in proportionate numbers to the national average, stereotypes rooted in 'nationality' and 'race' dominate military discourse about the conscripts.[69] The implication that non-British members of society were not fully enthusiastic members, not properly 'English,' was hardly a new accusation, but the strong desire for national unity brought about by the war made their perceived differences an even greater offence. Brigadier W.H.S. Macklin's oft-quoted report on the resistance of the NRMA men to overseas service illustrates this tendency. "The great majority are of non-British origin," he believed, with:

> German, Italian, and Slavic nationalities of origin probably predominating. Moreover most of them come from farms. They are of deplorably low education, know almost nothing of Canadian or British History and in fact are typical European peasants, with a passionate attachment for the land. A good many of them speak their native tongues much more fluently than they speak English and amongst them the ancient racial

[68] Russell, "BC's 1944 'Zombie' Protests": 71.

[69] For a further discussion of the ethnic backgrounds, languages spoken, and places of origin of NRMA recruits, see Chapter Three of the present study.

> grudges and prejudices of Europe still persist. Here again the process of converting these men into free citizens of a free country willing to volunteer and die for their country will be a matter of education, and I think it will be slow. At present there is negligible national pride or patriotism among them. They are not like Cromwell's 'Good soldier' who 'knows what he fights for and loves what he knows'. They do not know what they are fighting for and they love nothing but themselves and their land. This fact must be recognized.[70]

In ascribing these characteristics to his troops, Macklin demonstrated a seeming absence of self-awareness. While historians of conscription J.L. Granatstein and J.M. Hitsman characterize Macklin as "an intelligent, able, and experienced officer" who was simply "perpetuating myths," his line of thinking requires further explanation.[71] For Macklin, the refusal to enlist was simply incomprehensible. In time, he came to believe that conscripts lacked the necessary values that Canadians ought to possess, and in turn, that they simply *must have* been of non-British origin. Owing to his own white Anglo-Saxon values, he saw in the troops a lack of respect for the British democratic and liberal values on which Canada was founded. Further exacerbating the problem was the conscripts' supposed ignorance of Canadian and British history and traditions in concert with their alleged eagerness to hold onto the ancient grudges of their people. If the troops had any appreciation for their country and its inherited British traditions, they would not be so unreasonable as to refuse service abroad. At once, in his search for a universal explanation, Macklin reinforced the rationale behind the war as a defence of democracies, and justified his own pro-enlistment perspective by implying that those willing to fight were proud, patriotic, and dutiful citizens.

Given the limitations of the historical record, it is difficult to know with certainly the ethnic compositions of individual units, but we do know that the ethnic composition of the

[70] Macklin, "Mobilization of 13 Bde. on an Active Basis": 10. Brigadier Macklin's report is variably quoted in such works as: Stacey, *Arms, Men and Governments*, 429; Granatstein and Hitsman, *Broken Promises*: 204-207; Russell, "BC's 1944 'Zombie' Protests": 71-72; Byers, *Zombie Army*: 125, 133, and 170-71. This report is also reproduced as "Appendix S – Brigadier W.H.S. Macklin's Report" in Stacey, *Arms, Men and Governments*: 591-598.

[71] Granatstein and Hitsman, *Broken Promises*: 206.

NRMA men was a cross section of Canadian society.[72] The impression that the majority of conscripts were of non-British descent is therefore problematic. Nevertheless, these ascriptions still dominate the historic and contemporary discourse. Outside of Macklin's unit, other military staff similarly represented their men as possessing unfavourable ethnic characteristics to explain the disloyalty that they believed ran rampant among NRMA recruits. For example, Company Sergeant Major G. Campbell of the Prince Albert Volunteers believed there to be "Quite a few [men] of German extraction" in his unit, which led him to dismiss his troops as being "typical Zombies."[73] Owing further to the perception that men of German origin were overrepresented in the ranks of the NRMA, officers assumed that they had "no interest at all in being good soldiers."[74] The implication was that the conscripts' ethnic backgrounds prevented them from recognizing that military service was a prime component of male citizenship.

Major-General R.O. Alexander, a career officer who rose to the ranks of Inspector General, came to similar conclusions during his inspection of the Terrace Military Camp. Unimpressed with the camp's conditions and the troops stationed therein, he perceived in the men "a complete indifference as to what is going on in the war," compounded by "an attitude of lassitude and almost defeatism."[75] Of course, regardless of one's ethnic background, not

---

[72] Byers, *Zombie Army*: 126.

[73] LAC, RG 24, Volume 2655, HQS-35-45, File 6, "Proceedings of a Court of Inquiry Assembled at Tofino, B.C.," 11 Dec 1944: 13. On the definition of 'Zombie,' see: Stacey, *Arms, Men and Governments*: 461; Burns, *Manpower in the Canadian Army*: 114; Ralph Allen, *Ordeal by Fire: Canada, 1910-1945* (Toronto: Doubleday Canada Limited, 1961): 394; Granatstein, *Conscription in the Second World War*: 57; Granatstein and Hitsman, *Broken Promises*: 197; J.L. Granatstein, "The 'Hard' Obligations of Citizenship: The Second World War in Canada," in *Belonging: The Meaning and Future of Canadian Citizenship*, edited by William Kaplan (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1993): 36; Byers, "Mobilising Canada": 186; Russell, "BC's 1944 'Zombie' Protests": 52; and Dean Oliver, "'My Darlin' Clementine?' Wooing Zombies for $6.50 a Night: General Service-NRMA Relations in Wartime Calgary," *Canadian Military History* 7, no. 3 (2102): 49; and Byers, *Zombie Army*: 6. Also see Chapter One of the present study.

[74] "Proceedings of a Court of Inquiry Assembled at Tofino, B.C.": 13.

[75] Directorate of History, File HS322.009 (D.30), Major-General R.O. Alexander, "Abridged Report of the Inspection of the 15th Canadian Infantry Brigade," 13-17 November 1944.

every individual is cut out to be a soldier, nor is every young man able to thrive in a military culture, but Alexander assumed that such traits as an attitude of defeatism and an indifference to the war were inexorably linked to ethnicity. Consequently, he believed that the camp must have contained "a large number of men of Central European descent."[76] At best, the recruits were "a very mixed lot… of mediocre quality."[77] At their worst, they lacked any sense of moral fibre that characterized patriotic and right-thinking Canadians. The officer seemed incapable of seeing anything but defeatism and indifference among the NRMA troops, and thus favored easy explanations centred on the conscripts' supposed place of origin.

The assumption that conscripts were ethnic foreigners who resisted overseas service because they had little faith in the prospects of the Allied war effort was widespread. Lieutenant-Colonel J. MacGregor characterized the NRMA conscripts as having greater confidence in the military might of the Axis powers than they did in any of the democratic nations.[78] Furthermore, he believed this attitude to be especially preponderant among "those of European extraction."[79] In Vernon, Lieutenant W.E. Sanders asserted that his own company was similarly comprised of a large "percentage of citizens who are foreign born or are of foreign parentage. Many of them have never tried to understand us or our country and don't seem to give a dam [sic] whether we rule it or someone else does."[80] While Sanders' own attitude was cynical, he was alarmed, nonetheless, by the troops' apparent lack of national spirit; because the conscripts did not seem to care if the nation's democratic customs prevailed, they were represented as a threat to the war effort and to the country writ large.

---

[76] *Ibid*.
[77] *Ibid.*
[78] LAC, MG 27, III, B11, Volume 50, "Macklin's (Brigadier) Report re recruiting in Pacific Command," Lieutenant-Colonel J. MacGregor, "Observation on Attitude of (H.D. Personnel) Going Active," 28 April 1944: 1.
[79] *Ibid.*
[80] LAC, MG 27, III, B11, Volume 50, "Macklin's (Brigadier) Report re recruiting in Pacific Command," Lieutenant-Colonel W.E. Sanders, "Report on N.R.M.A. Personnel," 1 May 1944: 1.

After all, the patriotic discourse in the Second World War featured prominently the idea that the war pitted democracy and freedom against tyranny and oppression.

The primary evidence and the historiography suggest that these officers were incorrect in casting the conscripts as being predominantly non-British. As historian Daniel Byers argues, using contemporary statistics compiled by the Department of National Defence, the compulsory recruits roughly mirrored the ethnic composition of Canadian society, and foreign-born conscripts were actually underrepresented in the ranks of the NRMA. Accordingly, 92.0 per cent of NRMA men were Canadian born, 1.9 per cent British born, 1.2 per cent American born, and 4.5 per cent European born. The remaining 0.3 per cent were born elsewhere in the world, or else their place of origin was not identified.[81] Furthermore, of the men remaining in home defence units in 1944, approximately 17,000 spoke English as their first language, 12,000 spoke French, and 15,000 spoke another language as their native tongue.[82] While not directly centred on ethnicity, the evidence suggests that the NRMA men simply reflected the composition of the larger society.

The allegations that conscripts tended to hail from Central or Eastern Europe led staff of Pacific Command's headquarters to assert later that the conscripts were "not confined to any one nationality, but comprised a cross-section of all Canadian provinces."[83] That the

[81] Byers, *Zombie Army*: 130, citing a collection material from the army's Directorate of Records that is not yet formally accessioned or catalogued. For more information on this collection, see: Byers, *Zombie Army*: 281, note 3.

Of course, a proportion of those identified as Canadian born in both the enlistment *and* conscription records may have been the children of immigrants and were raised in immigrant enclaves that remained leery of military service. A conservative assumption would be that any evidence of an ethnic factor shaping enlistment or conscription behaviours would be distributed throughout the entire sample. Thus, some who enlisted were Canadian born but came from ethnic communities, just as some men who were conscripted but refused voluntary service were also Canadian born and from ethnic communities as well. In any case, the consensus among historians is that those called up under the NRMA were neither predominantly foreign-born, nor members of minority communities.

[82] Granatstein and Hitsman, *Broken Promises*: 207.

[83] "Not All One Nationality: Zombies in B.C. Camps Protest Conscription," *Winnipeg Tribune*, 27 November 1944: 1. This article is based on a press statement given by Pacific Command.

Command's own staff recognized that the stereotypes were inaccurate lends itself to the assertion that the discourse surrounding the country's NRMA recruits reveals more about the pro-enlistment critics of conscripts than of the conscripts themselves. Indeed, even the army's internal regulations permitted the discharge of troops on the grounds of ethnicity. If troops were of "enemy nationality or origin," they posed a security risk. Yet, NRMA recruits were not discharged under this regulation in substantive numbers, suggesting that perceptions of compulsory recruits as ethnic foreigners had little, if any, basis in reality.[84] Therefore, while the compulsory recruits were neither predominantly foreign-born nor overwhelmingly 'alien,' many officers constructed them as such because it helped to explain the conscripts' supposed disloyalty to the state while also justifying the officers' commitment to the cause. To the degree that NRMA recruits who refused overseas service were disloyal, foreign to Canadian values, unmotivated, or unpatriotic those who supported enlistment were, by contrast, brave, loyal, and patriotic.

In their internal commentary, the military depicted another discrete group of NRMA recruits as failing to adhere to British and Anglo-Canadian sensibilities: French Canadians. Unlike the assumption that many conscripts in the ranks were overwhelmingly Central or Eastern Europeans, a notion that is simply unsupported by the historical record, French Canadians were *slightly* overrepresented in the ranks of the NRMA.[85] Furthermore, francophones tended to be posted to designated francophone or bilingual units in which training was conducted in their native tongue, leaving little question that these men hailed from French Canada. Thus, while the military's discourse surrounding French Canadians featured similar assertions of Anglo-Saxon superiority, officers did not need to ascribe an

[84] LAC, MG 27, III, B11, Volume 81, HQS-1161-1-23, File 2, Directorate of Administration, "National Resources Mobilization Act (Army) Regulations, 1943": 1.

[85] Granatstein and Hitsman, *Broken Promises*: 207; and Byers, *Zombie Army*: 128-32.

unfavorable ethnicity to these men to explain their apparent disloyalty. Instead, they drew on unfavorable stereotypes.

French-Canadian recruits were easy fodder for officers owing to historical experiences leading up to the 1939-1945 conflict. The passage of time did little to heal antagonisms, and instead even reinforced the reluctance of French Canadians to participate in Canada's military affairs by the Second World War. The contentious issue of separate schooling in New Brunswick and Manitoba at the turn of the century, imperial participation in the South African War, and the restriction of French-language instruction in Ontario schools in the 1910s, had all left a mark.[86] Canada's entry into another imperial war in 1914 at the behest of English Canada further led many French Canadians to distance themselves from the war effort, and three years later the shortage of volunteers prompted Anglo-Canadian complaints that French Canada was not providing its fair share of men. A recruiting drive in Quebec ensued, but not enough men stepped forward to fill the gaps in the ranks. Sir Robert Borden and his Conservatives thus turned to their gaze towards conscription. The debate surrounding compulsory service polarized the nation along ethnic lines, and the issue was made worse by a gerrymandered federal election, which was then followed by widespread desertion and evasion of the law, as well as violent rioting in Quebec City and Montreal.[87]

The question of French-Canadian enlistment in the 1939-1945 conflict was especially fraught given this history and the remaining old wounds. When asked to release the

[86] John I. Little, "New Brunswick Reaction to the Manitoba Schools' Question," *Acadiensis* 1, no. 2 (Spring/Printemps 1972): 43; Carmen Miller, *Painting the Map Red: Canada and the South African War, 1899-1902* (Montreal-Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1998): xi, 16, and 27; and Marilyn Barber, "The Ontario Bilingual Schools Issue: Sources of Conflict," *Canadian Historical Review* 47, no. 3 (September 1966): 227.

[87] Granatstein, *Conscription in the Second World War*: 9; and Martin F. Auger, "On the Brink of Civil War: The Canadian Government and the Suppression of the 1918 Easter Riots," *Canadian Historical Review* 89, no. 4 (December 2008): 503-05.

government from its earlier promises against conscription, 72.1 per cent of Quebec voters declined to support compulsion, as compared to 22.9 per cent of Canadians outside of Quebec who also voted 'no.'[88] In other parts of the country, French-Canadian constituencies also voted overwhelmingly against compulsory service in the plebiscite.[89] According to Granatstein and Hitsman, the results of the plebiscite demonstrated clearly the differences in attitude that existed in Canada towards the war and conscription, and by extension, ideas about a citizen's duties.[90] That large numbers of French-Canadian conscripts refused overseas military service in the Second World War came as little surprise to officers and commanders, who easily dismissed francophones as lacking proper Anglo-Canadian sensibilities.

The military made several important inroads in the Second World War in terms of recruiting in Quebec, promoting French Canadians to the ranks of commissioned officers, translating training programs into French, and creating new French-speaking battalions. While French Canadians gained the ability to function within the Army to an extent greater than ever before, the stereotype of the disloyal French Canadian nevertheless persisted.[91] According to W.A.B. Douglas and Brereton Greenhous in their popular history of Canada in the Second World War, few English-Canadian soldiers and officers were willing to accept, let alone accommodate, French Canadians into their units.[92] The authors suggest that "prejudice played its part" in the exclusion of francophone troops, a statement supported by historian Jody Perrun in her inquiry into unity and morale in Second World War Winnipeg.[93]

---

[88] Granatstein and Hitsman, *Broken Promises*: 169.

[89] *Ibid*: 171. The six constituencies were Prescott, Ontario; Russell, Ontario; Provencher, Manitoba; Gloucester, New Brunswick, Restigouche-Madawaska, New Brunswick; and Kent, New Brunswick.

[90] *Ibid*.

[91] Byers, *Zombie Army*: 7. Also see: Reimers, "The Glamour and the Horror": 37-39.

[92] W.A.B. Douglas and Brereton Greenhous, *Out of the Shadows: Canada in the Second World War* (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1995): 257-58.

[93] *Ibid*: 258; and Jody Perrun, *The Patriotic Consensus: Unity, Morale, and the Second World War in Winnipeg* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2014): 26.

While French-English relations had improved in the 1939-45 conflict from an all-time low during the Great War, the image of a nation united behind the war effort did not reflect the home-front reality.

Poor reception of French-Canadian recruits is evident in much of the military's discourse for several reasons. First, ascriptions about ethnicity are rooted in white privilege, and in this instance, English-Canadian privilege. In Canada's social and cultural history, 'whiteness' and 'Britishness' have become the cultural norm; English Canadians are thus empowered to decide when and how they discuss ethnicity, while rarely embracing a perspective that appreciates that being English Canadian is an ethnic identity in its own right. By comparison, French-Canadians, indigenous peoples, and other non-British minorities are excluded from this Anglo normativity.[94] Second, and stemming from the first, while there was measurable progress in commissioning French-speaking troops, English-speaking officers remained overrepresented in the ranks of senior officers. Memorandum from the Oxford Rifles, a predominantly English-speaking unit, serves as one such example. The commanding officer contacted Headquarters in February 1944 in regards to a recent draft of French-speaking troops. His telegram was frank: "They are French speaking personnel… May permission be granted please to return this personnel to depots concerned."[95] The officer evidently anticipated difficulty administering the francophone recruits, and probably expected them to be beyond the influence of civic education. After all, the prevailing line of thinking was that all French Canadians were strong anti-conscriptionists. Thus, even before becoming acquainted with these troops, the officer wanted nothing to do with them because

[94] Andrew Baldwin, Laura Cameron, and Audrey Kobayashi, eds., *The Great White North: Race, Nature, and the Historical Geographies of Whiteness in Canada* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2011): 1; and Daniel Coleman, *White Civility: The Literacy Project of English Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2006): 3-4.

[95] LAC, RG 24, Volume 15132, War Diary of the Oxford Rifles, Appendix 11, Telegrams, 11 February 1944.

he assumed that the training experience would be unsuccessful, and he likely did not want it to reflect on his own service record. These same concerns played out in Prince Rupert in the lines of the Winnipeg Grenadiers. According to the anglophone war diarist, the arrival of a French-speaking regiment to the predominantly English-speaking camp rendered the unit as "a real cross-section of Canada." At the same time, the unit's composition led the diarist to note further, "*it is hoped* that we will be able to set an example in harmony."[96] Although the officer spoke of hope in incorporating the newly arrived troops, the tone of the entry seemed to belie any optimism for success.

Apart from the difficulties of mixing English and French Canadians, the latter group was problematic to officers in their own right. In part, this was due to the absence of bilingual or French-speaking individuals in command positions. As Brigadier Macklin aptly stated, "the French-speaking portion of the army in many ways presents a separate and distinct problem."[97] Officers were "somewhat disgusted with the attitude" of French Canadians. The military believed these men reflected poorly "on the many thousands of brave Fr. Canadians serving all over the world on every battle front."[98] The very fact that francophones enlisted in record numbers and served in every theatre of war works to expose the artificiality of the stereotype. Nevertheless, the military drew on Quebec's longstanding resistance to conscription to paint the picture that French Canadians were not loyal Canadians. Officers stressed the improbability of inducing French-speaking NRMA soldiers to volunteer, likening

[96] LAC, RG 24, Volume 15292, War Diary of the Winnipeg Grenadiers, 22 February 1943. Emphasis added.

[97] Macklin, "Mobilization of 13 Bde. on an Active Basis": 10.

[98] LAC, MG 27, III, B11, Volume 50, "Macklin's (Brigadier) Report re recruiting in Pacific Command," Lieutenant-Colonel L.J. St.-Laurent, "Enrolling NRMA. Personnel for Active Service in 1 Bn Le. Regiment de Hull C.A.," n.d. [May 1944]: 4.

it to a miracle.[99] The conversion of francophone conscripts, in the words of one officer, "will be a process of education and my opinion is that it will be a long process."[100] After all, English Canadians had endeavoured to 'educate' French Canadians since the Conquest and had yet to make progress.

Akin to the reports that emphasized the perceived traits of continental Europeans, officers were equally keen to reduce the French-Canadian conscripts to cultural stereotypes. In one such report, despite a prefatory assertion to the contrary, the commander of Le Régiment de Hull was as dismissive of his French-Canadian troops as his colleagues had been of the men they perceived to be non-British. "It is our opinion from discussions with officers of English-speaking units," wrote Lieutenant-Colonel L.J. St. Laurent, that the mentality among NRMA personnel "has been developed generally upon similar lines with only slight variations attributable to nationality."[101] While the evidence suggests that a certain *mentalité* did develop among the compulsory recruits, the "slight variations" that St. Laurent observed turned into a pointedly scathing critique of the French-Canadian conscript imbued with cultural and gendered inferences:

> Some are passionately and strongly attached to women's apron strings with a childish simplicity. Their mothers, wives or sweethearts have warned them that to sign active for overseas service would break their hearts, endanger their faltering health, jeopardize their future – they would be through with them etc. etc. Expectant mothers have warned against what might happen to the incubating child if the sire should leave Canada. Mothers with sons overseas are loath to see another go… Many phoned, wired or wrote home for permission to enroll, but were denied it. Others are just hiding behind women's skirts.[102]

St. Laurent concluded that such excuses were "powerful deterrents to the family-loving

[99] Macklin, "Mobilization of 13 Bde. on an Active Basis," 10; St.-Laurent, "Enrolling NRMA. Personnel for Active Service": 4; and LAC, RG 24, Volume 15183, War Diary of Le Régiment de Hull, 16 April 1944.

[100] Macklin, "Mobilization of 13 Bde. on an Active Basis": 1.

[101] St.-Laurent, "Enrolling NRMA. Personnel for Active Service": 1.

[102] *Ibid.*

French Canadian."[103] Officers only had to look to the example of the self-sacrificing men overseas to negate the notion of familial obligation as a valid reason for not enlisting. Lieutenant-Colonel R.J. Bolton, for example, impressed upon his troops that, "There is no such thing as a family reason. The days are past when a married man should stay at home with his family and let the single man do the fighting. Family reason is a damn good reason why you should go overseas."[104] Bolton further queried, "If you aren't ready to fight for your own wife and children, how can you expect the single man to do it for you?"[105] At the same time as the voluntary system consumed the nation's patriotic, self-sacrificing, and brave young men, the French-Canadian conscripts remained on home soil in safety "to propagate the race."[106] An attribute that would ordinarily be extolled as a virtue – the love of family – was quickly transformed into a weakness. Officers invariably portrayed French Canadians as being ruled by the women in their lives, and from there, it was a small step to characterize them effeminate or sexually suspect. From such a perspective, French Canadians stood outside of commonly held ideas of military masculinity, which centred on bravery, physical strength, endurance, and something of a stiff-upper lip.

The seeming ease with which St. Laurent criticized the French Canadian conscripts continued throughout his report. "When service in England is mentioned," he asserted, "a certain amount of antiquated ingrained objection is resurrected by a few to bolster their not wishing to 'fight' for the English."[107] Akin to the inappropriate "ancient racial grudges and prejudices of Europe" that Macklin witnessed, St. Laurent believed that the antiquated animosity of French Canadians for their anglophone counterparts was deeply ingrained. "This

[103] *Ibid*: 1-2.
[104] LAC, RG 24, Volume 15150, War Diary of the Prince of Wales Rangers, Appendix 2, Address by Lt. Col. R.J. Bolton, 22 November 1944: 3.
[105] *Ibid.*
[106] St.-Laurent, "Enrolling NRMA. Personnel for Active Service": 3.
[107] *Ibid*: 2.

vague, remotely-founded anti-English feeling," St. Laurent continued:

> has been fanned into heat at convenient intervals by political opportunists and would-be nationalists throughout our history. The Englishman has always been the patient butt of particular and well-timed hate campaigns, having been assigned responsibility for everything from crop failures to the failure of the favorite son to pass school exams. Anyone who speaks English is classified generally as English in their minds. This small minority, some of whom are Acadians, have heard their parents, relatives or friends rant against "Les Anglais." Their history books cease to be interesting after the fall of Quebec in 1759… [Yet] it was the same English who safeguarded and guaranteed their freedom, religion and language during the intervening years.[108]

Lacking self-awareness in ascribing these traits to the francophone troops, St. Laurent certainly would not have counted himself among the political opportunists and would-be nationalists. Yet, perhaps ironically, he believed that it was the French Canadians who were conveniently 'fanning the flames' of anti-English sentiment in their refusal to volunteer.

The final affront to the military's sensibilities was that French Canadians supposedly had no conception of democratic values. These men had "never been trained from childhood to make important decisions or to think for themselves. They have always been led or advised. They are not yet fully educated for democracy."[109] Drawing on anti-Catholic sentiment, the officer implied that these troops were led from the pulpit and ultimately Rome. Such a disposition made French Canadians ill suited for democracy, or so St. Laurent claimed. While officers praised the liberal and democratic foundations of Canada, inherited from imperial mother Britain, they were equally willing to reject the conscripts by assuming that they were poorly educated about these principles and the British traditions on which they were founded.

While Canada slowly but inexorably moved away from its inherited 'Britishness' in the postwar period, wartime rhetoric continued to stress the importance of the imperial

---

[108] *Ibid.*
[109] *Ibid*: 1. Also see: MacGregor, "Observation on Attitude of (H.D. Personnel) Going Active": 1.

connection.[110] Throughout the conflict, many Canadians (and especially English Canadians) felt a strong emotional tie to Britain. Contemporary observers made it clear that the war was being fought to protect British democratic freedoms, while the scholarly discourse similarly emphasizes the degree to which Canada's primary motivation for declaring war was that of obligation to aid in the defence of the empire.[111] English Canadians tended to assume that others must feel, or at least ought to feel, the same way. As Sheffield writes, "[f]rom this supposition sprang the arguments used to encourage French Canada to support the war effort for France, if not for Britain. It mattered not that the francophone population felt little or no connection to its old imperial parent nor much desire to save it from fascist aggression."[112] St. Laurent and his fellow officers conceived of the conscripts in wholly negative terms based on the troops' apparent inadequate knowledge of British customs and history. Ostensibly, had these men been able to let go of their separate and distinct history as French Canadians, they would have immediately rushed to the colours to support the Empire. The military's internal correspondence clearly privileged a national unity built upon Anglo-Canadian values. In times of war, when unity of purpose is so highly valued, those who did not appear to conform to acceptable norms stood outside of the picture of unanimity.[113]

Constructions centred on ethnic identity were the military's primary means to explain the conscripts' supposed disloyalty, but issues of patriotism and education permeate the historical record and cut across ethnic lines. "As regards the English-speaking NRMA soldiers who refuse to volunteer," noted one officer, they "have no patriotism or national

---

[110] Jonathan Vance, *Maple Leaf Empire: Canada, Britain, and Two World Wars* (Don Mills, ON: Oxford University Press, 2012): 4 and 222.

[111] "Canada's Paramount Interest," *The Globe and Mail*, 13 March 1939: 6; Stephen Leacock, "Canada and Monarchy," *Atlantic Monthly* (June 1939): 735; Allen, *Ordeal by Fire: Canada*: 392; and J.L. Granatstein and Peter Neary, eds., *The Good Fight: Canadians and World War II* (Toronto: Copp Clark Ltd., 1995): 1.

[112] Sheffield, *The Red Man's on the Warpath*: 53.

[113] Amy J. Shaw, *Crisis of Conscience: Conscientious Objection in Canada during the First World War* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2009): 131.

feeling what-ever."[114] Regardless of their 'nationality,' the remaining NRMA men were believed to be "beyond the influence of any education which can be imparted to them in a few weeks or months."[115] Although there was some recognition that insulting the conscripts was a poor way to induce them to 'go active,' military officers often used slanderous nicknames both 'on the ground' and in their reports.[116] Some examples include "dirty yellow Zombies," "yellow bastards," and "hesitant sheep."[117] The term 'Zombie' called into question the conscripts' intelligence, while in the military context, 'yellow' denoted cowardice. We might infer that 'hesitant sheep' implied that conscripts had to be shepherded or led into enlisting for active service while also pointing to a group mentality signifying that conscripts were not able to think for themselves. Even without resorting to name-calling, by the end of 1944 the image of the conscript was a wholly negative one. One officer called into question the conscripts' intelligence when he reported to his superior that, "The minds of many of these men move slowly."[118] Rather than implying that conscripts were not quick witted, the officer painted the picture that a right-thinking Canadian would have immediately donned the khaki the moment his country needed him. The recruits, however, chose to stand outside of this picture of solidarity and sacrifice, and appeared to be unmoved by any methods of persuasion.

Conclusion: Canadian Identity in the Second World War

Inasmuch as these developments might be understood through the dominant interpretive ethos of French and foreign-born Canadians or their descendents, the meaning of

[114] Macklin, "Mobilization of 13 Bde. on an Active Basis": 10.
[115] *Ibid*: 13.
[116] LAC, MG 27, III, B11, Volume 50, "Macklin's (Brigadier) Report re recruiting in Pacific Command," Captain R.R. Sanger, "Attitude of H.D. Personnel," 29 April 1944: 1.
[117] *Ibid*; LAC, RG 24, Volume 2655, HQS-35-45, File 7, "Proceedings of a Court of Inquiry assembled at Vernon, BC," 27 November 1944: 10; and Volume 15183, War Diary of Le Régiment de Hull, 30 April 1944.
[118] Macklin, "Mobilization of 13 Bde. on an Active Basis": 6.

these ascriptions seems to be rooted in historic concerns about national identity. The resistance of the NRMA men to front-line service was evidence to some that the nation had failed to foster in its citizenry any sense of national obligation or democratic responsibility. In this light, the conscription crisis itself might be viewed as a manifestation of these failings. At the same time, the refusal of compulsory recruits to volunteer for military service hinted at the country's poorly developed sense of identity. According to one officer, recruiting within the ranks of the NRMA brought to light the fact that the nation did not have "a national flag to wave proudly in front of the men."[119] Instilling a sense of one's duty to one's country was an egregious task when that country scarcely possessed a sense of self.

Officers stressed the importance of the Canada's connections to Britain by emphasizing the nation's underlying Anglo-Canadian values. They expressed concerns about the degree to which the Canadian nation lacked an identity of its own. As another officer wrote of the campaign to elicit NRMA voluntarism:

> We are endeavouring to 'sell Canada', to instill and awaken patriotism and a sense of duty to our native land – something that should have been a national, educational, and parental responsibility from the cradle…The cowardly sins of omission are bearing fruit. We have not developed a true and strong sense of nationhood. Physically we are a mighty nation, nationally we are children.[120]

The same officers who depicted the conscripts as ethnic foreigners with a strong aversion to British history and traditions were uneasy with the fact that a sense of Canadian nationalism had yet to replace the imperial connection as an effective anchor for identity. However much they stressed that Canadian civic virtues were closely tied to Britain, their own conceptions of citizenship were increasingly influenced by the notion of something more distinctly Canadian.

---

[119] St.-Laurent, "Enrolling NRMA. Personnel for Active Service": 4.
[120] *Ibid*.

According to Carl Berger in his seminal study of place and identity, Canadians' sense of nationality and the ideal of imperial unity were interlocked and identical in the period following Confederation.[121] Anglo-Canadians in particular believed that the Empire provided the best framework within which the Canadian nation could grow and develop. Indeed, the country had "an intense awareness of [its] Canadian nationality combined with an equally decided desire to unify and transform the British Empire so that this nationality could attain a position of equality within it."[122] Thus, to be both a Canadian and a British subject simultaneously was not a contradiction, nor was it merely adopting a derivative identity.[123] The events of the early twentieth century, however, undermined the appeal of imperialism for many Canadians. The Dominion's participation in the Boer War initially suggested that a permanent means of union would be formalized with Britain, but it instead nourished a sense of Canadian self-confidence that loosened rather than cemented the ties of Empire.[124] Ongoing disputes over the Alaskan territorial boundaries at the turn of the century further contributed to a surge of Canadian nationalism that was separate from their identity within the Empire.[125] Even the Great War, greeted by initial Canadian enthusiasm, soon led to disenchantment and disillusionment, and strengthened suspicions of the old world and of empires.[126]

Historians tend to agree that the First World War was Canada's war of independence

---

[121] Carl Berger, *Sense of Power: Studies in the Ideas of Canadian Imperialism, 1867-1914* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1970): 49.

[122] *Ibid*.

[123] Gillian Mitchell, *The North American Folk Music Revival: Nation and Identity in the United States and Canada, 1945-1980* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Company: 2013): 30-1.

[124] Berger, *Sense of Power*: 264.

[125] John A. Munro, "English-Canadianism and the Demand for Canadian Autonomy: Ontario's Response to the Alaska Boundary Decision, 1903,"*Ontario History* 57, no. 4 (1965): 189-203; and Edward J. McMahon, "The Alaska Boundary Dispute: A Milestone in Canada's Maturing Desire for Political Independence" (Master's Thesis, Loyola University, 1956).

[126] Berger, *Sense of Power*: 264.

through the narrative of colony to nation.[127] By way of battles won and lost in the trenches of Europe, Canada laid tangible claims to independence that materialized in a signature on the Treaty of Versailles, a seat in the League of Nations, and a right to sovereignty under the Statute of Westminster. At the same time as Canadians looked to concrete forms of nationhood, they turned their gaze inward in an attempt to "'Canadianize' a population that had either been coarsened by the brutality of war or, as new Canadians, had never been exposed to…democracy and justice."[128] Despite this gradual shift away from Britain and toward a distinct sense of self, the Second World War provided another rallying point around the Empire. Canadian economist and humorist Stephen Leacock brilliantly captured the imperial connection in 1939: "If you were to ask any Canadian, 'Do you have to go to war if England does?' he'd answer at once, 'Oh no.' If you then said, '*Would* you go to war if England does?' he'd answer, 'Oh yes.' And if you asked, 'Why?' he would say, reflectively, 'Well, you see, we'd *have* to.'"[129]At the same time, the shrill patriotism of the war years might be understood not as unflinching Canadian support for the war, but rather the last and final call to Empire for a nation that wondered where its duty rested. In this framework, the conscription issue becomes evidence of an identity crisis for many Canadians. The country had expressed patriotic sentiment in answering the call to defend Britain, parliamentary government, and democracies, but the conscription issue demonstrates that the nation – and

[127] Jonathan F. Vance identifies this historiographical trend in *Death So Noble: Memory, Meaning, and the First World War* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1997): 10. The colony-to-nation narrative forms the basis of such works as Pierre Berton's *Vimy* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1986) and C.P. Stacey's "Nationality: The Experience of Canada," *Historical Papers* 2, no. 1 (1967): 10-19. More recently, Desmond Morton, J.L. Granatstein, and Tim Cook have suggested that the Great War was Canada's war of independence. See: Desmond Morton and J.L. Granatstein, *Marching to Armageddon: Canadians and the Great War, 1914-1919* (Toronto: Lester and Orphen Dennys, 1989): 1; and Tim Cook, *Shock Troops: Canadians Fighting the Great War, 1917-1918* (Toronto: Viking, 2008): 628.

[128] Kristina R. Llewellyn, Sharon Cook, Joel Westheimer, Luz Alison, Molina Girón, and Karen Suurtamm, *The State and Potential of Civic Learning*: *Charting the Course for Youth Civic and Political Participation* (Ottawa: Canadian Policy Research Networks, 2007) : 8.

[129] Leacock, "Canada and Monarchy": 735.

especially its military commanders – was unsettled by its supposed affinity and affiliation within the Empire during the Second World War. The discourse on the conscripts' character suggests that, in their role as civic educators, the military clamoured for a definition of what it meant to be Canadian, and pointed to the nation's relative immaturity with its lack of a distinctly Canadian national symbols and a concrete sense of self.

Chapter Three:
"A lot of bad feeling and unnecessary trouble" – Canada's Conscripts in the Second World War

From the outset of the Second World War, William Lyon Mackenzie King's government made extensive promises concerning conscription in the hope of avoiding a repeat of 1917. Yet as early as May 1940, Axis battlefield victories forced the government to enact a series of measures that both escalated the country's commitment to the war and called into question the government's commitments. The most important policy shift was the National Resources Mobilization Act (NRMA), which authorized conscription for home defence in order to mobilize general service soldiers – those who had enlisted voluntarily – for service overseas. The men called up under the NRMA were liable for military service on Canadian soil, but were not obliged to serve overseas. Owing to these geographical restrictions, the military increasingly resorted to aggressive recruiting tactics that placed compulsory recruits under immense pressure to volunteer to serve on the front lines. As detailed in Chapters One and Two, the conscripts who withstood this pressure became the target of much derision because they refused to conform to dominant ideas and attitudes surrounding duty.

The scholarly literature on conscription acknowledges the country's negative perceptions of the men called up under the NRMA, but the actual experience of the NRMA recruits has attracted relatively little attention.[1] Yet, an inquiry into the lives of Canada's conscripts in the 1940s is important for several reasons. While both civilian and military reactions tended towards broad explanations of the NRMA recruits drawing upon ethnicity,

[1] The notable exception is Daniel Byers, *Zombie Army: The Canadian Army and Conscription in the Second World War* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2016): 100-176. Byers examines contemporary statistics on the compulsory recruits at length and further details some of their experiences, although these notions form a small part of his larger inquiry into the NRMA. For an overview of Byers' argument, and how this thesis differs from his work, see the Introduction of the present study.

gender, loyalty, and patriotism, these ascriptions render an incomplete story.[2] For inasmuch as these perspectives illuminate the attempt to explain the NRMA men, they do little to capture the experience of being a conscript during the Second World War.[3] This approach to these men further helps to fill a significant gap in the historiography. Historians have tended to disregard the human element of Canadian conscription in favor of decisions made at the highest level of politics.[4] Equally important, the compulsory recruits' responses to conscription were far more complex than historians generally have recognized, and, in particular, the dynamic was not a simple case of English-Canadian imperialism cast against French-Canadian nationalism.[5] In fact, the experiences and perspectives of NRMA recruits are important in their own right for offering insight into evolving relationships between Canadians and their government, ideas of appropriate wartime behaviour, and notions of voluntarism and duty in a democratic society.

This chapter explores why NRMA personnel chose to stand apart from their compatriots during the Second World War. Although few conscripts documented their wartime experiences, the available primary source material does allow a reconstruction of some of their motivations and worldviews. While the conscripts' reasons for not volunteering were as varied as were the motivations that drove others to enlist, a close inspection of the evidence reveals several broad trends in the recruits' responses. First, and perhaps most expectedly, conscripts rejected military service for personal reasons, including those related

[2] I borrow here language employed by Jonathan Swainger in his article on teenagers and community identity. See: Jonathan Swainger, "Teen Trouble and Community Identity in Post-Second World War Northern British Columbia," *Journal of Canadian Studies* 47, no. 2 (Spring 2013): 169.

[3] *Ibid*.

[4] For example, see: E.L.M. Burns, *Manpower in the Canadian Army 1939-1945* (Toronto: Clarke, Irwin & Company, 1956); R. MacGregor Dawson, *The Conscription Crisis of 1944* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1961); and J.L. Granatstein, *Conscription in the Second World War: A Study in Political Management* (Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1969).

[5] One prime example of this perspective appears in J.L. Granatstein and J.M. Hitsman, *Broken Promises: A History of Conscription in Canada* (Toronto: Copp Clark Pitman, 1985): viii.

to family ties, ethical and religious beliefs about war, and other personal circumstances. Quite simply, these men privileged their freedom of choice and their individual rights over any obligations to the state. Other NRMA recruits refused to 'go active' in protest of the treatment they received once they had been conscripted. Having been labeled 'Zombies,' excluded from social and community activities, and often threatened or physically assaulted, there were reasons why the recruits would be ill disposed to embracing volunteer service or the rhetoric of duty. NRMA personnel increasingly viewed military life with disdain owing to the coercive practices used to 'convert' conscripts to volunteers – including assigning menial duties and refusing leaves – which compulsory recruits viewed as punishments for their refusal to volunteer. Finally, these men also articulated something of a *quid pro quo* mindset rooted in politics. Canadians had increasingly been moving towards a reconsideration of their relationship to the government throughout the 1930s, and while duty had once been the driving force behind wartime enlistment, such expectations were under increasing scrutiny. Thus, a significant number wished to hold the government accountable by forcing it to implement conscription for overseas service rather than place undue pressure on individual men to fill the ranks on the front lines. Taken as a collective, the perspectives of Canada's compulsory recruits are intriguing. While they may not have the language to express it in such terms, these men articulated nuanced ideas about freedoms and rights, constructed their actions as a means to protest their treatment, and expressed concerns about the reciprocal responsibilities of a democratic government and its citizens.

Canada's Conscripts in the Second World War

Within four months of the passage of the NRMA in June 1940, men began receive call-up notices requiring them to undergo a complete medical examination before arriving at

one of 39 basic training centres across the nation.[6] Over the next six weeks, NRMA recruits acquired the fundamentals of drilling, marching, discipline, military education, and weaponry training.[7] As many recruits soon learned, the military regulated almost every aspect of their daily lives from the time they awoke in the morning to the time they retired at night. Army recruits were told how to dress and behave, when to eat and sleep, and were otherwise ordered to accept the distinctive hierarchy of authority and discipline that accompanied military service.[8] Naturally, for some recruits, these strict controls were disconcerting; it was difficult to acclimate to the rigours and demands of the army, particularly for those who had not voluntarily made the choice to enter the armed forces in the first place.

Upon completing 30 days' training, the NRMA recruit was despatched to the reserve unit nearest to his home and was then liable for recall in the event that his services were required.[9] By February 1941, owing to charges that the training scheme was ineffective and costly, policy shifts dictated that conscripts proceed to advanced training centres upon completion of the basic training program, rather than returning home. The protracted service period, which now amounted to four months in the army, meant that they acquired the specific skills required to serve as infantrymen, artillerymen, signallers, and engineers.[10] The military expected to release conscripts back to civilian life once advanced training was completed but, in the midst of the four-month training period, army planners extended the

---

[6] "First Drafts for Home Defence Are Now Being Called," *Cariboo Observer*, 28 September 1940: 1; and Granatstein and Hitsman, *Broken Promises*: 146.

[7] As noted in Chapter Two, an overview of the basic training syllabus can be found in the following war diaries: Library and Archives Canada (hereafter LAC), Record Group (hereafter RG) 24, Volume 17290, War Diary of No. 131 Canadian Army (Basic) Training Centre (hereafter CA(B)TC), Camrose, 16 July 1940; LAC, RG 24, Volume 17200, War Diary of No. 41 CA(B)TC, Huntingdon, 1-2 September 1940; and LAC, RG 24, Volume 17225, War Diary of No. 47 CA(B)TC, Valleyfield, 20 September 1940. Also see: Byers, *Zombie Army*: 62.

[8] Byers, *Zombie Army*: 144.

[9] Granatstein and Hitsman, *Broken Promises*: 145.

[10] Byers, *Zombie Army*: 81.

NRMA scheme once again in April 1941. Instead of receiving discharges after the advanced training period, conscripts who did not agree to serve overseas joined operational home defence units and were tasked with defending Canada's borders.[11] These units were scattered across the country and rotated frequently as a matter of policy in order to adapt the training syllabus to a variety of terrains and conditions in which the conscripts might have to fight.[12]

Despite the periodic change of scenery and intensive combat preparation, troops were often bored. Most soldiers found themselves assigned to defence posts that were located in small, remote, and often isolated communities.[13] Although the men communicated with their families and friends by written correspondence, censors nonetheless intercepted and seized letters that discussed life in the military in any degree of detail.[14] Moreover, a recruit's chances of returning home on furlough or a weekend pass declined as the distance from home increased. Conscripts whose first language was not English likely felt especially secluded because there was a chance that few or no local civilians or other ranks in the unit spoke their language or shared their culture.[15] Complaints also surfaced that books and films were not widely available on army bases in languages other than English.[16] Consequently, English-speaking recruits tended to tolerate life in the army better than did soldiers from other

[11] Granatstein and Hitsman, *Broken Promises*: 151.

[12] Reginald H. Roy, "From the Darker Side of Canadian Military History: Mutiny in the Mountains – the Terrace Incident," *Canadian Defence Quarterly* 6, no. 2 (Autumn 1976): 42. A sample of an adapted training syllabus can be found in LAC, RG 24, Volume 15291, War Diary of the Winnipeg Grenadiers, 16 September 1942.

[13] Byers, *Zombie Army*: 155.

[14] For example, see: LAC, RG 24, Volume 80, HQS-1161-1-18, File 1, Letter from Camp Borden, 9 July 1941.

[15] Byers, *Zombie Army*: 167.

[16] University of Victoria Special Collections, Accession (hereafter Acc) 1980-055, Box 1, Folder 2, 22nd Field Regiment, R.C.A., "Unit Moral Reports," April 1943: 3.

backgrounds, but even among conscripts whose native tongue was English, only 57 per cent professed a liking for army life.[17]

Of course, military service was not without its advantages. Perhaps most importantly, the recruits benefited from free health and dental care. For many, it was the first time that they enjoyed full and routine access to these services.[18] Conscripts were also encouraged to participate in various athletics to aid their physical conditioning and to foster a sense of camaraderie among the men in the ranks. According to one officer, a large percentage of NRMA recruits knew "little or nothing of games or sports and have to be taught same," a statement that lends itself to the interpretation that army life brought about myriad new experiences for these men.[19] In addition to organized sport, activities such as dances, concerts, films, and other shows helped to combat boredom and probably worked to broaden the conscripts' horizons.[20] Time spent in the military also many enabled them to see unfamiliar corners of the country. For some, life in the military was not without its benefits and large numbers of compulsory recruits did choose to enlist as volunteers at the end of the

[17] Directorate of History (hereafter DH), File 113.3R4003 (D1), Special Report 126, "General Attitudes of Other Ranks towards the Army," 6 September 1944.

[18] Byers, *Zombie Army*: 144. It is no accident that the Canadian welfare state was established during the Second World War. The federal government came to play an enormous role in all aspects of wartime society, and the NRMA is one example of this. Many compulsory recruits were in better health by the time they completed their training than they were before being called up.

[19] LAC, Manuscript Group (hereafter MG) 27, III, B11, Volume 50, "Macklin's (Brigadier) Report re recruiting in Pacific Command," Lieutenant-Colonel J. MacGregor, "Observation on Attitude of (H.D. Personnel) Going Active," 26 April 1944: 1. This observation was probably rooted in classism. Most working-class Canadians had yet to be introduced to the notion of leisure owing to their class. Furthermore, one of the truisms of British military life was that one learned how to be a man on the playing fields of Eton. Games, complete with rules, hierarchy, respectful endeavour, and graceful conduct, were critically important components of being masculine. Thus, while the evidence suggests that this leisure time was a new enterprise to many, the statement itself underlined vital distinctions.

[20] The same probably held true for the civilian population, who had the opportunity to interact with soldiers from across the country. See: Mia Reimers, "The Glamour and the Horror: A Social History of Wartime Northwestern British Columbia, 1939-1945" (Master's Thesis, University of Northern British Columbia, March 1999): 63-79.

training period.[21] Still, others were not easily swayed, and more than 60 per cent of NRMA personnel chose to remain on home soil.

For those men who declined to 'go active,' contemporary observers tended to conclude that they were French Canadians, members of other minority ethnic groups, or otherwise possessed a variety of undesirable characteristics in an effort to explain why they did not seem to share their fellow Canadians' sense of duty. These perceptions, and especially those rooted in ethnicity, were at odds with reality. According to historian Daniel Byers: "In many ways, including their ethnic and geographical origins, languages spoken, religious convictions, and even the occupations they had pursued before being called up for military training, NRMA recruits more closely mirrored the population at large than has previously been suggested."[22] In effect, most conscripts were young and unmarried, much like the nation's volunteer forces overseas. The greater number self-identified as Christians. The vast majority of NRMA recruits had been farmers or unskilled laborers. There was a slightly higher chance that compulsory recruits had been resident in Quebec but, owing to provincial demographics and recruiting practices, this is expected. The second largest province by population, Quebec also boasted more unmarried men per capita aged 21 to 24 and 25 to 30 than any other province and, owing to the dominant wartime image that conscripts simply must have been French Canadians, the government concentrated on recruiting in Quebec to a greater degree than elsewhere. Finally, recruits spoke a variety of languages including

[21] By the war's end, men who had been called up under the NRMA but chose to volunteer for overseas service comprised ten per cent of the Canadian Army overseas. In certain instances, commanders of training camps reported that 100 per cent of troops called up for military training 'went active.' See: Byers, *Zombie Army*: 165; and "All Trainees at Cornwall Again 'Active Service,'" *Ottawa Citizen*, 13 August 1941: 11.

[22] Byers, *Zombie Army*: 126. For Byers' full analysis of this data, see: *Zombie Army*: 125-43; and "Les «zombies» du Canada: un portrait des conscrits canadiens et de leur expérience durant la Deuxième Guerre mondiale," *Bulletin d'histoire politique* 8, nos. 2-3 (hiver-printemps 2000): 184-204.

English and French and the proportions were consistent with national averages.[23] In effect, the nation's compulsory recruits reflected the larger society from which they were drawn, but they clearly differed from their compatriots in their interpretation of duty.

For the Love of Family and Conscience: Personal Reasons against Enlistment

The decision to serve on the front lines was often fraught with considerations about one's ties to home and country, the circumstances of one's personal life, and one's beliefs about military service. To their officers, it was quite apparent that the "men seem[ed] to have personal reasons for not signing."[24] From the outset of the compulsory training program, conscripts expressed various reasons why they would not volunteer to serve abroad, and these changed little throughout the war. According to a national survey, the NRMA men indicated that they preferred to avoid military service for financial, domestic, occupational, and health reasons, or because they had a general dislike for army life.[25] While the greater number of Canadians believed that they were duty-bound to support the war effort at great personal risk, conscripts tended to privilege their personal needs and desires before those of the nation writ large. In light of the common association of military service with good citizenship, many Canadians viewed conscripts as selfish. By contrast, however, the compulsory recruits themselves seemed to possess a different understanding of the

[23] Byers, *Zombie Army*: 126-43 and 281, note 4. As Byers notes, information about each conscript was collected upon his enrollment into the military. Army officers then compiled and tabulated the data to provide statistical information about the NRMA recruits writ large. These statistics are part of a collection of unprocessed material from the army's Directorate of Records, but they have yet to be formally accessioned or catalogued.

[24] LAC, MG 27, III, B11, Volume 50, "Macklin's (Brigadier) Report re recruiting in Pacific Command," Lieutenant-Colonel L.J. St.-Laurent, "Enrolling NRMA. Personnel for Active Service in 1 Bn Le. Regiment de Hull C.A.," n.d. [May 1944]: 4; and Brigadier W.H.S. Macklin, "Mobilization of 13 Bde. on an Active Basis," 2 May 1944: 13.

[25] DH, File 113.3R4004 (D1), Report 101, "Attitudes of Depot-Recruits to Army Recruits," 3 January 1944.

obligations of citizens in a democratic and liberal society, one that privileged individual rights and freedom of choice over unthinking obligation and unflinching commitment.

Perhaps the most important personal reason why NRMA personnel chose to remain on the home front was rooted in familial obligation. Some men undoubtedly believed that their foremost duty was to their families at home, and that their duties as citizens came second. Despite one officer's sneering criticism, there was probably a degree of truth in his assertion that compulsory recruits refused to enlist because of their families:

> Some [conscripts] are passionately and strongly attached to women's apron strings… Their mothers, wives, or sweethearts have warned them that to sign active for overseas would break their hearts, endanger their faltering health, jeopardize their future – they would be through with them, etc. etc. Expectant mothers have warned against what might happen to the incubating child if the sirs should leave Canada. Mothers with sons overseas are loath to see another go.[26]

Indeed, individual conscripts were apparently apt to claim, "I would go if my mother agrees."[27] Another officer subscribed to similar thinking. "The pressure from outside sources to get men out of the army on leave is unending and unrelentless [sic], and has a continuously unsettling effect," he reported.[28] Pressure from home was especially acute in those areas of Canada that voted 'no' in the April 1942 plebiscite on conscription by large majorities. Much of Quebec, as well as predominantly French-speaking Maritime communities and areas of the west with large concentrations of German- and Ukrainian-Canadian voters, all refused to release the government from its promises against overseas conscription.[29] As historian J.L.

---

[26] St.-Laurent, "Enrolling NRMA. Personnel for Active Service": 1-2. This same excerpt is quoted in Chapter Two, but given the different interpretive angle, it warranted inclusion here too.

[27] Queen's University Archives, F00630, Box 39, File 4, "General Staff Memoranda. October-November 1944," Secretary to the Cabinet War Committee, "Report of Cabinet Committee on Army Enlistments for General Service, 6 November 1944: 5.

[28] Macklin, "Mobilization of 13 Bde. on an Active Basis": 11.

[29] J.L. Granatstein, "The 'Hard' Obligations of Citizenship: The Second World War in Canada," in William Kaplan, ed., *Belonging: The Meaning and Future of Canadian Citizenship* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1993): 43; and Granatstein and Hitsman, *Broken Promises*: 169.

Granatstein argues, "That support at home…must have reinforced the reluctance of home-defence conscripts from those communities to volunteer for overseas service."[30]

In another report on the NRMA recruits, one officer believed that his men "want to follow home sentiment and feel they would be letting down those people who fought so hard to keep them in Canada."[31] Across the country, the problem of family members discouraging voluntarism was widespread. Many conscripts apparently gave "the excuse their parents or wives will not give their consent" to send their sons or husbands abroad.[32] Another officer likewise believed that, "family ties and home defence" were extolled "to encourage young men not to…fight."[33] The war diarist for the Rocky Mountain Rangers recorded a similar instance of family influence. The commanding officer "had the experience… of interviewing the wives of two of his men in order to point out to them that it was their husband's [sic] duty to volunteer for General Service." The officer apparently "persuaded the wives," but it is unclear if their husbands agreed to attest as a general service volunteer once the matter was settled with their significant others.[34] In any case, opinion among officers was near unanimous that it was "quite evident… that outside influence has a great…bearing" on many compulsory recruits' decision to stay on home soil.[35] Of course, few people accepted these familial ties as a valid reason for refusing what many considered the most important of a citizen's obligations. The commanding officer of the Prince of Wales Rangers, for example, was forthright in his belief that, "There is no such thing as a family reason. The days are past when a married man should stay at home with his wife and family and let the single man do

[30] Granatstein, "The 'Hard' Obligations": 43.
[31] St.-Laurent, "Enrolling NRMA. Personnel for Active Service": 2.
[32] MacGregor, "Observation on Attitude of (H.D. Personnel) Going Active": 1.
[33] LAC, MG 27, III, B11, Volume 50, "Macklin's (Brigadier) Report re recruiting in Pacific Command," Lieutenant-Colonel L.J. St. Laurent, "Subversive Societies – French Canadian NRMA Personnel.," 29 April 1944: 1.
[34] LAC, RG 24, Volume 15205, War Diary of the Rocky Mountain Rangers, 14 April 1944.
[35] MacGregor, "Observation on Attitude of (H.D. Personnel)": 1.

the fighting. Family reason is a damn good reason why you should go Overseas [sic]. If you aren't ready to fight for your own wife and children how can you expect the single man to do it for you?"[36] The question was pertinent, but for many conscripts, leaving their families behind to fight a distant war was simply not compelling.

Still other recruits felt that they would make unsuitable reinforcements for overseas. In one lengthy account, Private J. Adoranti explained under oath, "I have varicoseal [sic] which I had previous to joining the army. It did not trouble me much while a civilian, but found army trg was very painful." Initially posted to the Brockville Rifles, he visited the medical officer, reported his ailment, and explained that his condition pained him during route marches and battle drill training, but his concerns were brushed aside. Despite feeling that he "couldn't carry on" with his training, Adoranti was mobilized for the Aleutian Islands. There, while on combat duty, he recalled that his officers "threatened me with detention if I refused to march which I didn't, then I was called a sissy… I felt quite ashamed of myself time and time again when I could not follow the others." Several months later, his health concerns remained unaddressed in the new unit to which he was posted:

> [O]n one route march I felt the pain and couldn't keep up and was taken to the front of the column by vehicle. The Coy Comd [company commander] ordered me to keep up with the rest. I said I was doing my best. He took me by the sleeve and pulled me and tried to make me keep up with the rest. When he saw this failed he ordered a man to fix bayonet and get behind me and make sure I did keep up. I couldn't because of the pain… I haven't been given any medical treatment… If I appear hostile at any time its because of the manner in which I have been treated.[37]

[36] LAC, RG 24, Volume 15150, War Diary of the Prince of Wales Rangers, Appendix 2, Address by Lt. Col. R.J. Bolton, 22 November 1944: 3. This excerpt is also quoted in Chapter Two, but the present chapter examines it from a different angle and it thus warranted inclusion here.

[37] LAC, RG 24, Volume 2655, HQS-35-45, File 7, "Proceedings of a Court of Inquiry assembled at Vernon, BC," 27 November 1944: 32-33.

Military administrators acknowledged the poor state of health of many of the men called up under the NRMA.[38] Nevertheless, those unsuitable for operations often remained in the home defence army and were subject to appeals to volunteer for front-line service. It is not surprising that they declined.

For other recruits, deeply held personal or religious beliefs contributed to the decision to refuse front-line service. As Thomas Socknat writes in his seminal study of pacifism in Canada, the question of conscription, and especially conscription for overseas, was important and even threatening for some because it exposed the vulnerability of individual conscience and forced pacifists to declare their personal opposition to the nation's war effort.[39] Furthermore, conscientious objection is at the core of an individual's relationship to the state because it challenges what many considered the most basic of civic obligations – the duty to defend one's country.[40] Owing to the experience of conscription and conscientious objection in the Great War, provisions were made early in the Second World War for objectors to undertake work of national importance under civilian direction, resulting in a flexible system that enabled young men to postpone compulsory military service for either a set period or the duration of the war.[41] According to Heather T. Frazer and John O'Sullivan, the least cooperative of conscientious objectors (COs) might be jailed, those who offered limited cooperation were employed in public works, while "the most cooperative [were] put into

[38] For example, see various instructions and correspondence contained in: LAC, MG 27, III, B11, Volume 68, "Compulsory Training – NRMA 1942," and Volume 76, "Strengths, Shortages, Reserves, Statistics, Medical Cases 1943."

[39] Thomas Socknat, *Witness Against War: Pacifism in Canada 1900-1945* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987): 225.

[40] Charles C. Moskos and John Whiteclay Chambers III, eds., *The New Conscientious Objection: From Sacred to Secular Resistance* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1982): 1.

[41] Amy J. Shaw, *Crisis of Conscience: Conscientious Objection in Canada during the First World War* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2009): 39.

uniform."[42] Thus, despite accommodations for conscience, more than 700 of the 12,000 men classified as COs entered the armed forces, the majority under the NRMA.[43] Still others probably characterized themselves as pacifists even if they were not recognized as *bona fide* conscientious objectors. While little is known about these men, matters of conscience motivated their actions and thus, they privileged their individual sense of religious and ethical objection to war.

Finally, the historiography on conscription provides additional insight into the recruits' reasons against volunteering. According to Granatstein, a recruit's ethnic origins may have had significant bearing on his willingness to serve overseas:

> For a Ukrainian, a Pole, a German, or an Italian, Britain's wars were not necessarily just, and rhetoric about the need to serve king and country…inevitably rang hollow… The almost automatic firing of foreign-born workers at the outbreak of war in 1914, the internment of citizens of Germany and Austria-Hungary, and the wholesale gerrymander of 1917, when the Wartime Elections Act stripped recently naturalized Canadians of the franchise all reinforced a natural tendency to keep to one's own kind.[44]

Granatstein further argues that the nation did almost nothing to correct the misgivings of the Great War, suggesting that there were "no attempts worth recounting" to integrate those of origins other than British or French into Canada's life and values.[45] The internment of naturalized and Canadian-born citizens of Japanese, German, and Italian heritage during the Second World War also did little to forge loyalties to the Canadian state, especially when combined with the discrimination that ethnic Canadians faced during the war.[46] As the Wartime Information Board reported in 1943, complaints surfaced "that 'foreigners' are

---

[42] Heather T. Frazer and John O'Sullivan, *"We Have Just Begun to Not Fight": An Oral History of Consientious Objection in Civilian Public Service during World War II* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1996): vii.

[43] Socknat, *Witness Against War*: 255-6.

[44] Granatstein, "The 'Hard' Obligations of Citizenship": 39.

[45] *Ibid*: 40.

[46] *Ibid*: 42-44.

staying home and taking the jobs of 'real' Canadians who enlist… [They] have suffered years of humiliating discrimination because of their names, accents, or appearances… And until they feel like Canadians they can have little urge to fight for Canada."[47] As Granatstein notes further, for many French Canadians, the wounds of the Great War and the ensuing conscription crisis of 1917 remained unhealed, and the points of departure between those who supported the defence of British ideals and conscription, and those who did not, remained unresolved when Canada went to war again.[48]

A Form of Protest: Conscripts Respond to the Pressure to 'Go Active'

While there were as many reasons against enlistment for front-line service as there were compulsory recruits, conscripts' experiences in the army provide additional clues why they refused overseas' service. For much of the war, the two categories of Canadian soldiers – conscripts and volunteers – drilled, marched, slept, ate, and otherwise lived alongside one another before the latter mobilized for service abroad. While instructing conscripts and volunteers conjointly made logistical and fiscal sense, the two categories of soldiers in close quarters gave rise to a number of problems. According to military historian Reginald H. Roy, the differences in attitude and outlook between conscripts and volunteers resulted in a far-reaching morale problem that was unparalleled in Canadian military history.[49] To voluntary recruits, many of whom enlisted out of a sense of duty to king and country, compulsory

[47] Wartime Information Board, Information Briefs, Volume 6, "Low Morale,"19 April 1943, cited by William R. Young, "Chauvinism and Canadianism: Canadian Ethnic Groups and the Failure of Wartime Information," in *On Guard for Thee: War, Ethnicity, and the Canadian State, 1939-1945*, edited by Norman Hiller, Bohdan Kordan, and Lubomyr Luciuk (Ottawa: Canadian Committee for the History of the Second World War, 1988): 43. Also see: Jody Perrun, *The Patriotic Consensus: Unity, Morale, and the Second World War in Winnipeg* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2014): 26.

[48] Granatstein, "The 'Hard' Obligations of Citizenship": 39.

[49] Reginald H. Roy, "Morale in the Canadian Army in Canada during the Second World War," *Canadian Defence Quarterly* 16 (Autumn 1986): 41.

recruits failed to adhere to the responsibilities of citizenship, as evidenced by their NRMA status. As one officer reported:

> [T]he active personnel mentally ranged themselves in a body on one side and the N.R.M.A. ranged themselves on the other, and the gulf between them widened and deepened daily… It is not too much to say that the volunteer soldier in many cases literally despises the N.R.M.A. soldier…The volunteer feels himself a man quite apart from the N.R.M.A. man. He regards himself as a free man who had the courage to make a decision. He seldom takes the trouble to analyze the manifold reasons put forward by those who won't enlist. He lumps them all together as no more than feeble excuses masking cowardice, selfishness and bad citizenship. In many cases no doubt he is right.[50]

Furthermore, the same officer also observed that, "the volunteer regards himself as above, and apart from the NRMA soldier. Nothing the latter does or can do by way of physical courage or superior intellect can alter this fact. It might be likened to the scorn of the white man (even the 'poor white') for the educated negro. He may be educated but he is still a nigger.'"[51] In a prime example of white privilege and the normativity of English-Canadian beliefs and values, the implication was that those who were not ready to fight, regardless of the reason why, were of no more use to the nation than were people of color. Viewed in this sense, the conscripts' refusal to 'go active' is hardly surprising.

Ralph Allen, a well-known war correspondent, described some of this discrimination in his popular history of the war years:

> Inevitably and quickly the existence of two such armies side by side led to frictions and differences of the ugliest kind. In their training camps it was… deliberate policy…to mix the R Men [conscripts] and A Men [volunteers] in fairly close ratios and hope that by moral pressure and sometimes by actual physical violence the A Men would help persuade the R Men to "go active" too. Between the two groups there were small distinctions in such things as cap badges and service ribbons and quite often larger ones in their treatment…Officially there was no discrimination against the R Men and none has ever been officially admitted… [but] the present writer can

[50] Macklin, " Mobilization of 13 Bde. on an Active Basis": 9.
[51] *Ibid*: 12.

> testify from his own experiences that there was. So can thousands of other ex-servicemen.[52]

Allen described further the verbal, emotional, and physical abuse that conscripts experienced at the hands of voluntary recruits in two of his postwar novels, *Home Made Banners* and *The High White Forest*. Based on observations the author made while reporting for the *Globe and Mail*, these fictional accounts revolve around the inequitable treatment that conscripts received during training, as well as the types of pressures they faced from their officers to volunteer for front-line service.[53] Others similarly detail the hostility that NRMA personnel faced. Barry Broadfoot provided several anecdotal accounts in *Six War Years, 1939-1945: Memories of Canadians at Home and Abroad* that affirm that army life could be a miserable experience for many conscripts. One of Broadfoot's interviewees recalled that at least one incoming draft of men into the unit were:

> a bunch of Zombies… Some French Canadians, but a lot of Ukrainians, and what-have-you from towns and places in Manitoba and Saskatchewan… They didn't have to enlist for overseas service. Just to defend Canada… Our C.O. [commanding officer]… he told us to run the asses off them if we wanted… We called it P.T., physical training…We decided these Zombies better start the day right. Most of them were cow milkers [sic] anyway… Christ almighty, when I think of it, there was no gymnasium, no drill hangar, and here's these Zombies running through the streets of this town at 6:30 in the morning and it would often be 20 below. Hell, even colder. And in gymwear [sic] too! I think we froze them so silly they couldn't get going for the rest of the day, but anyway, they knew they were in the army, and they knew they were N.R.M.A. crud because the regular troops didn't get this treatment. Sure, sure, oh sure, you're darned right it was a form of punishment. The C.O. sure meant it to be, and we did too. I always figured if they were in this man's army, whether they wanted to be or not, they would damn well act like soldiers. It toughened 'em up anyway, although I'm not sure it got any of them to go active service.[54]

---

[52] Ralph Allen, *Ordeal by Fire: Canada, 1910-1945* (Toronto: Doubleday, 1961): 394-5.

[53] Ralph Allen, *Home Made Banners* (Toronto: Longmans, Green and Co., 1946): 38-75; and *The High White Forest* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1964): 170-94. For a further discussion of these novels, see: Granatstein and Hitsman, *Broken Promises*: 154-55; and Byers, *Zombie Army*: 159.

[54] Barry Broadfoot, *Six War Years, 1939-1945: Memories of Canadians at Home and Abroad* (Toronto: Doubleday, 1974): 334-35.

Conn Smythe, best known for forming and owning the Toronto Maple Leafs hockey team, preserved his own experiences with recruiting from within the ranks of the NRMA in his memoirs. Having risen through the ranks of the military in the First World Wars, Smythe went on to become a commanding officer in the 1939-1945 conflict. He recalled one instance in which his non-commissioned officers (NCOs) subjected NRMA recruits to cold showers for hours on end until they agreed to 'convert' to voluntary status.[55]

Such instances of abuse are also readily available from the compulsory recruits' perspective. In September 1941, two NRMA recruits at the Cornwall, Ontario training camp submitted formal affidavits alleging that their general service compatriots verbally threatened them in front of witnesses and NCOs before the situation escalated to physical blows. Private Joseph Robert Miville claimed that he was "beaten to the point of becoming unconscious" before awaking in the camp's military hospital. He asserted further that NRMA recruits were subjected to "all sorts of vexations, reprimands, [and] harsh punishments, all inflicted without any reason or right and solely with a view to putting pressure" on compulsory recruits in order to make them "enlist…in the Active Force."[56] Private J. Albert Lefebvre, the other conscript who submitted a formal complaint, alleged that his officers refused to grant him a pass to leave the training camp unless he agreed, "to use my holiday to try and induce my wife to assent to my voluntary enlistment."[57] The Department of National Defence launched an inquiry, but by the time of the investigation, Miville and Lefebvre retracted their statements and refused to discuss the issue further.[58] As Byers suggests, "Without more

[55] Conn Smythe with Scott Young, *Conn Smythe: If You Can't Beat 'Em in the Alley* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1981): 147-48. Also see: Byers, *Zombie Army*: 160.

[56] LAC, RG 24, Volume 80, HQS-1161-1-18, File 2, "Complaints Generally in Reserve Training Centres," Statement by Joseph Robert Miville, 7 September 1941.

[57] LAC, RG 24, Volume 80, File HQS-1161-1-18, File 2, "Complaints Generally in Reserve Training Centres," Statement by J. Albert Lefebvre, 7 September 1941.

[58] Byers, *Zombie Army*: 163.

information, it is difficult to tell whether this was due to a lack of truthfulness in the claims, or pressures put on the men to drop them."[59] Of course, in light of the numerous sources that document forms of malignant treatment, it defies belief that the greater number of NRMA troops did not suffer abuse at the hands of their officers and general service colleagues.

Viewed with disdain and tormented for much of the war, conscripts also had to contend with intense pressure from their officers to 'go active' or 'convert' into volunteers willing to make the ultimate sacrifice. In the words of the commander of one training centre:

> [O]ccasionally strong methods are sometimes used… Active and Reserve recruits are placed in the same platoons for training, and it is the desire that these platoons become 100% Active… Naturally when there are only one or two men left in a platoon who are still 'R,' they are bound to be a bit unpopular while they remain so. This sort of thing is of course discouraged as much as possible, but in spite of orders in this regard, incidents do occur.[60]

The details of such incidents were not included in the report, but according to one NRMA recruit at Camp Borden:

> The Commanding Officer has openly boasted that he intends to make it as tough as possible for those who do not intend to join… Today we were given a chance to again signify what branch of the service we wished to entered [sic]. Those who did not volunteer were taken on a route march without equipment and also without our water bottles. This is in line with their policy of tough stud… I don't mind going away [to an operational home defence unit] but the thing that makes me so mad is the 'Shit' that we will have to take between now and the time we are supposed to leave… So far they have got about a third of the Company. I haven't done anything yet and I am at my wits end. God only know [sic] how long the rest of the gang can hold out.[61]

As detailed in Chapter Two, officers were concerned with promoting good citizenship and the responsibilities that it encompassed – not the least of which was military service – but without any sense of their own hypocrisy, they were willing to use any tactics at their disposal to find reinforcements from within the ranks of the NRMA.

---

[59] *Ibid*.

[60] LAC, RG 24, Volume 80, HQS-1161-1-18, File 2, "Complaints Generally in Reserve Training Centres," E.M. Ansell to W.H. Kippen, 19 February 1942.

[61] LAC, RG 24, Volume 80, HQS-1161-1-18, File 1, Letter from Camp Borden, 9 July 1941.

As the war dragged on and civilian enlistment began to wane, the drive to obtain volunteers from the ranks of the NRMA increased in vigor. By the spring of 1943, the number of troops stationed in the westernmost province had reached nearly 60,000.[62] Of this number, men called out under the NRMA accounted for 63 per cent of soldiers in the province, and in some units, compulsory recruits comprised as much as 95 per cent of a unit's strength.[63] As the Allies advanced in the Pacific, the possibility of attack on Canada abated and military planners moved to disband one of the divisions in British Columbia. The reinforcement stream absorbed the majority of voluntary recruits in the province and exacerbated the divisions between volunteers and conscripts in the province. [64] In the ranks of the Prince Edward Island Highlanders, for example, there were only six volunteers, while Les Fusiliers du Saint-Laurent boasted only three general service men.[65] It would be reasonable to assume that efforts to attest conscripts to general service were particularly acute in the province because of the large numbers of NRMA men in the ranks there. As Peter A. Russell writes, there had been an ongoing campaign to persuade or pressure home defence (HD) men to go active, but it "reached an entirely new level of intensity" in the spring of

[62] Reginald H. Roy, "Major-General G.R. Pearkes and the Conscription Crisis in British Columbia, 1944," *BC Studies* no. 28 (Winter 1975-76): 53. Alongside these troops on the ground, 17 Air Force squadrons were in place to defend the west coast from the air. See: Jan Peterson, *Twin Cities: Alberni – Port Alberni* (Lanzville, BC: Oolichan Books: 1994): 176.

[63] Macklin, "Mobilization of 13 Bde. on an Active Basis": 8; University of Victoria Special Collections, Acc 1980-055, Box 1, Folder 2, "Unit Morale Reports," April 1943. Several units boasted conscripts in percentages well above average: 13th Brigade Headquarters (60 per cent), 21st Field Company (66.7 per cent), King's Own Rifles of Canada (81 per cent), Rocky Mountain Rangers (85 per cent), Canadian Fusiliers (90 per cent), Winnipeg Grenadiers (90 per cent), 13 Brigade Defence Platoon (90 per cent), 22nd Field regiment (91 per cent), and Le Régiment de Hull (95 per cent).

[64] Roy, "Major-General G.R. Pearkes": 53.

[65] LAC, RG 24, Volume 2654, HQS-35-45, File 5, "Proceedings of a Court of Inquiry assembled at Terrace, B.C.," 3 December 1944: 7 and 21.

1944.[66] In one incident, officers "had reduced more than one man to tears… [while] persuading the man to enlist," during the campaign.[67]

Across the province, the military attempted to 'convert' as many conscripted soldiers as possible and promised that these men would transfer to Europe as a unit. Major-General Pearkes, commander of the military's westernmost formation in Canada, selected Vernon's 13th Infantry Brigade as the unit that would proceed to the front lines.[68] Any troops who 'converted' thus transferred to Vernon Military Camp before heading to Debert, Nova Scotia to board ships for the European theatre. As part of their efforts to bolster the brigade's ranks, numerous recipients of the Victoria Cross, the British Commonwealth's highest decoration for valor, traveled to British Columbia's military camps to urge men to volunteer. Unit commanders further lectured their men on the importance of voluntarism and they conducted one-on-one interviews to encourage 'conversions.'[69] In one report on the campaign, an officer candidly described how "officers [were] obliged to use every sort of cajolery, argument and promise, to induce their men to enroll."[70] In some instances, monetary incentives and small prizes were offered to those men who agreed to volunteer to serve abroad.[71]

While enduring various forms of pressure to volunteer, the men who resisted these demands had to contend with certain consequences of the recruiting campaign. With the influx of newly attested general service troops in Vernon, the remaining conscripts in the 13th

---

[66] Peter A. Russell, "BC's 1944 'Zombie' Protests Against Overseas Conscription," *BC Studies* no. 122 (Summer 1999): 54.

[67] Macklin, "Mobilization of 13 Bde. on an Active Basis ": 5.

[68] Russell, "BC's 1944 'Zombie' Protests": 54.

[69] LAC, RG 24, Volume 15183, War Diary of Le Régiment de Hull, 3-29 April 1944; Reginald H. Roy, *For Most Conspicuous Bravery: A Biography of Major-General George R. Pearkes, V.C., through Two World Wars* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1978): 211-13; and Russell, "BC's 1944 'Zombie' Protests": 54.

[70] St.-Laurent, "Enrolling NRMA. Personnel for Active Service": 3.

[71] LAC, MG 27, III, B11, Volume 81, "Recruiting for Overseas 1944," "Statement by Minister on Allegations of Former Members of Régiment de Hull," n.d. [6 June 1944?]: 1; Volume 81, "Recruiting for Overseas 1944," Major-General G.R. Pearkes to Major-General H.F.G. Letson, Telegram, 25 June 1944; and St.-Laurent, "Enrolling NRMA. Personnel for Active Service": 1;

Brigade who refused to volunteer were routinely transferred out of their barracks and into a nearby tent camp christened "Tentville" or "Zombeeville [sic]" by officers and other general service soldiers.[72] Major-General Pearkes described the conditions at the camp as "quite comfortable," and noted that the "Weather was not cold[,] beds were provided and exactly the same rations [were] issued as for volunteers."[73] One war diarist, however, refuted any notion of comfort: "The overflow tent camp is very muddy and with floorless, lightless and heatless tents the conditions are not good."[74] Furthermore, while the brigade's voluntary recruits participated in a Victory Loan parade, the unit's NRMA men received orders to proceed on a 15-mile march out of town.[75] Several conscripts experienced reductions in rank in order to fill their positions with volunteers, and compulsory recruits were further routinely denied access to medical and dental care in order to inoculate and otherwise prepare their colleagues for the overseas draft.[76] Volunteers also received preference over conscripts when it came to issuing passes to leave the camp.[77] Finally, once the brigade vacated Vernon, the men who did not attest as volunteers were relocated to other units across the province.[78] Several weeks

[72] LAC, RG 24, Volume 15032, War Diary of the Canadian Fusiliers, 5 and 13 April 1944; Volume 17332, War Diary of HQ Vernon Military Camp, 10 April 1944; Volume 15205, War Diary of the Rocky Mountain Rangers, 14, 15, and 17 April 1944; Macklin, "Mobilizing 13 Bde. on an Active Basis": 6; "Statement by Minister on Allegations of Former Members of Régiment de Hull" 1-3; and St.-Laurent, "Enrolling NRMA. Personnel for Active Service": 1.

[73] Pearkes to Letson, Telegram, 25 June 1944.

[74] LAC, RG 24, Volume 15205, War Diary of the Rocky Mountain Rangers, 14 April 1944.

[75] LAC, RG 24, Volume 15183, War Diary of Le Régiment de Hull, 22 April 44.

[76] LAC, RG 24, Volume 15294, War Diary of the Winnipeg Light Infantry, 8 April 1944; Volume 15183, War Diary of Le Régiment de Hull, 12, 14, and 25 April 1944; Volume 15291, War Diary of the Winnipeg Grenadiers, 13 April 1944; Volume 15150, War Diary of the Prince of Wales Rangers, 17 April 1944; Volume 15032, War Diary of the Canadian Fusiliers, 5, 13, and 26 April 1944; Macklin, "Mobilization of 13 Bde. on an Active Basis": 6; "Statement by Minister on Allegations of Former Members of Régiment de Hull": 3; Pearkes to Letson, Telegram, 25 June 1944. Some seven months later, the war diarist for the 47th Light Anti-Aircraft battalion recorded an instance in which GS soldiers enjoyed access to the medical and dental officers while the NRMA men were scheduled for training exercises that day. See: LAC, RG 24, Volume 14618, War Diary of the 47th Light Anti-Aircraft Battalion, 10 November 1944.

[77] LAC, RG 24, Volume 15205, War Diary of the Rocky Mountain Rangers, 7 April 1944.

[78] LAC, RG 24, Volume 15032, War Diary of the Canadian Fusiliers, 3 April 44; Volume 15096, War Diary of Les Fusiliers du St-Laurent, 24 April 1944; Macklin, "Mobilization of 13 Bde. on an Active Basis": 7; and "Statement by Minister on Allegations of Former Members of Régiment de Hull": 3.

after receiving transfers, some NRMA men complained that they were made "to live like savages for five weeks in the woods of Courtenay," before being shipped to a remote northern community for the winter. At that time, the unit in question was completing a routine bivouac training exercise, but the recent transfers believed that the hard training and isolation was punishment for their refusal to join the 13th Infantry Brigade in battle.[79] There was an easy explanation for these circumstances: the necessity of housing incoming recruits, preparing them for overseas, and allowing them to spend time with their families or to enjoy the local sites before heading to the front lines. In addition, the unit at Courtenay was already engaged in their training when they received the incoming draft of men from Vernon.[80] Nevertheless, the military's lack of communication fostered animosity among the NRMA men. Their bitter resentment towards the army during the recruiting campaign was the final affront for many of the NRMA troops.[81]

Owing to the predominantly negative attitudes towards conscripts and their deplorable experiences in training camps, many recruits became increasingly steadfast in their refusal to volunteer regardless of circumstances. One senior officer witnessed the resentment among NRMA troops that "grew out of treatment received" and "by being mixed with the Active Force." His troops reported that they "were greeted with such phrases as 'yellow bastards' when the country hoped…that they would go Active."[82] Indeed, one self-

[79] "Statement by Minister on Allegations of Former Members of Régiment de Hull": 3.

[80] LAC, RG 24, Volume 15069, War Diary of Les Fusiliers du St-Laurent, 24 April 1944.

[81] Russell, "BC's 1944 'Zombie' Protests": 56-71; "Proceedings of a Court of Inquiry assembled at Terrace, B.C.": 9; LAC, RG 24, Volume 2655, HQS-35-45, File 6, "Proceedings of a Court of Inquiry assembled at Tofino, B.C.," 11 December 1944: 16;

[81] Dominion of Canada, *Official Report of Debates of the House of Commons*, Jean-Francois Pouliot (Témiscouata), 16 May 1944 (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1944): 2,951; and "Municipal Council Requests Royal Court of Inquiry," *Le Soleil*, 13 May 1944: 3. Also see editorials in *Le Droit*, *L'Evenment Journal*, and the *Quebec Chronicle-Telegraph* cited by Russell, "BC's 1944 'Zombie' Protests": 56.

[82] LAC, MG 27, III, B11, Volume 50, "Macklin's (Brigadier) Report re recruiting in Pacific Command," Captain R.R. Sanger, "Attitude of H.D. Personnel" 29 April 1944: 1.

proclaimed 'Zombie' alluded to as much. "You'll never know the harassment we underwent," he recalled. "I was a Zombie…I was a marked man… Shit and slops for four years, and every time I got slapped in the face with a wet fish it strengthened my resolve."[83] Likewise, in one brigade, the NRMA personnel were "determined never to sign active in protest against the repeated attempts to have them sign, against the taunts and jibes suffered over the years from Active personnel and the public who classified them as 'Zombies,' 'Westypoofs,' 'Conscripts,' 'Women's Home Companions,' 'Pantywaists,' 'Poltroops,' 'The Lily Livered,' and other unmentionables."[84] After enduring unrelenting mental, emotional, and in some cases, physical abuse, combined with coercive army recruiting practices, many NRMA men became firm in their stance against enlistment for overseas, no matter the circumstances. After all, having endured "a lot of bad feeling and unnecessary trouble," why should they risk their lives for a nation that viewed them with contempt and "treated [them] like scum"?[85]

Renegotiating Relationships: The Politicization of Compulsory Recruits

The final reason why many NRMA recruits refused to enlist was rooted in politics. Inasmuch as the government expected that all Canadians unite behind the war effort, many compulsory recruits felt unnerved at the prospect of making the ultimate sacrifice for a nation that had failed them in the 1930s but that nonetheless expected them to fight on the front lines. At the centre of such thinking was the articulation of an 'eye for an eye' mindset that left many conscripts to wonder what the Canadian state had done for them that bound them to

[83] Broadfoot, *Six War Years*: 3-4.

[84] St.-Laurent, "Enrolling NRMA. Personnel for Active Service": 2. Other examples include: LAC, MG 27, III, B11, Volume 57, "Reinforcement Situation 1944," "Notes of a Telephone Conversation between Honourable A.L. Macdonald and Major General Pearkes – 2P.M.," 1 Nov 1944; RG 24, Volume 2655, HQS-35-45, File 7, "Court of Inquiry – Disturbances, Prince George, B.C.," 4 December 1944: 17; File 6, "Proceedings of a Court of Inquiry assembled at A6 C.E.T.C. Chilliwack, B.C.," 5 December 1944: 9; Granatstein, "The 'Hard' Obligations of Citizenship": 36; and Roy, "Major-General G.R. Pearkes": 62.

[85] Jack Corless, *Lucky Jackie: Zombie to Decorated* (Unpublished Manuscript, Northern British Columbia Archives and Special Collections, Jack Corless Collection, 2006.13.2, 2006): 1.

overseas service. In articulating such notions, the conscripts' refusal to enlist was part of a broader trend interconnected with the rise of welfare-state thinking.[86] Thus, as the nation's conscripts demonstrate, Canadians were moving towards a reconsideration of their relationship to the state. To the degree that duty had compelled thousands of young men to 'don the khaki,' others increasingly expressed the notion that this open-ended expectation was unsustainable.

The bitter experience of having lived through the Great Depression led many to refuse to volunteer for a government that offered little aid when the public had been desperate and starving. The Second World War provided the first sustained economic growth in the country for at least a decade. More importantly, many individuals, some for the first times in their lives, were able to secure employment and work for high wages as the economy shifted into wartime production. Yet, almost as soon as the nation reached full employment, they began to receive call-up notices under the NRMA, and their military training tore them away from long sought-after employment opportunities. In the words of one conscript in an anonymous letter sent to the Minister of National Defence: "I was attending high school when the 'depression' came... My father had to resort to 'menial jobs,' mother to 'scrubbing and washing'. The meagre income thus derived necessitated careful budgeting and self-sacrifice that I might continue to graduation." Following graduation, with "Diplomas [sic] in hand, eager to learn, willing to work, I set out seeking employment." Finding few opportunities and quickly becoming "ragged and hungry," the young man "rode the rods, worked in relief camps at $5.00 a month [and] had just got a job when war broke out." Despite his recent employment gains, the anonymous recruit, like many other young men, eventually received

[86] Alvin Finkel, *Social Policy and Practice in Canada: A History* (Waterloo, ON: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2006): 120, 125-26, and 143.

the call to arms under the NRMA. These men fulfilled their legal obligations to the country by answering their call-up notices, but few felt obliged to exceed these duties by volunteering for service overseas.[87] As one company commander explained, "When asked why they are not GS, they state that they do not owe the country anything, that during the 'Depression Years' the country didn't care whether they were alive or dead, but now it is at war, they are wanted. When it is pointed out that there are plenty of men overseas who were just as badly off as they were, they merely state: 'If they want to be suckers, we aren't.'"[88] Thus, for those men who believed that the government reneged on its responsibility to provide adequate relief and care for its citizens in their time and need, they also believed that these circumstances absolved them from their duty to aid the government in its darkest hour. Here, in the responses of conscripts, we see hints that Canadians were beginning to rethink the reciprocal responsibilities of a government and its citizens.

Across the country, compulsory recruits seemed to have "enthrisasm [sic] for work, but there [sic] interest is in returning to civil life. They say 'Why go over now? – [We] want to get back to our jobs.'"[89] Manpower shortages on the home front meant that the Department of Agriculture urged the army to release soldiers temporarily for seeding, harvesting, logging, and factory work, even while the Department of National Defence's prioritized the 'conversion' of conscripts to volunteers.[90] "Time and again," recalled the General Officer Commanding-in-Chief of Pacific Command:

---

[87] LAC, MG 27, III, B11, Volume 85, "Resignation Miscellaneous – Caucus Notes, Diary, Memoranda, Speeches, Correspondence, Statement, 'Zombie Prayers,'" Anonymous Letter, 18 November 1944.

[88] University of Victoria Special Collections, Acc 1980-055, Box 1, Folder 2, "Attitudes of Personnel, Unit Report, Pacific Command," Major J.C. Lovat-Fraser, Appendix B, Comments by O.C., 25th Field Company, R.C.E.," 13October 1944.

[89] LAC, MG 27, III, B11, Volume 57, "Reinforcement Situation 1944," "Telephone Conversation Mr. Ralston – General Pearkes," 1 November 1944.

[90] Major-General G.R. Pearkes, interviewed by Reginald H. Roy, 29 September 1966: 14-15, cited in Roy, "Major-General G.R. Pearkes": 57.

> the Deputy Minister of Agriculture would ring me up [and say] 'we've got to have more men released; we've got to get this crop in.' Some men went practically for the whole summer. They went home for seeding, they stayed for haying and they were again granted leave for harvesting… And these men never did get trained and they formed the hard core of the resistance movement against volunteering.[91]

The relative ease with which the NRMA soldier could obtain farm leave – accompanied by additional wages and a taste of civilian freedom – resulted in bitter resentment towards the military, the government, and conscription policy because, had they not been called up, conscripts could be working for lucrative wages.[92] According to another officer, because army leave was easily obtainable, the conscript became convinced "that he is not really needed for the defence of Canada. He blames his Commending [sic] Officer, his Brigadier and his G.O.C. [General Officer Commanding] and 'The Army' for refusing to let him go… I am absolutely convinced," he continued, "that thousands of NRMA soldiers will resolutely decline to enlist as long as the prospect of farm or other leave is dangled before them like a carrot before a donkey."[93]

Fostering further resentment among NRMA recruits was the fact that conscription was unevenly imposed. Invariably, men working in essential industry could defer their compulsory military training owing to their employment. Yet, thousands of other men, all eligible for service, escaped the draft completely. In 1943, the army reported that it was over 20,000 men short of its needs in NRMA men, all while 115,000 single men and 160,000 married men employed in low-priority industries had not received call-up notices.[94] In a democratic society, conscription policy aimed to ensure equality of sacrifice, but in practice

---

[91] *Ibid*.

[92] Roy, "From the Darker Side": 44.

[93] Macklin, "Mobilization of 13 Bde. on an Active Basis": 12. For other references to economic considerations, also see: *Ibid*: 3 and 11; LAC, MG 27, III, B11, Volume 50, "Macklin's (Brigadier) Report re recruiting in Pacific Command," Lieutenant W.E. Sanders, "Report on NRMA Personnel," 1 May 1944: 1; Volume 50, Adjutant-General to the Minister, "Mobilization of 13 Bde. on an Active Basis," 18 May 1944; and "Notes of a Telephone Conversation between Honourable A.L. Macdonald and Major General Pearkes": 2.

[94] Granatstein and Hitsman, *Broken Promises*: 198-99.

and from the conscripts' perspective, the NRMA forced some men into uniform but overlooked others, the latter of whom continued to earn high wages working in nonessential industries. Thus, when conscripts were able to obtain leave, they despised seeing other men "working unmolested for high wages."[95] In light of the evidence, it comes as little surprise that some 6,300 conscripts out of 15,600 had unlawfully deserted their posts to return to civilian life in late 1944 alone.[96] In the words of Private D.E. Laracque, a conscript serving in the ranks of Les Fusiliers du Saint-Laurent, "I have been in the army for four years, and been gypped all that time and it won't happen to me anymore."[97] The inherent inequality was simply too much to overcome. Far from the image of the mindless, unthinking 'Zombie,' the evidence suggests that conscripts were expressing far more sophisticated critique than is generally attributed to them.

Related to one's relationship to the state, other home defence troops were firm in their stance that a democratic government ought to be transparent in its policies, honest in their execution, and accountable for any consequences. As one NRMA recruit recalled, the men compelled into uniform had, "honestly tried to abide by the laws of this country," by answering their call-up notices, completing the compulsory training program, and serving on home soil in defensive units.[98] Yet, while they had complied with the law, these men were subjected to undue pressure from their military commanders, general service colleagues, and the civilian population to exceed their ascribed wartime duty. Many NRMA personnel thus refused to 'go active' on principle; to volunteer would allow the government to escape the

[95] Macklin, "Mobilization of 13 Bde. on an Active Basis": 11.
[96] "The Shocking Truth," *Globe and Mail*, 22 January 1945: 6.
[97] "Proceedings of a Court of Inquiry assembled at Terrace, B.C.," 3 December 1944: 9.
[98] Anonymous Letter, 18 November 1944.

'spectre of conscription' and its repercussions while, in equal measure, would hold the government accountable to its extensive promises against compulsion for overseas service.

At the same time, while many NRMA recruits seemed genuine in their view of government accountability, we must allow for alternate interpretations of the evidence. As Roy argues:

> a great many [of conscripted men] claimed that if the government wanted or needed them, it would conscript them for overseas service. Since Prime Minister W.L. Mackenzie King had repeatedly declared that his government would not impose conscription for overseas service, it was a refrain which the conscripts could use as a shield to their own personal motives for avoiding service overseas.[99]

Indeed, in Le Régiment de Hull, the commanding officer believed that at least some of his troops were "willing to gamble on being conscripted for overseas service and will bide their time" serving in defensive roles.[100] In all likelihood, both possibilities were realized; some conscripts were politically progressive in their views, and others latched onto excuses rooted in politics in order to avoid being sent overseas. In both instances, though, conscripts apparently took pride in the fact that they "have beaten 'the army' [and] they have beaten 'the government,'" in refusing to volunteer.[101]

At the same time, the majority of conscripted men were ostensibly willing to serve overseas, but only if the government ordered them to do so. As reported by Major-General Pearkes, the troops under his command frequently claimed, "We will hang back and wait until the Government tells us," or "If the Government tells us to go, we will go."[102] In the Rocky Mountain Rangers, "The opinion most generally expressed" by the NRMA personnel

[99] Roy, "From the Darker Side": 43-44.
[100] St.-Laurent, "Enrolling NRMA. Personnel for Active Service": 3.
[101] Macklin, "Mobilization of 13 Bde. on an Active Basis": 9-10.
[102] "Notes of a Telephone Conversation between Honourable A.L. Macdonald and Major General Pearkes": 2.

was "that it is up to the Govt. to make the decision."[103] Brigadier Macklin, the commanding officer of the 13th Infantry Brigade, observed this sentiment in his unit as well: "As they say themselves, they will go if they are sent."[104] Macklin went on to suggest that his men, "honestly think that by holding out they will some day [sic] force the Government to adopt conscription which they feel is the only fair system."[105]

To the degree that the system of coercing young men into 'going active' under the banner of voluntarism ensured a steady stream of reinforcements for overseas, the government was able to delay implementing conscription for overseas service and to avoid the historical unrest associated with compulsion. In the event that these men were needed overseas to win the war, the NRMA recruits wanted to ensure that the country's politicians had to answer to its citizens and deal with any repercussions related to conscription policy. In Le Régiment de Hull, "A large percentage of the NRMA personnel," were apparently "perfectly willing to serve their country anywhere but are firm in the stand that they should be ordered officially to go overseas."[106] Likewise, "The big majority," of men stationed at British Columbia transit camp felt "that if the military authorities really wanted them they would order them Active."[107] Many recruits therefore scoffed at the notion of front-line service because they felt that the country's war effort overseas should not rely on "handcuffed volunteers," a term used to describe the so-called voluntary recruiting system from within the ranks of the NRMA.[108]

---

[103] LAC, RG 24, Volume 15205, War Diary of the Rocky Mountain Rangers, 19 April 1944.
[104] Macklin, "Mobilization of 13 Bde. on an Active Basis": 13.
[105] *Ibid*: 10-11.
[106] St.-Laurent, "Enrolling NRMA. Personnel for Active Service": 1.
[107] MacGregor, "Observation on Attitude of (H.D. Personnel)": 1.
[108] The term 'handcuffed volunteer' seemingly originated in the context of the American draft in the Second World War. According to Gordon L. Rottman, voluntary enlistment in the United States halted in January 1943 following the implementation of general conscription. Up to this point, the Marines had only accepted volunteers in their ranks, but owing to recent compulsory measures, American draftees could now join

Quite apart from contemporary perceptions of 'Zombies,' the troops compelled to arms were not mindless or unthinking creatures, but instead expressed nuanced ideas about governmental accountability and the democratic notion of equality in their stance on conscription. As detailed in Captain R.R. Sanger's report on the NRMA, the men had a number of questions about the government's policy on conscription:

> Why if the situation in Europe is so critical at the present time does not the Govt. bring in conscription when it is empowered to do so by the plebescite [sic] taken a short time ago… Why should the H.D. receive the brunt of Govt. criticism and be used as a political football while there are thousands of able-bodied civilians wandering the streets, who come under the same category but so far have escaped the draft? Why did the Govt. not bring in Conscription after the plebiscite? Was it because the Govt. deemed it necessary to handle Quebec with kid gloves to insure [sic] the Liberal Party of the backing of the Quebec population, as it is the only Province in Canada opposing conscription…[109]

Likewise, troops stationed elsewhere reportedly directed similar questions to their officers. "Why does the Govt. not exercise its powers of conscription…Why, when there is such a labour shortage are so many men putting in their time in uniform travelling around the west coast when there is no apparent need for such a large force there… If the Govt. doesn't see fit to carry out a policy that is fair to all concerned, why should we go and fight for those who are staying at home and making good money and having a good time?"[110] By the time these reports were penned in late 1944, compulsory recruits had been subjected to various pressures to volunteer for the front lines for more than three years. Much of the rhetoric used by the army to attest men to volunteer status centred on the apparent necessity of overseas reinforcements, and that it was their duty as Canadian citizens to wage war on the front

---

any arm of service they desired. Those who selected the Marines became known as 'handcuffed volunteers' or 'draftee volunteers.' See: Gordon L. Rottman, *FUBAR: Soldier Slang of World War II* (Oxford: Osprey Publishing, 2007): 58. For its use in the Canadian context, see: Dean Oliver, "'My Darlin' Clementine?' Wooing Zombies for $6.50 a Night: General Service-NRMA Relations in Wartime Calgary," *Canadian Military History* 7, no. 3 (1998): 49.

[109] MacGregor, "Observation on Attitude of (H.D. Personnel)": 1.

[110] LAC, MG 27, III, B11, Volume 50, "Macklin's (Brigadier) Report re recruiting in Pacific Command," Lieutenant-Colonel W.E. Sanders, "Report on N.R.M.A. Personnel," 1 May 1944: 1-2.

lines.[111] In the men's minds, if their services were required for the European theatre as badly as their officers assured them they were, the responsibility to conscript rested on the government. As the men pointed out, the country's favourable reaction to the plebiscite earlier in the war authorized overseas conscription.[112] By foregoing compulsion for abroad, the government created an environment that fostered unease, misinformation, and distrust within the ranks, as well as a general loss of faith in the military and in its officers. That few historians acknowledge that the so-called 'Zombies' were politically aware and even sophisticated in their views of government accountability is one of the most puzzling anomalies in the historiography.

Conclusion: Rendering a Human Aspect of Conscription

Many scholars view wars as exercises in nation building.[113] This is especially true of the Great War through the narrative of colony-to-nation, owing to Canada's seat on the League of Nations, its signature on the Treaty of Versailles, and greater Canadian independence under the Statute of Westminster. In the same way, the Second World War gave rise to the 'rights revolution' in Canada and opened the dialogue on the meaning of Canadian citizenship.[114] For those men compelled to serve under the National Resources Mobilization Act, by asserting their right *not* to serve in the military, these men were part of

[111] LAC, RG 24, Volume 15150, War Diary of the Prince of Wales Rangers, Appendix 2, Address by Lt. Col. R.J. Bolton, 22 November 1944: 1-3; and Macklin, "Mobilization of 13 Bde. on an Active Basis": 9.

[112] As discussed in Chapter One, approximately 63 per cent of Canadians voted 'yes' in the conscription plebiscite to release the government from its earlier promises against compulsory service, while 37 per cent voted 'no.'

[113] For example, see: Jonathan Vance, *Death So Noble: Memory, Meaning, and the First Word War* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1997): 11; R. Scott Sheffield, *the Red Man's on the Warpath: The Image of the Indian in the Second World War* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2004): 10; Ivana Caccia, *Managing the Canadian Mosaic in Wartime: Shaping Citizenship Policy, 1939-1945* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2010): 3; Tim Cook, "Battles of the Imagined Past: Canada's Great War and Memory," *Canadian Historical Review* 95, no.3 (2014): 417.

[114] On the 'rights revolution,' see Michael Ignatieff, *The Rights Revolution* (Toronto: House of Anansi Press, 2000). The discourse on citizenship culminated in the Canadian *Citizenship Act* of 1946.

an important transformation in the discourse of citizenship and the nation-building process.[115] That these men stood apart from their compatriots in their understanding of duty makes them an important study in the evolution of rights and responsibilities in Canada.

As we have seen, many Canadians expressed concern over the vast numbers of home defence conscripts who refused to conform to contemporary understanding of wartime duty. Contemporary opinion held that the men called up under the National Resources Mobilization Act were undemocratic, unpatriotic, and they simply must have been French Canadians or other ethnic minorities because they did not seem to possess proper Anglo-Saxon values. Certainly, the nation's conscripts refused to conform to popular expectations surrounding civic responsibility, but not for the reasons that many contemporaries believed. While there is little evidence to support the notion that all conscripts responded universally to the suggestion that they 'go active' and serve on the front lines, there are several broad trends in the responses of these men.

Indeed, their reactions to conscription policy and to coercive recruiting practices were legacies of the interwar years and in their experiences in the army once they joined the ranks of the NRMA. For some, the government had failed them during the Depression, and further reneged on its promises against overseas conscription, thus absolving conscripts from their responsibilities to fight for king and country. The possibility that the government might avoid the consequences of implementing overseas conscription by coercing young men to 'go active' was also the cause for some concern. For others, family ties and personal beliefs came before any kind of civic obligations. Still other conscripts refused to enlist in the overseas army because they felt that they were victims of discrimination because of their ethnicity, or

[115] Shaw makes this argument for conscientious objectors during the Great War, but it is equally applicable to conscripts during the Second World War. See: Shaw, *Crisis of Conscience*: 7.

because they were 'treated like scum' during military training and service at the hands of officers and other uniformed men. A sustained inquiry into the motivations of Canada's conscripts is important because it undermines contemporary perceptions of 'Zombie' conscripts, and because it further serves to suggest that the nation's conscripts were quite sophisticated in their understanding of individual rights, political responsibility, and the reciprocal relationship of a democratic government and its citizens.

Conclusion:
Conscription and Identity in Second World War Canada

> The vision and courage of men and women have transformed our country – almost within living memory – from small and virtually unknown regions of forest and farm into one of the great industrial nations of the world. But far more than material growth has arisen from the vision and courage of our people; they have also sought to continuously to defend and to extend the frontiers of freedom. More than once in the name of Canada, the sons and daughters of Canada have valiantly served; and thousands have died to save the world's freedom. In world affairs, our country has an outstanding record of responsibility and integrity.[1]
>
> – William Lyon Mackenzie King
> Speech at the Supreme Court of Canada on Canadian Citizenship
> 3 January 1947

Two days after the Canadian Citizenship Act of 1946 came into effect, Prime Minister William Lyon Mackenzie King and 25 others – among them a farmer, a shoemaker, and a metallurgical engineer – received Canadian citizenship. Although the status of being a Canadian citizen had existed for more than three decades, only after the Second World War did citizenship become distinct and separate from British nationality.[2] The war was an integral part of that transformation of citizenship and of identity, and the emphasis that King placed on the conflict's transformative powers, and on the courage of the nation's sons and daughters in taking up arms, is hard to ignore. The war had confirmed Canada as a sovereign nation, and many wanted the rest of the world to recognize the country's recently won status.[3]

---

[1] William Lyon Mackenzie King, "I Speak as a Citizen of Canada," in *Great Canadian Speeches: Words that Shaped a Nation*, edited by Brian Busby (London: Arcturus Publishing, 2008): 123.

[2] Margaret A. Banks, "The Franchise in Britain and Canada," *University of Toronto Law Journal* 17, no. 1 (1967): 187. The status of 'Canadian citizen' was originally created under the Immigration Act of 1910 to designate those British subjects who were born, naturalized, or domiciled in Canada. A separate status of 'Canadian national' had been introduced by Canada in 1921 with the passage of the Canadian Nationals Act. These concepts – Canadian citizen and Canadian national – remained subsets of the status of 'British subject' until the Canadian Citizenship Act came into effect in 1947.

[3] Citizenship and Immigration Canada, "Towards the Canadian Citizenship Act," in *Forging Our Legacy: Canadian Citizenship and Immigration, 1900-1977*, revised 1 July 2006, http://www.cic.gc.ca/English /resources/publications/Legacy/ index.asp.

It was this climate of identity, citizenship, and nation building that has informed this thesis. When newspapers reported on NRMA recruits, they were not merely reporting 'facts' but were also providing insight into how Canadians envisaged their nation, or contested that vision. The 'Zombie' ascription reveals the degree to which Canadians were unsettled by the prospective that touchstones of Anglo-Canadian life were coming under scrutiny – that duty was no longer obligatory, and that some viewed what was once considered deferential and honorable conduct with disdain. Likewise, as frustrated and disbelieving as were military officers with the conscripts under their command, their discourse reveals concerns that Canada lacked distinct symbols of its own nationhood as it slowly distanced itself from the badges, symbols, and identities of British imperialism. Furthermore, the perspectives of conscripts themselves also formed an integral part of this dialogue. An inquiry into the reasons why many compulsory recruits chose to stand apart from their compatriots in their vision of duty and government responsibility provides key insights into the stresses and nuances of the mid-century nation-building process.[4] As such, this thesis argues that the identity, citizenship, and nation building feature prominently in the rhetoric surrounding conscription in the Second World War.

While this examination leaves many questions unanswered, it does provide a platform for further study. The notion of identity – whether that of the nation writ large or that of individual conscripts – is a lens through which British Columbia's 1944 anti-conscription demonstrations might be (re)interpreted. In addition, we might wonder about conscript-volunteer tensions at training camps early in the war, or other 'Zombie' uprisings at Calgary,

[4] Daniel Byers, *Zombie Army: The Canadian Army and Conscription in the Second World War* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2016): 125-175. Also see: Daniel Byers, "Les «zombies» du Canada: un portrait des conscrits canadiens et de leur expérience durant la Deuxième Guerre mondiale," *Bulletin d'histoire politique* 8, nos. 2-3 (hiver-printemps 2000): 184-204.

Drummondville, Gravenhurst, Shilo, Debert, and other cities and military camps across Canada. While this thesis contributes to the extant historiography on conscription, there nevertheless remains a lacuna in the literature when it comes to understanding compulsory service 'on the ground.' This aspect deserves attention and analysis.

Still, this thesis offers one of the first sustained attempts to move beyond the politics of conscription in the Second World War. The complex layers of meaning assigned to the 'Zombies' reveals a wealth of knowledge about national identity. Through an examination of its social constructions, compulsory service is well suited as one avenue through which to glean contemporary ideas about Canada's sense of self, popular notions of the nature and responsibility of governments, and the reciprocal duties of its citizens. By linking identity discourse with an important social and politico-military issue, this study contributes to both a revisionist history of conscription outside of high-level politics as well as to our understanding of Canadian identity and citizenship in the mid-twentieth century. Historian and political scientist Alan C. Cairns contends that, "The debates surrounding the conscription crises of both world wars were citizenship controversies about the extent and nature of civic obligation," but as this thesis suggests, the evidence demonstrates that the debate also touched upon what it was to be Canadian.[5] To dismiss contemporary ideas about and attitudes towards conscription is to do a disservice to those who argued both sincerely and viscerally about the kind of nation they desired and hoped to possess in the 1940s.

[5] Alan C. Cairns, "The Fragmentation of Canadian Citizenship," in *Belonging: The Meaning and Future of Canadian Citizenship*, edited by William Kaplan (Montreal-Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1993): 181.

Bibliography:

Primary Sources:

Archival Sources:

Directorate of History, Ottawa, Ontario
File 113.3R4003 (D1)
File HS322.009 (D30)

Heritage Park Museum, Terrace, British Columbia
Terrace Mini-Museum Aural History Programme

Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa, British Columbia
Record Group 2 – Records of the Privy Council Office
Record Group 24 – Department of National Defence
Manuscript Group 26, J –W.L.M. King Papers
Manuscript Group 27, III, B11 – J.L. Ralston Papers
Manuscript Group 30, E133 – A.G.L. McNaughton Papers
Manuscript Group 30, E157 – H.D.G. Crerar Papers
Manuscript Group 30, E520 – K. Stuart Papers

Northern British Columbia Archives and Special Collections, Prince George, British Columbia
2006.13 – Jack Corless Collection

Queen's University Archives, Kingston, Ontario
F00630 - Charles Gavan Power Fonds

University of Victoria Special Collections, Victoria, British Columbia
1980-55 – Reginald H. Roy Fonds
Canadian Military Oral History Collection

Published Primary Sources:

Dominion of Canada. *Acts of the Parliament of the Dominion of Canada*. Ottawa: King's Printer, 1940.

---. *Acts of the Parliament of the Dominion of Canada*. Ottawa: King's Printer, 1943.

---. *Official Report of Debates of the House of Commons*. Ottawa: King's Printer, 1940.

---. *Official Report of Debates of the House of Commons*. Ottawa: King's Printer, 1942.

---. *Official Report of Debates of the House of Commons*. Ottawa: King's Printer, 1944.

Periodicals:

Magazines:
Atlantic Monthly
The Maple Leaf
Saturday Night

Newspapers:
Blairmore Enterprise (Blairmore, AB)
Calgary Herald (Calgary, AB)
Canberra Times (Brisbane, AUS)
Cariboo Observer (Quesnel, BC)
Charlottetown Guardian (Charlottetown, PEI)
Chicago Tribune (Chicago, IL)
Chilliwack Progress (Chilliwack, BC)
Crag and Canyon (Banff, AB)
Didsbury Pioneer (Didsbury, AB)
Edmonton Journal (Edmonton, AB)
Globe and Mail (Toronto, ON)
Halifax Chronicle (Halifax, NS)
Hamilton Review (Hamilton, ON)
Hamilton Spectator (Hamilton, ON)
High River Times (High River, AB)
Kamloops Sentinel (Kamloops, BC)
Kelowna Courier (Kelowna, BC)
Kingsville Reporter (Kingsville, ON)
La Liberté et le patriote (Winnipeg, MB)
La Patrie (Montreal, QC)
La Survivance (Edmonton, AB)
L'Action Populaire (Joliette, QC)
L'Avenir du Nord (Saint-Jérôme, QC)
Le Canada Français (Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu, QC)
Le Devoir (Montreal, QC)
Le Droit (Ottawa, ON)
Le Soleil (Quebec City, QC)
Le Temps (Montreal, QC)
L'Evenment Journal (Quebec City, QC)
London Times (London, UK)
Montreal Gazette (Montreal, QC)
New York Times (New York, NY)
Niagara Falls Gazette (Niagara Falls, ON)
Omineca Herald (Terrace, BC)
Ottawa Citizen (Ottawa, ON)
Ottawa Evening Citizen (Ottawa, ON)
Ottawa Journal (Ottawa, ON)
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette (Pittsburgh, PA)
Prince George Citizen (Prince George, BC)

Prince Rupert Daily News (Prince Rupert, BC)
Prince Rupert Evening Empire (Prince Rupert, BC)
Quebec Chronicle-Telegraph (Quebec City, QC)
Red Deer Advocate (Red Deer, AB)
Regina Leader-Post (Regina, SK)
Saskatoon Star-Phoenix (Saskatoon, SK)
Spokane Daily Chronicle (Spokane, WA)
Saint John Telegraph-Journal (Saint John, NB)
St. Maurice Valley Chronicle (Trois-Rivières, QC)
Staveley Advertiser (Staveley, AB)
Strathmore Standard (Strathmore, AB)
Sydney Morning Herald (Sydney, AUS)
Sylvan Lake News (Sylvan Lake, AB)
The Canadian Statesman (Bowmanville, ON)
The Chronicle (Carbon, AB)
The New Canadian (Vancouver, BC)
The News Herald (Vancouver, BC)
The People's Weekly (Edmonton, AB)
Terrace Standard (Terrace, BC)
Toronto Daily Star (Toronto, ON)
Toronto Telegram (Toronto, ON)
Vancouver Province (Vancouver, BC)
Vancouver Sun (Vancouver, BC)
Victoria Daily Colonist (Victoria, BC)
Victoria Times (Victoria, BC)
Western Farm Leader (Calgary, AB)
Western Star (Cornerbrook, NFLD)
Windsor Daily Star (Windsor, ON)
Winnipeg Evening Tribune (Winnipeg, MB)
Winnipeg Tribune (Winnipeg, MB)

Secondary Sources:

Published Secondary Sources:

Ahlbäck, Anders. *Manhood and the Making of the Military: Conscription and Masculinity in Finland, 1917-1939*. Farnham, UK: Ashgate, 2014.

Allen, Ralph. *Home Made Banners.* Toronto: Longmans, Green and Co., 1946.

---. *Ordeal by Fire: Canada, 1910-1945*. Toronto: Doubleday Canada Limited, 1961.

---. *The High White Forest*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1964.

Anderson, Kay. *Vancouver's Chinatown: Racial Discourse in Canada, 1875-1980*. Montreal-Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1991.

Anderson, Mark Cronlund and Carmen L. Robertson. *Seeing Red: A History of Natives in Canadian Newspapers*. Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2011.

Andrew Baldwin, Laura Cameron, and Audrey Kobayashi, eds. *The Great White North: Race, Nature, and the Historical Geographies of Whiteness in Canada*. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2011.

Armstrong, Elizabeth. *The Crisis of Quebec, 1914-1918.* Montreal-Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1974.

Asante, Nadine. *The History of Terrace*. Terrace, BC: Totem Press, 1972.

Auerback, Sasha. "Negotiating Nationalism: Jewish Conscription and Russian Repatriation in London's East End, 1916-1918." *Journal of British Studies* 46, no. 3 (July 2007): 594-620.

Auger, Martin F. "On the Brink of Civil War: The Canadian Government and the Suppression of the 1918 Easter Riots." *Canadian Historical Review* 89, no. 4 (December 2008): 503-540.

Avakumovic, Ivan. *Socialism in Canada: A Study of the CCF-NDP in Federal and Provincial Politics*. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1978.

Balzer, Timothy. *The Information Front: The Canadian Army and News Management during the Second World War*. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2011.

Banks, Margaret A. "The Franchise in Britain and Canada." *University of Toronto Law Journal* 17, no. 1 (1987): 187-194.

Barber, Marilyn. "The Ontario Bilingual Schools Issue: Sources of Conflict." *Canadian Historical Review* 47, no. 3 (September 1966): 227-248.

Beauregard, Claude. *Guerre et censure au Canada, 1939-1945*. Sillery, QC: Septentrion, 1998.

Beheils, Michael, ed. *The Essential Laurendeau.* Toronto: Copp Clark, 1977.

Berger, Carl. *The Sense of Power: Studies in the Ideas of Canadian Imperialism, 1867-1914*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1970.

---. *The Writing of Canadian History: Aspects of English-Canadian Historical Writing, 1900-1970.* Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1976.

Berton, Pierre. *Vimy*. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1986.

---. *The Great Depression: 1929-1939*. Toronto: Doubleday Canada, 2012.

Birney, Earle. *Turvey: A Military Picaresque*. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1949.

Bourrie, Mark. *The Fog of War: Censorship of Canada's Media in World War Two.* Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 2011.

Bowman, Phyllis. *We Skirted the War!* Prince Rupert, B.C: P. Bowman, 1975.

Broadfoot, Barry. *Six War Years, 1939-1945: Memories of Canadians at Home and Abroad*. Toronto: Doubleday, 1974.

Buck, Tim. *30 Years: The Story of the Communist Movement in Canada, 1922-1952*. Toronto: Progress Books, 1952.

Burns, E.L.M. *Manpower in the Canadian Army 1939-1945*. Toronto: Clarke, Irwin & Company, 1956.

Byers, Daniel. "Mobilising Canada: The National Resources Mobilization Act, the Department of National Defence, and Compulsory Military Service in Canada, 1940-1945." *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association* 7, no. 1 (1996): 175-203.

---. "Les «zombies» du Canada: un portrait des conscrits canadiens et de leur expérience durant la Deuxième Guerre mondiale." *Bulletin d'histoire politique* 8, nos. 2-3 (hiver-printemps 2000): 184-204.

---. *Zombie Army: The Canadian Army and Conscription in the Second World War*. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2016.

Caccia, Ivana. *Managing the Canadian Mosaic in Wartime: Shaping Citizenship Policy, 1939-1945.* Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2010.

Cairns, Alan C. "The Fragmentation of Canadian Citizenship." In *Belonging: The Meaning and Future of Canadian Citizenship*, edited by William Kaplan, 181-220. Montreal-Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1993.

Campbell, Lara, Michael Dawson, and Catherine Gidney, eds. *Worth Fighting For: Canada's Tradition of War Resistance from 1812 to the War on Terror*. Toronto: Between the Lines, 2015.

Canova, Timothy A. "Democracy's Disappearing Duties." In *Democratic Citizenship and War*, edited by Yoav Peled, Noah Lewin-Epstein, Guy Mundlak, and Jean Cohen, 199-216. Abingdon, UK: Routlege, 2011.

Christie, Nancy and Michael Gauvreau, eds. *Cultures of Citizenship in Postwar Canada, 1940-1955*. Montreal-Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2003.

Coleman, Daniel. *White Civility: The Literacy Project of English Canada*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2006.

Cook, Tim. *At the Sharp End: Canadians Fighting the Great War*, *1914-1916*. Toronto: Viking Canada, 2007.

Cook, Tim. *Clio's Warriors: Canadian Historians and the Writing of the World Wars*. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2006.

---. *Shock Troops: Canadians Fighting the Great War 1917-1918.* Volume Two. Toronto: Penguin Group, 2008.

---." Battles of the Imagined Past: Canada's Great War and Memory." *Canadian Historical Review* 95, no.3 (2014): 417-426.

---. *Fight to the Finish: Canadians in the Second World War 1939-1945.* Volume Two. Toronto: Penguin Books, 2015.

Coombs, Howard G. ed. *The Insubordinate and the Noncompliant: Case Studies of Canadian Mutiny and Disobedience, 1920 to Present*. Kingston: Canadian Defence Academy Press, 2007.

Copp, Terry. *A Nation at War, 1939-1945*. Waterloo, ON: Laurier Centre for Military, Strategic and Disarmament Studies, 2004.

---. *Fields of Fire: The Canadians in Normandy*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004.

Copp, Terry and Richard Nielsen. *No Price Too High: Canadians and the Second World War*. Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson Limited, 1996.

Cuthbertson, Wendy. *Labour Goes to War: The CIO and the Construction of a New Social Order, 1939-45*. Vancouver: University of British Columbia, 2012.

Dafoe, John W. *Laurier: A Study in Canadian Politics*. Toronto: Thomas Allen, 1922.

Dawson, R. MacGregor. *The Conscription Crisis of 1944.* Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1961.

Douglas, W.A.B. and Brereton Greenhous. "Canada and the Second World War: The State of Clio's Art." *Military Affairs* 42, no. 1 (February 1978): 24-28.

---. *Out of the Shadows: Canada in the Second World War*. Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1996.

Dreisziger, N.Z. "Rallying Canada's Immigrants behind the War Effort, 1939-1945." In *Forging a Nation: Perspectives on the Canadian Military Experience*, edited by Bernd Horn, 177-194. St. Catharines, ON: Vanvell, 2002.

Dudink, Stefan, Karen Hagemann, and John Tosh, eds. *Masculinity in Politics and War: Gendering Modern History*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004.

Dummitt, Christopher. *The Manly Modern: Masculinity in Postwar Canada*. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2007.

Durflinger, Serge Marc. "The Montreal and Verdun Zoot-Suit Disturbances of June 1944." In *L'Impact de la Deuxième Guerre mondiale sur les sociétés canadienne et québécoise,* edited by Serge Bernier, 7-21. Ottawa: Université du Québec à Montréal et la Direction Histoire et patrimoine de la Défense nationale, 1998.

---. *Fighting from Home: The Second World War in Verdun, Quebec*. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2006.

English, Allan D. *Cream of the Crop: Canadian Aircrew 1939-1945.* Montreal-Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1996.

Ferguson, Barry. "Before the Citizenship Act: Confronting Canadian Citizenship in the House of Commons, 1900-1947." In *Thinkers and Dreamers: Historical Essays in Honour of Carl Berger*, edited by Gerald Friesen and Doug Owram, 163-189. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2011.

Finkel, Alvin. *Social Policy and Practice in Canada: A History*. Waterloo, ON: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2006.

Flynn, George Q. *Conscription and Democracy: The Draft in France, Great Britain, and the United States.* Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2002.

Frank, Floyd. *My Valley's Yesteryears*. Victoria: Orca Book Publishers Ltd., 1991.

Frazer, Heather T. and John O'Sullivan, eds. *"We Have Just Begun to Not Fight": An Oral History of Consientious Objection in Civilian Public Service during World War II.* New York: Twayne Publishers, 1996.

Fussell, Paul. *Wartime: Understanding and Behaviour in the Second World War.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1989.

German, Daniel. "Press Censorship and the Terrace Mutiny: A Case Study in Second World War Political Management." *Journal of Canadian Studies* 31, no. 4 (Winter 1996-97): 124-142.

Graham, W.R. *Arthur Meighen: The Door of Opportunity*. Toronto: Clarke, Irwin, and Co., 1960.

Granatstein, J.L. *Conscription in the Second World War 1939-1945: A Study in Political Management*. Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1969.

---. "'Strictly on Its Merits: The Conscription Issue in Canada after 1945." *Queen's Quarterly* 79 (Summer 1972): 192-206.

---. *Canada's War: The Politics of the Mackenzie King Government, 1939-1945*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990.

---. *The Generals: The Canadian Army's Senior Commanders in the Second World War*. Toronto: Stoddart Publishing, 1993.

---. "The 'Hard' Obligations of Citizenship: The Second World War in Canada." In *Belonging: The Meaning and Future of Canadian Citizenship*, edited by William Kaplan, 36-49. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1993.

---.*Canada's Army: Waging War and Keeping the Peace*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002.

Granatstein J.L. and J.M. Hitsman. *Broken Promises: A History of Conscription in Canada*. Toronto: University of Oxford Press, 1977.

Granatstein, J.L. and Peter Neary, eds. *The Good Fight: Canadians and World War II.* Toronto: Copp Clark Ltd., 1995.

Greenfield, Nathan M. *The Damned: The Canadians at the Battle of Hong Kong and the POW Experience, 1941-45*. Toronto: Harper Collins, 2011.

Grimshaw, Louis E. "No. 1 Armoured Train." *Canadian Defence Quarterly* 21, no. 2 (October 1991): 40-44.

Gullace, Nicoletta F. "White Feathers and Wounded Men: Female Patriotism and the Memory of the Great War." *Journal of British Studies* 36 (April 1997): 178-206.

Heron, Craig, ed. *The Workers' Revolt in Canada, 1917-1925*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998.

Heron, Craig and Myer Siemiatycki. "The Great War, the State, and Working-Class Canada." In *The Workers' Revolt in Canada, 1917-1925*, edited by Craig Heron, 11-42. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998.

Hewitt, Steven R. "You are making history, you are making history: The On to Ottawa Trek in Northern Ontario." Thunder Bay, ON: Lakehead University Centre for Northern Studies, 1995.

Hillmer, Norman. "The Second World War as an (Un) National Experience." In *On Guard for Thee: War, Ethnicity, and the Canadian State, 1939-1945*, edited by Norman Hillmer, Bohdan Kordan, and Lubomyr Luciuk, xi-xx. Ottawa: Canadian Committee for the History of the Second World War, 1988.

Historical Section. *The R.C.A.F. Overseas*. Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1944.

Horn, Bernd. "Good Men Pushed Too Far? The First Canadian Parachute Battalion Hunger Strike, 20-23 October 1944." In *The Insubordinate and the Noncompliant: Case Studies of Canadian Mutiny and Disobedience, 1920 to Present*, edited by Howard G. Coombs, 25-54. Kingston: Canadian Defence Academy Press, 2007.

Horn, Michiel. *The League for Social Reconstruction: Intellectual Origins of the Democratic Left in Canada 1930-1942*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980.

Hutchison, Bruce. *Mackenzie King: The Incredible Canadian.* Toronto: Longmans, Green and Co., 1953.

Ignatieff, Michael. *The Rights Revolution*. Toronto: House of Anansi Press, 2000.

James, Lawrence. *Mutiny: In the British and Commonwealth Forces, 1797-1956*. London: Buchan & Enright Publishers, 1987.

Jarvis, Christina S. *The Male Body at War: American Masculinity during World War II*. DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press, 2004.

Jeffries, John W. *Wartime America: The World War II Home Front*. Chicago: Ivan R. Dee Inc., 1996.

Kaplan, William, ed. *Belonging: The Meaning and Future of Canadian Citizenship*. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1993.

Kerby, N.J. *One Hundred Years of History – Terrace, B.C.* Terrace: Terrace Regional Museum Society, 1984.

Keshen, Jeffrey A. *Saints, Sinners, and Soldiers: Canada's Second World War*. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2004.

Lackenbauer, P. Whitney. "Guerillas in Our Midst: The Pacific Coast Militia Rangers, 1942-45." *BC Studies* no. 122 (Autumn 2007): 31-67.

Lammers, Cornelius J. "Strikes and Mutinies: A Comparative Study of Organizational Conflicts between Rulers and Ruled." *Administrative Science Quarterly* 14, no. 4 (December 1969): 558-572.

Laurendeau, André. *André Laurendeau: Witness for Quebec*, edited by Philip Stratford. Toronto: Macmillan, 1973.

Leander, Anna. "Drafting Community: Understanding the Fate of Conscription." *Armed Forces & Society* 30, no. 4 (Summer 2004): 571-599.

Levi, Margaret. *Consent, Dissent, and Patriotism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.

Levine, Allan. *King: William Lyon Mackenzie King: A Life Guided by the Hand of Destiny.* Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 2011.

Little, John I. "New Brunswick Reaction to the Manitoba Schools' Question." *Acadiensis* 1, no. 2 (Spring/Printemps 1972): 43-58.

Liversedge, Ronald. *Recollections of the On to Ottawa Trek*. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd., 1973.

Llewellyn, Kristina R., Sharon Cook, Joel Westheimer, Luz Alison, Molina Girón, and Karen Suurtamm, *The State and Potential of Civic Learning*: *Charting the Course for Youth Civic and Political Participation.* Ottawa: Canadian Policy Research Networks, 2007.

Lotchin, Roger W. "The Historians' War or the Home Front's War? Some Thoughts for Western Historians." *The Western Historical Quarterly* 26, no. 2 (Summer 1995): 185-196.

Lower, A.R.M. "Review of The Incredible Canadian: A Candid Portrait of Mackenzie King: His Works, His Times, and His Nation, by Bruce Hutchison." *Queen's Quarterly* 59 (Winter 1952-53): 560-563.

Macfarlane, John. *Ernest Lapointe and Quebec's Influence on Canadian Foreign Policy*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999.

Makowsky, Tom. "Prince George at War." In *Sa Ts'e: Historical Perspectives on Northern British Columbia*, edited by Thomas Thorner, 441-459. Prince George: College of New -Caledonia Press, 1989.

Mansikka, Eric. *Pack Up Your Troubles: Canadian War Humour*. Toronto: Methuen, 1987.

Mantle, Craig Leslie, ed. *The Unwilling and the Reluctant: Theoretical Perspectives on Disobedience in the Military*. Kingston: Canadian Defence Academy Press, 2006.

---, ed. *The Apathetic and the Defiant: Case Studies of Canadian Mutiny and Disobedience, 1812-1919.* Kingston: Canadian Defence Academy Press, 2007.

Massolin, Philip. *Canadian Intellectuals, the Tory Tradition, and the Challenge of Modernity, 1939-1970*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001.

McVicar, Hugh. "'Backdoor to War': A Canadian Infantryman at Hochwald and Xanten, February-March 1945." *Canadian Military History* 4, no. 2 (Autumn 1995): 75-81.

Medovoi, Leerom. *Rebels: Youth and the Cold War Origins of Identity*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2005.

Miller, Carmen. *Painting the Map Red: Canada and the South African War, 1899-1902*. Montreal-Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1998.

Miller, Ian. *Our Glory and Our Grief: Torontonians and the Great War.* Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002.

Mitchell, Gillian. *The North American Folk Music Revival: Nation and Identity in the United States and Canada, 1945-1980*. Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Company: 2013.

Morton, Desmond. "French Canada and War, 1868-1917: the Military Background to the Conscription Crisis of 1917." In *War and Society in North America*, edited by J.L. Granatstein and R.D. Cuff, 84-103. Toronto: T. Nelson, 1971.

---. *When Your Number's Up.* Toronto: Random House, 1993.

Morton, Desmond and J.L. Granatstein. *Marching to Armageddon: Canadians and the Great War, 1914-1919*. Toronto: Lester and Orphen Dennys, 1989.

---. *Victory 1945: Canadians from War to Peace*. Toronto: HarperCollins, 1995.

Moskos, Charles C. and John Whiteclay Chambers III, eds. *The New Conscientious Objection: From Sacred to Secular Resistance*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1982.

Mowat, Farley. *The Regiment*. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1973.

---. *My Father's Son: Memories of War and Peace*. Toronto: Key Porter Books, 1992.

Munro, John A. "English-Canadianism and the Demand for Canadian Autonomy: Ontario's Response to the Alaska Boundary Decision, 1903." *Ontario History* 57, no. 4 (December 1965): 189-203.

Murray, T. Hunter. "Coast Defence in British Columbia, 1939-1941: Attitudes and Realities." *BC Studies* no. 28 (Winter 1975-76): 3-27.

Neary, Peter and J.L. Granatstein, eds. *The Veterans Charter and Post-World War II Canada*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1999.

Nicholson, G.W. *The Official History of the Canadian Army in the Second World War*. Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1956.

Nielsen, Arne. *We Gambled Everything: The Life and Times of an Oilman*. Edmonton: University of Edmonton, 2012.

Nolan, Brian. *King's War: Mackenzie King and the Politics of War, 1939-1945.* Toronto: Random House, 1988.

Oliver, Dean. "'My Darlin' Clementine'? Wooing Zombies for $6.50 a Night: General Service-NRMA Relations in Wartime Calgary." *Canadian Military History* 7, no. 3 (Summer 1998): 46-54.

Perras, Galen Roger. "Canada as a Military Partner: Alliance Politics and the Campaign to Recapture the Aleutian Island of Kiska." *The Journal of Military History* 56 (July 1992): 423-454.

---. *Stepping Stones to Nowhere: The Aleutian Islands, Alaska, and American Military Strategy, 1867-1945*. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2003.

Perrun, Jody. *The Patriotic Consensus: Unity, Morale, and the Second World War in Winnipeg.* Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2014.

Peterson, Jan. *Twin Cities: Alberni – Port Alberni*. Lantzville, BC: Oolichan Books: 1994.

---. *Harbour City: Nanaimo in Transition, 1920-1967*. Surrey: Heritage House, 2006.

Pickersgill, J.W. and D.F. Forster. *The Mackenzie King Record, Volume 2: 1944-1945*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1968.

Pike, Francis. *Hirohito's War: The Pacific War, 1941-1945*. London: Bloomsbury, 2015.

Pope, Maurice A. *Soldiers and Politicians: The Memoirs of Lt.-Gen. Maurice A. Pope*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1962.

Purcell, Gillis. "Wartime Press Censorship in Canada." *International Journal* 2, no. 3 (Summer 1947): 250-261.

Rawling, Bill. "Only If Necessary: Canada's War against Japan, 1941-45." In *Contradictory Impulses: Canada and Japan in the Twentieth Century*, edited by Greg Donaghy and Patricia E. Roy, 101-119. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2008.

Rea, J.L. "What Really Happened? A New Look at the Conscription Crisis." *The Beaver* 74, no. 2 (April-May 1994): 10-19.

Reynolds, Graham with Wanda Robson. *Viola Desmond's Canada: A History of Blacks and Racial Segregation in the Promised Land*. Halifax: Fernwood Publishing, 2016.

Rose, Sonya O. "Temperate Heroes: Concepts of Masculinity in Second World War Britain." In *Masculinity in Politics and War: Gendering Modern History*, edited by Stefan Dudink, Karen Hagemann, and John Tosh, 177-195. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004.

---. *Which People's War? National Identity and Citizenship in Wartime Britain, 1939-1945.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004.

Rottman, Gordon L. *FUBAR: Soldier Slang of World War II*. Oxford: Osprey Publishing, 2007.

Roy, Patricia E. *The Oriental Question: Consolidating a White Man's Province, 1914-1941*. Vancouver: University of British Columbia, 2003.

---. *The Triumph of Citizenship: The Chinese and Japanese in Canada, 1941-1967*. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2007.

Roy, Reginald H. *Ready for the Fray: (Deas Gu Cath): The History of the Canadian Scottish Regiment (Princess Mary's) 1920-1955*. Vancouver: Evergreen Press Limited, 1958.

---. *Sinews of Steel: The History of the British Columbia Dragoons*. Kelowna, BC: British Columbia Dragoons, 1965.

---. *The Seaforth Highlanders of Canada, 1919-1965*. Ottawa: Seaforth Highlanders of Canada, 1969.

---. "Major-General G.R. Pearkes and the Conscription Crisis in British Columbia, 1944." *BC Studies* no. 28 (Winter 1975-76): 53-72.

--. "From the Darker Side of Canadian Military History: Mutiny in the Mountains – the Terrace Incident." *Canadian Defence Quarterly* 6, no. 2 (Autumn 1976): 42-55.

---. *For Most Conspicuous Bravery: A Biography of Major-General George R. Pearkes, V.C., through Two World Wars*. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1978.

---. "Morale in the Canadian Army in Canada," *Canadian Defence Quarterly* 16 (Autumn 1986): 40-45.

--. *D-Day! The Canadians and the Normandy Landings, June 1944*. Ottawa: CEF Books, 2001.

Russell, Peter A. "BC's 1944 'Zombie' Protests against Overseas Conscription." *BC Studies* no. 122 (Summer 1999): 49-76.

Said, Edward. *Orientalism*. New York: Random House, 1978.

Schull, Joseph. *The Far Distant Ships: An Official Account of Canadian Naval Operations in the Second World War*. Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1950.

Schulz, John. *Writing about Canada: A Handbook for Modern Canadian History*. Scarborough, ON: Prentice Hall, 1990.

Shaw, Amy J. *Crisis of Conscience: Conscientious Objection in Canada during the First World War*. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2009.

Sheffield, R. Scott. *The Red Man's on the Warpath: The Image of the "Indian" and the Second World War*. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2004.

Smith, Leonard V. "War and 'Politics': The French Army Mutinies of 1917." *War in History* 2, no. 2 (1995): 180-201.

Smythe, Conn with Scott Young. *Conn Smythe: If You Can't Beat 'Em in the Alley*. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1981.

Socknat, Thomas. *Witness Against War: Pacifism in Canada 1900-1945*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987.

Stacey, C.P. *The Canadians in Britain , 1939-1944*. Ottawa: King's Printer, 1945.

---. *Canada's Battle in Normandy: The Canadian Army's Share in the Operations*. Ottawa: King's Printer, 1946.

---. *From Pachino to Ortona: The Canadian Campaign in Sicily and Italy, 1943*. Ottawa: King's Printer, 1946.

---. *The Canadian Army 1939-1945: An Official Historical Summary*. Ottawa: King's Printer, 1948.

---. *Official History of the Canadian Army in the Second World War*. Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1955.

---. "Nationality: The Experience of Canada." *Historical Papers* 2, no. 1 (1967): 10-19.

---. *Arms, Men and Governments: The War Policies of Canada, 1939-1945*. Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1970.

Stanley, Peter. *Invading Australia: Japan and the Battle for Australia, 1942*. Victoria, AUS: Penguin Books, 2008.

Stevenson, Michael D. *Canada's Greatest Wartime Muddle: National Selective Serve and the Mobilization of Human Resources During World War II.* Montreal-Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2001.

Stille, Mark. *Midway, 1942: Turning Point in the Pacific*. Botley, UK: Osprey Publishing Ltd., 2010.

---. *The Imperial Japanese Navy in the Pacific War*. Botley, UK: Osprey Publishing Ltd., 2014.

Sugden, Jessie Bond. *In the Shadow of the Cutbanks: A Story of Growing Up in Prince George*. Prince George: Fraser-Fort George Museum Society, 1986.

Swainger, Jonathan. "Teen Trouble and Community Identity in Post-Second World War Northern British Columbia." *Journal of Canadian Studies* 47, no. 2 (Spring 2013): 150-179.

Terrace Regional Historical Society. *20th Century Anecdotes from the Terrace Area*. Terrace: Totem Press Ltd., 2002.

Thompson, E.P. *The Making of the English Working Class*. New York : Vintage Books, 1963.

---. "The Moral Economy of the English Crowd in the Eighteenth Century." *Past and Present*, no. 50 (February 1971): 76-136.

Thompson, John Herd with Allen Seager. *Canada 1922-1939: Decades of Discord*. Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1990.

Thompson, Neville. *Canada and the End of the Imperial Dream: Beverley Baxter's Reports from London through War and Peace, 1936-1960*. Don Mills, ON: Oxford University Press, 2013.

Torrance, Judy. *Public Violence in Canada, 1867-1982*. Montreal-Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1986.

Tosh, John. "Hegemonic Masculinity and the History of Gender."In *Masculinity in Politics and War: Gendering Modern History*, edited by Stefan Dudink, Karen Hagemann, and John Tosh, 41-58. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004.

Tucker, G.N. *The Naval Service of Canada: Its Official History*. Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1952.

Vance, Jonathan F. *Death So Noble: Memory, Meaning, and the First World War*. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1997.

---. *Maple Leaf Empire: Canada, Britain, and Two World Wars.* Don Mills, ON: Oxford University Press, 2012.

---. "An Open Door to a Better Future: The Memory of Canada's Second World War." In *Canada and the Second World War: Essays in Honour of Terry Copp*, edited by Geoffrey Hayes, Mike Bechthold, and Matt Symes, 461-476. Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2012.

Walker, Richard J. "1944: The Case for the Prosecution." In *The Insubordinate and the Noncompliant: Case Studies of Canadian Mutiny and Disobedience, 1920 to Present*,

edited by Howard G. Coombs, 55-100. Kingston: Canadian Defence Academy Press, 2007.

Ward, W. Peter. *White Canada Forever: Popular Attitudes and Public Policy towards Orientals in British Columbia*. Third Edition. Montreal-Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002.

Watston Jr., George M. "Midway: The Turning Point." In *The Pacific War: The Story of the Bitter Struggle in the Pacific Theatre of World War II*, edited by Bernard C. Nalty. London: Pavilion Books, 2015. Google Books.

Wilford, Timothy. "The Enemy Within and the Pacific Threat: Canadian Security Intelligence in British Columbia, 1942–45." *Intelligence and National Security* 27, no. 4 (August 2012): 531-558.

Willms, A.M. "Conscription 1917: A Brief for the Defence." *University of Toronto Press Journals* 37, no. 4 (December 1956): 338-351.

Wood, James A. *Militia Myths: Ideas of the Canadian Citizen Soldier, 1896-1921*.Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2010.

Wood, James B. *Japanese Military Strategy in the Pacific War: Was Defeat Inevitable?* New York: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2007.

Young, William R. "Chauvinism and Canadianism: Canadian Ethnic Groups and the Failure of Wartime Information." In *On Guard for Thee: War, Ethnicity, and the Canadian State, 1939-1945*, edited by Norman Hiller, Bohdan Kordan, and Lubomyr Luciuk, 31-51. Ottawa: Canadian Committee for the History of the Second World War, 1988.

Unpublished Secondary Sources:

Byers, Daniel. "Mobilizing Canada: The National Resources Mobilization Act, the Department of National Defence, and Compulsory Military Service in Canada, 1940-1945." PhD Dissertation, McGill University, 2000.

Charbonneau, François. "La crise de la conscription pendant la Seconde Guerre mondiale et l'identité canadienne-française." Master's Thesis, University of Ottawa, 2000.

Hamel, Jennifer. "A Brief History of the Writing (and Re-Writing) of Canadian National History." Master's Thesis, University of Saskatchewan, 2009.

Keuchle, Karen. "The Terrace Mutiny." Unpublished Manuscript, District of Terrace, 1984.

McMahon, Edward J. "The Alaska Boundary Dispute: A Milestone in Canada's Maturing Desire for Political Independence." Master's Thesis, Loyola University, 1956.

Reimers, Mia. "The Glamour and the Horror: A Social History of Wartime Northwestern British Columbia, 1939-1945." Master's Thesis, University of Northern British Columbia, 1996.

Savage, Mac. *The WWII American Sub-port of Embarkation, Prince Rupert: An Understanding of Why the Americans Were in Northern BC*. Unpublished Manuscript, 2012.

Sewell, Sarah Kathleen. "Making the Necessary Sacrifice: The Military's Impact on a City at War – Calgary, 1939-1945." Master's Thesis, University of Calgary, 2013.

Websites:

Citizenship and Immigration Canada. "Towards the Canadian Citizenship Act." *Forging Our Legacy: Canadian Citizenship and Immigration, 1900-1977*. Revised 1 July 2006. http://www.cic.gc.ca/English /resources/publications/Legacy/index.asp.

"Dr. Reginald H. Roy – Obituary." *Times Colonist*. 2 February 2013. http://www.legacy.com/ obituaries/timescolonist/obituary.aspx? pid=162777510.

Petter, Christopher. "Reg Roy's Legacy for Canadian Military History." *The Ring*. 22 February 2013. https://ring.uvic.ca/ culture/reg-roys-legacy-canadian-military-history.

Riddell, John and Ian Angus. "The Left in Canada in World War II." *Socialist History*. Accessed 4 September 2014. http://www.socialisthistory.ca/Docs/History/Left-in-WW2.htm.