

Canada's Response to the War

- because Canada used to be a British colony, there was a strong sense of duty to take part
 - o 30,000 signed up within the first month
 - majority were British Canadians
 - all sorts of others did, including Asian CDNs, African CDNs, Japanese CDNs, and women
 - o were told by the British and the press that they would “be home by Christmas!”
 - believed they were going off on an adventure and would have a great time
 - would prove to be anything but...
- before the war, Canada was very regionalized
 - o people were likely British Columbians before Canadians
 - the trials faced created a **Canadian Identity**
 - due to the trials they faced, they became ‘Canadian’
 - Canada fought extremely well and to be CDN was something to be proud of
- during the war, Canada grew economically
 - o the War Measures Act mobilized the economy for war (eg. tractors to tanks)
 - o **Sam Hughes** was in charge of CDN armaments, and he was inept (was later fired)
 - created the **Ross Rifle** for our soldiers
 - often jammed or backfired, and killed nearly as many CDNs as Germans
 - CDNs used Lee Enfields off dead British soldiers rather than risk using the Ross

CDN Attitudes During WWI

- CDNs did not have open minds in 1914
- exclusion of women and other groups was commonplace
 - **sexism**
 - women were considered to frail and emotional for battle
 - *hysterical – intense craziness, and it was believed that women suffered from it due to imbalances in the uterus (hysterectomy)*
 - *sexist prognosis*
 - **racism**
 - men of Aboriginal, African, Japanese, or Chinese heritage were initially not accepted into the military
 - even though many volunteered to fight, they were not allowed until much later
 - **discrimination**
 - few minorities were promoted within the ranks of the military
 - few CDN soldiers were promoted to high ranks in the British-led forces
- **War Measures Act**
 - was invoked during times of national emergency
 - only been used three times in CDN history... this being the first time
 - gave the gov't complete control over everything
 - power to control the economy, transportation, and trade
 - reorganize production to a wartime footing
 - eg. instead of making tractors, you make tanks
 - control food production to feed troops overseas

○ PROBLEMS with the WMA

- civil liberties were threatened and sometimes suspended
 - anyone suspected of being a threat to the nation could be imprisoned or deported
 - to protect CDNs, German CDNs were interned to prevent sabotage and treason
 - mail could be opened and censored
 - if arrested under WMA, you had no right to see a judge
- was it good for CDNs? For some, yes, but for many minorities and immigrants, no
 - today, the gov't can still suspend rights if they deem it in the interest of the public

- women's contributions during wartime

- there was a real threat that with men away at the front line, no one would be able to run the country
- well, never fear, women stepped up to the challenge
 - worked on production lines in factories
 - served as wartime nurses and ambulance drivers
 - organized committees to support and contribute to the war effort
 - took over traditional male jobs all across the country
 - farming, factories, engineers, etc.
 - there was always the assumption that they would return to their traditional roles once the war ended...
 - problems erupt b/c many don't want to return and men begin to feel threatened