

Too Close to Home:

Anti-Semitism & Fascism in Canada 1930s & 1940s



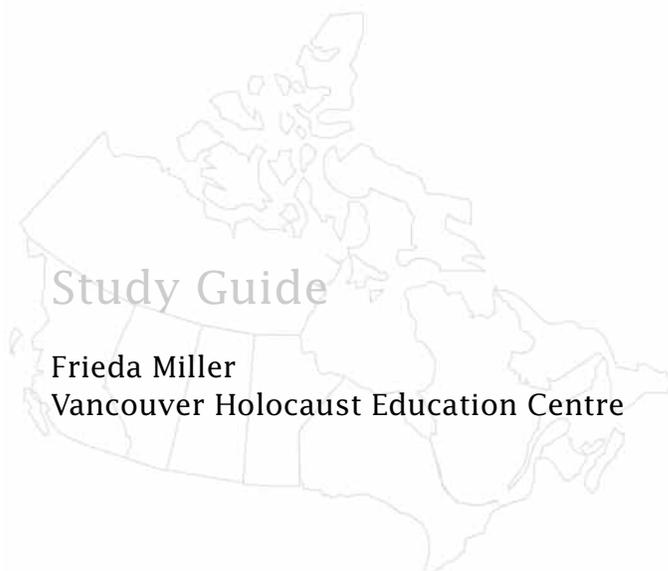
Study Guide

Vancouver Holocaust Education Centre

Too Close to Home:

Anti-Semitism & Fascism in Canada

1930s & 1940s



Study Guide

Frieda Miller

Vancouver Holocaust Education Centre

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Table of Contents

The History, The Kit	1
The Artefacts	2
The Study Guide	3
Working With Primary Documents	4
Jews in Canada	5
Anti-Semitism	6
Fascism and Nazism	8
The Ku Klux Klan	11
Immigration	13
Propaganda	16
Glossary	18
Resources	23

About the History: Canada in the 1930s & 1940s



This discovery kit draws attention to a shameful part of Canadian history; a time when Nazi ideology and anti-Semitism permeated Canada's cultural and political landscape. Racism in Canada during the 1930s and 1940s was not uniquely directed towards Jews but part of a wider current of public opinion and government policy. It

affected many ethnic, religious and cultural groups, including First Nations peoples, the Doukhobors, Japanese, Chinese and East Asian immigrants, amongst others. Not surprisingly, these attitudes were reflected in Canada's restrictive and ethnically selective immigration policies. For European Jews seeking refuge from Germany and Austria in the 1930s and later from Nazi-occupied Europe, the repercussions of Canada's closed-door policies were particularly tragic. During the Holocaust, Canada admitted only 5,000 Jews, one of the worst records of any of the refugee receiving countries.

The Kit

The kit provides secondary school students and teachers with primary source materials, such as documents, photographs and cartoons, which address the issues of anti-Semitism, Fascism, Nazism and immigration in Canada during the 1930s and 1940s. These materials provide support for the British Columbia curriculum, specifically Social Studies Grade 11 and History Grade 12. It also offers an extension to *Canada and the Holocaust: Social Responsibility and Global Citizenship, a Social Studies Resource Guide for Grade 11*, published by the BC Ministry of Education.

The kit uses a document-based approach to help students understand and analyse this historical period. This learning strategy capitalizes on the power of primary source material to engage students' interest, curiosity and understanding. Questions are used to elicit students' reflections, predictions, and analysis, while promoting critical thinking.

Teachers may wish to use the materials contained in this kit as a case study to approach the experiences of other ethnic or minority groups in Canada. The goal is to help students appreciate that Canada's present diversity and multi-cultural identity is a relatively recent state that evolved out of a more exclusionary past. Because some minority groups continue to experience racism and barriers to full inclusion in today's society, students are challenged to be vigilant and responsive to current expressions of racism.

The Artefacts

The artefacts found in this discovery kit include documents, photographs, cartoons and propaganda produced in Canada during the 1930s and 1940s. The artefacts can be examined individually or compared thematically. To facilitate a comparative analysis the artefacts are organized in the following thematic groupings.



Themes

Anti-Semitism

Social
Economic
Political

The Ku Klux Klan

British Columbia
Ontario and Saskatchewan

Fascism and Nazism

Canada
Quebec
Ontario
Manitoba

Immigration

Evian Conference
S.S. St. Louis
Children in Vichy France
Opposition to Jewish immigration

Teachers may find some of the materials in the kit to be of a sensitive, complex and controversial nature. In particular, some of the cartoons and propaganda materials may be offensive or disturbing to students who are members of one of the affected or targeted groups. The intent of distributing these artefacts is not to offend, but to help students decode the text, imagery and metaphors inherent in these materials. The goal is for students to apply these critical thinking skills to other examples of race-based stereotyping and hate literature, wherever it may be found.

The Study Guide

This Study Guide offers teachers and students a basic strategy for examining and analyzing primary source materials, (see *Working with Primary Sources* on the following page). This strategy can be used independently or in combination with any of the thematic sections which follow

The guide is organized into 5 thematic sections – Anti-Semitism, Fascism and Nazism, the Ku Klux Klan, Immigration and Propaganda. Each theme includes a Student Information Sheet and some Discussion – Extension Questions, which can be used for classroom discussion or further research. Also included in the guide is a Student Information Sheet on *Jews in Canada*, a glossary of terms and a list of supplemental learning resources.

The guide provides opportunities for individual study, small group work or large group lecture and discussion.

Individual Student Work

Students can work independently to examine, research and analyze one or more of the artefacts. Their findings can be shared with others in small or large group formats.

Small Group Work

Students can work in small groups to examine and compare artefacts within one of the thematic sections. Groups can share their findings with those working on different themes.

Large Group Instruction — Lecture

Teachers may wish to use the historical source materials and the information sheets contained in the kit to develop and deliver the information directly to their class in the form of a lecture and large group discussion. To illustrate their presentation, teachers are encouraged to reproduce the artefacts as slides or overheads or scan them into a PowerPoint presentation. Alternatively, teachers may wish to display the artefact sheets as a small classroom exhibit.

Working With Primary Sources

Student Information



Teachers should mask or cover the captions, found on the bottom of the artefact sheets, before distributing them to students for this activity. Teachers should ask students to examine their artefact(s) and to respond to the following sets of questions. The questions are sequenced to move students from their initial descriptions, responses and predictions, to a deeper analysis of the larger issues.

Describe

Closely examine the document, photograph or cartoon. Describe what you see. Write down your first thought, feeling or response to the artefact. If you are working in a group compare your responses.

Question

List all the questions that you have about the document. If working in a group, share your questions and make a combined list of the best questions.

Predict

What individual or group do you think might have produced this artefact? Where and when do you think it was produced and for what purpose? Who do you think was the intended audience?

Read

Uncover and read the captions, the relevant Student Information Sheets and any translations if applicable.

Analyze

What have you learned about the artefact from your readings that you did not know before? Compare what you now know about your artefact with your initial ideas and predictions. Explain any metaphor or analogy. What evidence does the artefact offer about the people who produced it? What does the artefact tell you about the political or cultural climate of the period? Summarize your ideas. Compare the artefact with a similar but contemporary artefact. What is the most interesting thing about the artefact that you would want to share with a friend?

Research

To extend your understanding of the artefact, respond to one of the discussion questions found in the study guide. Alternatively, make a list of any questions that you still have and research one of them. Present your findings to the group.

Jews In Canada

Student Information



At the outbreak of World War II there were 167,000 Jews in Canada, representing 1.5% of the population. Most lived in Montreal, Toronto and Winnipeg. The majority were foreign-born and many spoke Yiddish as their first language. They were politically, religiously and economically diverse.

The Jewish community in Canada responded to the emerging Nazi threat in Europe by organizing rallies and protests to warn Canadians about the dangers of Hitler's anti-Semitic policies. In 1934, faced with the Canadian government's refusal to rescue European Jews, the Canadian Jewish Congress began public campaigns against anti-Semitism at home and abroad.

With the end of the war and the liberation of the concentration camps, the atrocities of the Holocaust became more widely known. Hundreds of thousands of surviving European Jews found themselves displaced with no homes or communities to return to. Despite this growing refugee crisis, Canada steadfastly maintained its restrictive immigration policies. In 1945 a senior Canadian government official was asked how many Jews he thought that Canada would be prepared to admit. His response, which reflected Canada's official position at the time, was "none is too many." ¹

After the war, Canadian Jews continued to petition the government to admit Jewish refugees. Finally, in 1947, the Canadian government passed the Privy Council Order #1647, granting permission for 1000 Jewish orphans under the age of 18 to enter Canada. The War Orphans Project (www.virtualmuseum.ca/Exhibitions/orphans/english (or french), as it was known, marked a turning point in the history of Jewish immigration to Canada. Between 1947 and 1949, 1,123 orphans emerged from the devastation of the Holocaust to new lives in Canada. In 1948, an initial wave of 40,000 other Jewish survivors also entered Canada.

According to Statistics Canada's 2001 Census, Jews now represent 1.1% of the population. Although, public expressions of anti-Semitism have decreased in recent years, the desecration of Jewish cemeteries and synagogues still occurs. The most disturbing and dangerous forms of anti-Semitism today are the anti-Semitic and Holocaust denial propaganda disseminated by neo-Nazi and white supremacist groups on their internet sites. As well, some forms of anti-Israel rhetoric exploit historic forms of anti-Semitism and anti-Semitic stereotypes.

¹ Abella, Irving and Harold Troper, *None is Too Many*. Lester & Orpen Dennys, 1983, page xxi.

Anti-Semitism

Student Information



During the first half of the 20th century racism was commonplace in Canadian society. It found expression in both the attitudes and the actions of many Canadian citizens and was more overt and widespread than it is today. The racism of the times revealed itself in anti-immigrant, anti-Semitic, anti-Asian and anti-Black feelings amongst others. As a result, minority groups found themselves segregated socially, economically and politically.

During the 1920s, 1930s and 1940s Jews found themselves barred from many public places in Canada, including hotels, beaches, golf courses and parks. It was not unusual to find public signs, which read "open to gentiles only." Some universities established quotas limiting the number of Jews to be admitted. Often, Jewish students were

required to have better grades than their non-Jewish counterparts to qualify for admission. Many hospitals barred Jewish interns or doctors and some public schools refused to hire Jewish teachers.

During the 1930s, the effects of the Great Depression strengthened these long-standing prejudices. With unemployment ranging between 15% and 25%, racists and nativists appealed to Canadians' fears that immigrants would take scarce jobs away from them.

Economic sanctions were felt in many different ways. Fascist and other extremist groups called for the boycott of Jewish businesses. More importantly, the majority of Canadians, not just the radical few, believed that Canada was and should be a white, Anglo-Saxon, Protestant country, which meant that Jews and other groups were excluded from many professions and neighbourhoods. Many department stores, insurance companies and banks had policies of not hiring Jews. Landlords felt free not to rent or sell property to Jews or other minorities. Some property deeds, especially those in more affluent areas, were drawn up with restrictive covenants, preventing the sale of property to Jews or to other "objectionable" groups. In many Canadian communities, it was taken for granted that landowners had the right to discriminate on the basis of race and religion. Canadian courts upheld these discriminatory practices until after World War II.

This social and political climate contributed to and was reflected in Canada's restrictive immigration policies of the 1930s and 1940s. As a result, European Jews seeking to flee Germany and Austria in the 1930s found the doors of most Western democracies, including Canada's, closed to them.

Anti-Semitism

Discussion – Extension Questions

How do the cartoons in this kit create a negative impression of Jews during the 1930s and 40s? What story or message do the cartoons convey? Describe the use of stereotypes, symbolism, metaphor or analogy if applicable.

Many of the artefacts in this section speak to the prevalence of anti-Semitism in Quebec. Why do you think anti-Semitism found fertile ground in Quebec at the time? Consider social, economic and political factors.

Anti-Semitism was not unique to Canada. Research the historical origins of anti-Semitism, an attitude that a CBC documentary called “the longest hatred.” What is the difference between religious and racial anti-Semitism?

What role should schools play in combating racism? What other institutions have responsibilities to fight racism?

Find and examine cartoons or propaganda materials directed at another ethnic group during this period of time. Alternatively, consider the anti-Asian and anti-First Nations images found here. Describe the impression or message conveyed and the use of stereotypes, symbolism and metaphor. Compare these materials to the Jewish case study above.



Cover of book by Hilda Glynn-Ward, a leading British Columbia journalist, 1921.



Indian Girl of Story / Indian Girl of Fact. Courtesy Charles Hou from "The Art of Decoding Political Cartoons."

Fascism & Nazism In Canada

Student Information



Nativist, Fascist and Nazi movements sprung up in Canada between the first and second world wars. These groups promoted the idea of a country free of Jews. They derived many of their ideas and tactics directly from Fascist and Nazi organizations in Germany. Organizations with anti-communist, anti-immigrant, and anti-Semitic platforms provided an outlet for many Canadians to voice their anxieties about a changing nation.

Nativists opposed immigration and saw newcomers as a threat to Canadian society. Fascism, begun by Benito Mussolini in 1920 in Italy, promoted the ideas of militarism, ultra-nationalism, anti-communism, conformity of the group and allegiance to a single leader. Nazism was the ideology of Adolf Hitler's National Socialist German Workers Party, which stressed many of the same ideas as fascism, along with racism and anti-Semitism.

There were many fascist groups in Canada during the 1930s, including the Canadian Nationalist Party of Winnipeg, the Canadian Guard based in Vancouver, the National Worker's Party of Canada, and the Canadian Union of Fascists, which published *The Thunderbolt*.



Brown Shirts in Winnipeg

September 1933, a dozen ex-soldiers led by William Whittaker launched the brown-shirted Canadian Nationalist Party in Winnipeg. Highly militaristic and fervently patriotic, members wore swastika tiepins with their khaki uniforms and delivered fiery speeches against a backdrop of the Union Jack. They published *The Canadian Nationalist*, which featured anti-Semitic propaganda similar to that being produced in Germany that included allegations of a global Jewish conspiracy. The party and its publications played upon the poor economic conditions to denounce Jews violently and equate them with communists.

Western fascism drew support from German and Ukrainian immigrants who held a historic animosity towards Jews. In 1935, a successful group libel suit was launched that prevented Whittaker and his publication from further vilifying Jews.



Ontario Swastika Clubs

As Ontario became more ethnically diverse in the 1930s, some Toronto residents began to feel threatened and complained of a "foreign invasion" and of "obnoxious and undesirable elements." Swastika Clubs sprung up, expressed their anti-immigrant sentiments and waged violent street campaigns against Jews. Defiant youths sported swastikas on armbands, sweaters, bathing suits, and bare chests, and clashed with Jewish patrons.

On August 14, 1933, violence erupted after a predominately Jewish baseball team, the Harbord Playground, won a game at Toronto's, Christie Pits. A group known as the Pit Gang lifted a swastika-emblazoned sweater into the air. That night, Pit Gang members painted a large swastika and "Hail Hitler" on their clubhouse roof. The next day, during a second game, the crowd yelled anti-Semitic slurs. Six hours of fighting ensued during which both sides called in reinforcements and fought each other with baseball bats, stones, and lead pipes. Today, the Christie Pits riot stands as the worst race riot in Toronto's history.



Nazism in Quebec

Quebec nationalism, Catholicism and unfavourable economic conditions fuelled French Canadian anti-Semitism of the 1930s. Most disturbing were the extremist activities of Adrien Arcand and Joseph Menard. Arcand was an admirer of Adolf Hitler and Nazi racial policies. He drew inspiration, propaganda and funding directly from the German Nazi party. Determined to help roll back the Jewish "invasion", Arcand formed the National Socialist Christian Party in 1934. A combination of German Nazism and Italian Fascism, the party espoused the values of law and order, a strong leader, and a Canada free of Jews.

In 1930, Arcand and Menard launched *Le Goglu*, one of many anti-Semitic publications that featured loathsome caricatures of Jews, historic accusations of blood-libel, world conspiracy and economic domination. Promoted as a "journal humoristique," the newspaper was similar to the German Nazi publication *Der Stürmer*. *Le Goglu* received funding from the federal Conservative Party until it ceased publication in 1933.

For a brief period between 1936 and 1938, Arcand's politics gained public legitimacy and were supported by Quebec's provincial government. His party merged with other fascist groups including the Canadian Nationalist Party of Winnipeg to form the National Unity Party of Canada. After the outbreak of World War II and as Canada declared war on Nazi Germany, tolerance towards homegrown Nazis wore thin and Arcand's headquarters were raided. The police confiscated truckloads of anti-Semitic propaganda and arrested suspected Fascists. Arcand and other members of the National Socialist Christian Party were interned for the duration of the war.

Fascism & Nazism in Canada

Discussion – Extension Questions

Anti-Semitism and Nazism were not confined to Germany or Nazi-occupied Europe but were in fact too close to home. Explain why you think these racist ideologies found expression in Canada during the 1930s and 1940s and were not discredited until the outbreak of WWII. How can this help you understand the rise of Nazism in what was a modern, industrialized country like Germany? Explain.

In the 1920s and 1930s, many democracies ended, including those in Italy, Germany, Spain and Russia, and were replaced by totalitarian states. There were groups and organizations in Canada at the time, which believed that democracy was unable to meet the challenges of the day and should be replaced. Why did democracy survive in Canada during this period when it succumbed in so many other countries? Is democracy in Canada secure today?

Ernst Zundel arrived in Canada from Germany in 1958. He met and became a follower of Adrien Arcand, a right-wing author and activist known as “Canada’s Hitler.” In 1996, Zundel was charged by the Canadian Human Rights Commission with using his web site to distribute hate literature and Holocaust denial material. He moved to the United States but was deported back to Canada by U.S. immigration agents. As of January 2004, Zundel faced deportation from Canada to his native Germany, where he is wanted on hate crime charges. Do you think Zundel should be deported from Canada to face hate crimes charges in Germany? To support your position, research the connection between Arcand and Zundel and compare their publications.



Ku Klux Klan

Student Information



The Ku Klux Klan (KKK) originated in the 1860s in Pulaski, Tennessee. Ex-Confederate soldiers who believed in white supremacy and the preservation of slavery formed the first Klan, known as the Invisible Empire Knights of the Ku Klux Klan. When the Civil War ended in 1865, KKK members terrorized newly freed African-Americans. They threatened, harassed and attacked white northerners who worked for racial equality in the south. The KKK is

notorious for wearing white hoods and sheets, for lynchings, and for burning crosses to intimidate their victims.

In the 1920s and 1930s the Klan began to target Jews and Catholics. It was during this period that the Klan moved north, forming chapters throughout the US and Canada. The Klan re-emerged in the 1950s and 1960s to oppose the growing civil rights movement and the African-American fight against segregation policies.

The KKK of Canada, the Kanadian KKK, and the KKK of the British Empire were active in Quebec, Ontario, Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia. In Western Canada they set up offices in Vancouver and Victoria, and toured Alberta and Saskatchewan. At the movement's peak, thousands joined the Canadian Ku Klux Klan, which held meetings, parades and cross burnings.

The Klan stood for the supremacy of the white race and the preservation of British Protestant Canada. They delivered anti-immigrant, anti-Catholic speeches and promoted the idea that dangerous "outsiders" such as Jews, Blacks, Asians and Catholics were a threat to national and racial purity. In British Columbia, Klan organizers concentrated on anti-Oriental and anti-Catholic agitation. Some of their local publications included *The Beacon* and *The Bisector*.

The Klan became active again in Canada briefly in the 1970s but was never more than a small group of violent agitators. In the United States, the Klan was reinvigorated in the 1980s under the leadership of Louisiana's David Duke, founder of the National Association for the Advancement of White People.

Adapted from Choose Dignity: A Kit for Fighting Hate, page 23.

Ku Klux Klan

Discussion – Extension Questions

What institutions, organizations and laws exist in Canada today to protect citizens from hate literature and propaganda? Examine one of the Artefacts In light of the Canadian Charter of Rights (<http://laws.justice.gc.ca/en/charter/index.html#garantie>). Consider sections 1, 2, 7, 15, 24, and 26 of the Charter. Do you think that the Charter provides adequate protection from material such as your artefact? Do you think that the Charter provides adequate protection for both individual freedoms and the rights of minorities as they relate to racism?

A hate crime includes but is not limited to: intimidation, harassment, physical assault, vandalism, hate graffiti, and hate propaganda that advocates genocide, public incitement of hatred and the threat of violence. Canada has developed legislation that deals with the public expression of hate, such as;

- The Criminal code, sections 318 and 319 make it an offence to wilfully promote hatred against an identifiable group (<http://laws.justice.gc.ca/en/c-6/41558.html>).
- Human rights legislation and regulations under the Broadcasting Act make it illegal to subject an identifiable group to hatred or contempt.
- Canada Customs prohibits the importation of hate propaganda.

Research and describe Canada's anti-hate laws. Read sections 318 (on Advocating Genocide) and 319 (on Public Incitement of Hatred) of the Criminal code (www.gdmc.org/Program/hrep/legislation.html). If in your opinion, the laws are effective in dealing with hate in society today, explain why. If you think that the laws are inadequate, rewrite them to make them more effective. Also, explain whether you think that controls should be placed on internet providers to prevent the dissemination of hate on the internet. Explain your reasons.



Immigration

Student Information

In 1923, the Canadian Immigration Act severely restricted the admission of non-preferred immigrants, such as Jews and others with “undesirable racial characteristics.” The act ranked immigrants into four classes. In the First Class, British and Americans were guaranteed entry into Canada. The second or Preferred Class consisted of immigrants from western and northern Europe. Eastern Europeans were in the third, Non-Preferred Class.

Jews and southern Europeans who were in the fourth or Special Permit Class, had to get the permission of the Canadian cabinet to enter Canada. This meant that Jews could not apply with other citizens of their country. For instance, French Jews could not apply under the Preferred Class, as could other French citizens. This race-based discrimination preceded the Nazi’s 1935 Nuremberg race laws by over a decade.

During the Holocaust from 1933 to 1945, Canada admitted fewer than 5,000 Jews, arguably, the worst record of all the other refugee-receiving countries. By contrast Argentina admitted 50,000 Jewish refugees; Australia, 15,000; Brazil, 27,000; the United Kingdom, 70,000; and the United States, 200,000.



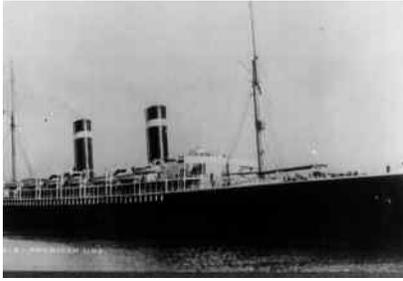
Evian Conference

The Nazis’ initial plan was to make Germany *Judenrein* – “free of Jews” by forcing all Jews to emigrate. By 1937 about a quarter of the Jewish population of Germany had fled, many to neighbouring countries. Austria was annexed in March 1938 and German Jews who had fled to Austria were trapped again.

American President, Franklin D. Roosevelt proposed an international conference to address the growing problem of German and Austrian refugees, which prompted this statement by Hitler in March, 1938: *“I can only hope that the other world which has such deep sympathy for these criminals (Jews) will at least be generous enough to convert this sympathy into practical aid. We on our part are ready to put all these criminals at the disposal of these countries, for all I care, even on luxury ships.”*

Canada was very reluctant to attend, despite assurances from Roosevelt that no country would be expected to change its existing immigration policies. In the end, Canada was compelled to participate or risk being the only country, other than fascist Italy, to decline. Prime Minister Mackenzie King feared that admitting Jewish refugees would precipitate social unrest and political backlash, especially in Quebec.

The conference was convened from July 6 – 15, 1938 in Evian, France with delegates from 32 nations in attendance. Each nation, except for the Dominican Republic, made it clear that they would not admit more European Jews. This reinforced Hitler’s view of the undesirability of Jews and that his plan to rid Europe of Jews would be unopposed by the international community.



S.S. St. Louis

On May 15, 1939, 907 German Jews with visas for Cuba sailed from Hamburg aboard the S.S. St. Louis. When the ship reached Havana on May 27, the Cuban government refused to honour their landing permits. On June 5, Cuba agreed to let the refugees land if a \$443,000, bond was paid within twenty-four hours, a deadline that Jewish relief organizations could not

meet. Panama, Argentina, Columbia, Chile and Paraguay all denied the ship permission to land. The Americans sent its coast guard to escort the St. Louis northward and away from the American coast.

The plight of the St. Louis touched some influential Canadians, including George Wrong a professor of history at the University of Toronto, B. K. Sandwell of *Saturday Night*, Robert Falworth Flavelle, a wealthy businessman and several Christian ministers. The group sent Prime Minister King a telegram asking that Canada offer the exiles sanctuary. King, preoccupied with the British Royal Family visit, did not think this was a Canadian problem. The Minister of Justice Ernest Lapointe was “*emphatically opposed*” to admitting the refugees, while the Director of Immigration F. C. Blair, replied that the refugees were not qualified under Canadian immigration law and that “*No country could open its doors wide enough to take in the hundreds of thousands of Jewish people who want to leave Europe: the line must be drawn somewhere.*”

The St. Louis had exhausted its last hope and returned to Europe. Those who disembarked in England were safe. Many of the others who disembarked in Belgium, France and the Netherlands were later caught up in the Holocaust and perished.

Children in Vichy, France

In the summer of 1942, the pro-Nazi government of Vichy, France began to deport Jewish refugees to concentration camps in Poland, leaving behind thousands of Jewish children in French internment camps. Jewish groups in Canada and the U. S. besieged their governments with requests to save the children and the Vichy government was pressured not to deport the children. Finally, on October 2, 1942 the Mackenzie King cabinet approved an Order-in-Council to admit 500 – and possibly an additional 500 – of the children. However, when the Allies began their invasion of North Africa in November 1942, Canada and the U. S. broke off diplomatic relations with the Vichy government and the Germans occupied Vichy. The children, trapped by the war, could no longer be rescued and like their parents, were deported to Auschwitz.

On December 31, 1942 Lester B. Pearson wrote to External Affairs concerning the admission of 20 children who had managed to escape to Portugal. Director of Immigration, F. C. Blair blocked the admission of these children on the grounds that

they were not orphans and not part of the original group of 1000 Vichy children.

Immigration

Discussion – Extension Questions



Canada's immigration policies in the first half of the 20th century have sometimes been referred to as a "paper wall" because they barred the entry of different ethnic groups to the country. Examine the immigration artefact sheets and compare the case study of Jewish immigration to the experience of another ethnic group at the time. Consider immigrant groups from Africa, China, Great Britain, India, Japan, Northern Europe, Southern Europe or the United States.

Not all Canadians held anti-Semitic or anti-immigrant views during the 1930s and 1940s. Many opposed Fascism and supported more open immigration. The telegram signed by prominent Christian citizens asked Prime Minister Mackenzie King to provide sanctuary to the Jews fleeing Nazi Germany aboard the S.S. St. Louis. Research other examples of

Canadian opposition to racism at the time and write a letter to Mackenzie King expressing this opposition and citing reasons for this position that are consistent with the period.

Discrimination on the basis of race and ethnicity remained a feature of Canadian immigration policy until 1967. Why did Canadian immigration policy change at that time in its history?

With the exception of First Nations communities, Canada is a country settled by immigrants. Today, Canada is one of the world's foremost immigrant-receiving countries. Toronto has been cited by the United Nations as the world's most multicultural city with 50% of its population being foreign-born. Vancouver's demographics approach those of Toronto. Survey how many students in the class have immigrated to Canada or have parents or grandparents who came as immigrants. Ask students to compare the results of the class survey with the United Nations' statistics.

Argue whether the Canadian government should maintain, increase or decrease current levels of immigration to Canada? Post signs with the words Maintain, Increase and Decrease in a u-shape around the perimeter of the classroom. Have students stand under the sign that best represents their opinion or anywhere along the u-shaped continuum to indicate shades of opinion. Students discuss the question and try to persuade classmates to move along the u-shaped continuum to their own position.

Propaganda

Student Information

Propaganda is an organized plan to promote biased information, derogatory ideas or practices, that is transmitted in speeches, slogans, posters, newspapers, film and, more recently, on the internet. During World War II, propaganda was used by nations on both sides to shape public opinion and build loyalty. The Nazis used propaganda to promote Nazism, anti-Semitism and the ideology of an Aryan master race.

Examine one or more of the artefacts found in the kit. In your opinion, can your artefact(s) be classified as propaganda? Use *Propaganda Criteria* on the following page to help you make your assessment. Support your reasoning by citing some of the text, images or slogans from your artefact.

Propaganda

Discussion – Extension Questions

Joseph Göbbels, the Nazi Minister of Propaganda, believed that propaganda is most effective when it delivers simple, repeated messages that play to people's emotions. Examine your artefact for evidence of repetition, simplicity of message and emotional appeal to explain its effectiveness.

One of the goals of Nazi propaganda was to raise fears about Communism, enslavement, poverty or race defilement. Find an artefact that reflects one of these goals. Explain the techniques used to attain this goal.

What assumptions did the producers of your artefact make about their intended audience? How correct do you think these assumptions were? Do you think that those who produce propaganda today have similar assumptions about their audiences? Explain.

How did propaganda change in the last half of the 20th century? Consider the role of mass communication, radio, film, television and the internet. Have these new media, in turn, broadened and personalized the scope and reach of propaganda?

What is the difference between persuasion in advertising and propaganda? Use examples from this kit and recent advertisements from newspapers, magazines or the Internet to support your arguments.

In the video *Walk Through the 20th Century with Bill Moyers: World War II: The Propaganda Battle*, Bill Moyers is quoted as saying "Democracy is a babble of competing propagandas." Do you agree or disagree with the quote? Must a society allow even the most repulsive ideas the freedom to circulate or should some ideas be restricted? If a democratic society must accept few, if any, restrictions on the circulation of ideas, what are some of the best defences against propaganda and hate in our society?

Propaganda

Criteria

The Big Lie

Sometimes it is easier to fool people with a big lie than with a small lie. People often assume that something that big simply must be true. For example, the Nazis presented their invasion of Poland as a necessary measure of self-defence. Also, despite the obvious contradictions, the Nazis tried to link Judaism with both Communism and Capitalism.

Name-Calling & Racial Slurs

A form of harassment, which directs disparaging and insulting comments or jokes, against a particular group. The act of damaging a person's or a group's reputation by using derogatory names, often based on stereotypes. Nazi propaganda films portrayed Jews as vermin, lazy, dangerous and cruel. They were presented as distasteful, untrustworthy and as having stereotypical physical characteristics.

Repetition

The act of constantly repeating generalizations, derogatory names or slogans in order to convince people of its truth.

Scape-goating

Making a person or group carry the blame for unrelated, unfortunate circumstances, events or other people's actions. The Nazis blamed the Jews for the poor economic conditions in Germany after the first world war.

Simplification

Shows only one side of an issue. Simplifies complex issues so that all can understand. Hitler said "The Jews are undoubtedly a race, but they are not human."

Slogan

Using a catchword or phrase loaded with emotion to promote an idea. Slogans are effective because they are easy to remember. As part of their propaganda campaign against Jews, Nazis used the slogans "Jews are our misfortune" and "Germans, defend yourselves against Jews."

Stereotyping

Projecting false, generalized, or exaggerated ideas about a group onto all members of the group. Stereotypes are generally but not always derogatory, as when all Asians are said to be good at math or all Blacks are said to be good at sports. Stereotypes deny individual difference and personal merit in favour of biased generalizations. The Nazis generalized from the fact that some Jews were successful business people to the accusation that all Jews were greedy and controlled international banking and finance. Generalizations can both reinforce and create stereotypes.

Superiority

Statements, which arouse pride in the intended audience or flatter them that they are superior to others. Nazis believed in the Master Race Theory, which promoted the idealized Aryan as tall, blond, blue-eyed, muscular and superior to other races. Aryan mothers were idealized as blond, noble and traditional.

Glossary

Anti-Semitism

A form of racism, related to the discrimination, persecution or hatred of Jews, resulting from the cultural, linguistic and religious differences of Jews, blaming the Jews for everything from economic conditions to epidemics and natural disasters. The term came into widespread usage in the 1870s but antagonism towards Jews, specifically Christian anti-Semitism, had been prevalent for centuries before.

Nazi anti-Semitism moved from a hatred based primarily on religion to one that was race-based. This shift to racial anti-Semitism meant that anyone with a Jewish grandparent, even someone who had converted or married a non-Jew was still targeted as a Jew by virtue of their ‘blood.’

Blair, Frederick Charles (1874 — 1946)

Director of the Immigration Branch of the Department of Mines and Resources, 1936 – 1943, with the status of Deputy Minister; actively involved in all immigration matters related to Jewish immigration. A supporter of immigration restrictions and particularly hostile to Jewish immigration.

Bronfman, Samuel (1889 — 1971)

President of Canadian Jewish Congress from 1939 – 1962; unified organized Jewish community under the CJC umbrella and created the United Jewish Refugee Agencies (1939) to oversee community efforts taken on behalf of the European Jews.

Canadian Jewish Congress / CJC

An organization of the Canadian Jewish community, founded in 1919, but dormant until events in Europe revitalized it in 1933. During and after the war, the CJC worked to secure asylum for Jewish refugees in Canada.

Concentration Camps

The Nazis established prison camps shortly after assuming power in 1933 to imprison and isolate political opponents and those considered to be “racially” undesirable such as Jews and Gypsies. Most of the approximately 1800 camps were transit or labour camps. After the occupation of Poland, extermination camps were established for the purpose of mass murder at Auschwitz-Birkenau, Treblinka, Sobibor, Belzec, Chelmno and Majdanek.

Crerar, T.A. (1946 — 1975)

Minister of Mines and Resources in the Mackenzie King government; responsible for immigration; for the most part, he did not interfere with the implementation and enforcement of immigration policy by his senior officials.

Displaced Persons

Dislocated, stateless Jews and others, whose homes were destroyed or occupied by strangers or who feared reprisals or annihilation if they returned to their pre-war communities. In 1945, there were between 1.5 million and 2 million displaced persons, among them 200,000 Jews mostly from Eastern Europe.

Evian Conference

Convened by U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt on July 6, 1938 to address the problem of Jewish refugees. Delegates from 32 countries, including Canada, attended. With the exception of the Dominican Republic, which offered to admit 100,000 Jews, the other nations refused to increase their quotas and admit more refugees.

Fascism

Founded in 1920 in Italy by Benito Mussolini, Fascism stresses militarism, ultra-nationalism, anti-communism, absolute conformity, and allegiance to a single leader. All aspects of political, social, and cultural life are subordinated to the state. Fascist regimes typically exhibit intolerance for civil and human rights and use secret police to impose terror and repress dissent.

Gentile

Someone not of the Jewish faith.

Hayes, Saul (1906 — 1980)

National Executive Director of the Canadian Jewish Congress from 1938 – 1974 who directed the revitalization of the CJC and lobbied on behalf of the Canadian Jewish community, particularly in aiding Jewish immigrants and refugees.

Holocaust

The mass murder of nearly 6 million European Jews by the Nazis and their collaborators during World War II. Many individuals and groups were persecuted and suffered during the Holocaust, but only the Jews were targeted for total “extermination”. The term literally means a burnt sacrifice, or sacred burning. The biblical word “Shoah,” meaning catastrophe, is the Hebrew equivalent.

Holocaust Denial

Attempts made by many white supremacists to deny or minimize the Nazis’ systematic attempt to murder European Jews. Holocaust denial may appear in comic strips, pamphlets or in sophisticated pseudo-academic journals. Holocaust deniers often call denial “historical revision” to give the appearance of respectability.

Immigrant

A person who comes to a new country to live as a permanent resident.

Glossary

Jew/Jewish

Someone of the Hebrew or Jewish people. Someone who is either born into or converts to Judaism, the religion, philosophy and way of life of the Jewish People.

Ku Klux Klan

Began in the United States as a racist, anti-Black organization and found support in Western Canada during the 1920s and 1930s. The Klan, which promotes the supremacy of the white race, became active again briefly in Canada during the 1970s but was never more than a small group of violent agitators. Ku Klux — from the Greek *κυκλος*, meaning circle — connotes unity and fraternity while Klan — as in clan — means family.

Mackenzie King, William Lyon (1874-1950)

Canadian Prime Minister from 1921-1930 and again from 1935-1948. Concerned with growing French Canadian nationalism. Saw Jewish immigration as a potentially divisive issue for French Canada.

Nativism

A belief system that opposes immigration and views newcomers as emblems of unwelcome change. Anti-immigrant sentiments were deeply embedded in the popular attitudes and government policies of both English and French Canada during the first half of the 20th century.

Nazi

A member of the National Socialist German Workers' Party (NSDAP) founded in 1919 and brought to power in 1933 under Adolf Hitler.

Nazism

The ideology of Adolf Hitler's National Socialist German Workers Party, which stressed nationalism, imperialism, anti-Communism, militarism, racism, and anti-Semitism. The Nazis replaced the German parliament with a dictatorship based on the concepts of leader and follower, command and obedience. Between 1933 and 1945, Nazi ideology inspired counterparts worldwide and continues to fuel neo-Nazi movements today.

Nuremberg Laws

Anti-Jewish legislation announced during a Nazi party rally in Nuremberg, Germany on September 15, 1935. The first of a long series of decrees which stripped Jews of their German citizenship. The laws defined a Jew based on the number of Jewish grandparents, prohibited marriages and sexual relations between Jews and Germans, prohibited Jews from hiring German maids under the age of 45 or from raising the German flag.

Privy Council

Prime Minister's department and the Cabinet Secretariat that provides advice and support to the government and various agencies of the government. It is responsible for preparing Orders-in-Council.

Privy Council Order / Order-in-Council

Order formulated by the Canadian Cabinet or a committee of Cabinet and formally approved by the Governor General. Some orders simply make appointments. About a third are legislative, forming part of the law and are enforced by the courts.

Propaganda

The systematic dissemination of information. Current usage implies the dissemination of biased ideas and information through speeches, slogans, posters, cartoons, newspapers, film, radio, and other media for the calculated purpose of instilling particular beliefs, prejudices, or convictions in the audience.

Quota

The number of people permitted to enter a country or an institution such as a university.

Racism

An individual or group action based on hatred for those who are perceived to be racially or ethnically different.

Refugee

Someone who flees their country of origin because of a well-founded fear of persecution due to race, religion, nationality, membership in a social or political group.

Restrictive Covenant

A condition written into the deed of a property preventing its sale to Jews or other "objectionable" groups. These covenants were often found in affluent residential areas. This discriminatory practice was upheld by Canadian courts until after World War II.

Skelton, O.D. (1878 — 1941)

Leading public servant of his day; Under Secretary of State for External Affairs, 1925 – 1941; a nationalist who favored independent Canadian control of its foreign policy; key adviser to the government on domestic and foreign affairs.

S.S. St. Louis

On May 15, 1939, 907 German Jews sailed to Cuba aboard the S.S. St. Louis. Upon arrival their visas were not recognized and Cuba refused to let the ship land. Appeals for sanctuary were sent to Argentina, Uruguay, Paraguay and the United States amongst others. In Canada, an influential group of concerned Christian citizens telegrammed Prime Minister Mackenzie King asking him to intervene. There was no reply. The ship returned to Europe. Those who disembarked in England were safe. Many of the others who disembarked in Belgium, France and the Netherlands were later caught up in the Holocaust and perished.

La Societ St. Jean Baptiste

Quebec nationalist organization.

Glossary

Star of David

Symbol adopted by the Nazis as a way to identify Jews. In 1939, all Polish Jews were required to wear the star. This requirement was later extended to Russia, Germany and Nazi-occupied Europe.

Stereotype

A false, generalized, or exaggerated idea about a group. Stereotypes can be derogatory or seemingly positive, as when all Asians are said to be good at math or all Blacks are said to be good at sports. Stereotypes deny individual differences and personal merit in favour of biased generalizations. The Nazis generalized from the fact that some Jews were successful business people to the accusation that all Jews were greedy and controlled international banking and finance. Generalizations can both reinforce and create stereotypes.

Swastika

Symbol of the Nazi party used on Nazi uniforms and flags. A cross with equal arms each of which is bent at a right angle. Originally an Indian symbol of good luck.

Synagogue

A building or place of worship for those of the Jewish faith. A congregation of Jews for the purpose of worship or religious study.

Visa

An endorsement on a passport or a separate document, which permits the holder to enter or leave a country.

World War II

The war fought from 1939 to 1945, in which Great Britain, France, the Soviet Union, the United States, Canada, China, and other allies defeated Germany, Italy, and Japan. After Germany invaded Poland on September 1, 1939, Britain declared war against Germany. Canada declared war on Germany on September 10, 1939. The United States entered the war after the bombing of Pearl Harbour in December 1941. The war ended with the surrender of Germany in May 1945 and the surrender of Japan in August 1945.

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