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“Is It Even Worthwhile Doing the Dishes?”
Canadians and the Nuclear Threat, 1945-1963.

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A Thesis Submitted to McGill University in partial fulfilment of the
requirements of the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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Canadians faced an unprecedented threat after the Second World War. Located between two competing superpowers Canada could become the battlefield of a third world war. How did Canadians respond to the nuclear threat? The government of John Diefenbaker warned that millions of Canadians could die in a nuclear war. It strengthened Canada's contribution to the defence of North America and Europe and dedicated more resources to civil defence. Between 1957 and 1963 the domestic issue of nuclear arms acquisition and growing cold war tensions combined to draw attention to the threat. Newly founded anti-nuclear groups as well as Canadian unions, newspapers, magazines, student groups, churches and community organizations confronted nuclear issues. These groups shared a concern about survival but reached different conclusions about how Canada could avoid nuclear devastation. Their attempts to come to terms with the threat of nuclear war highlight broader themes in the history of postwar Canada including the influence of the cold war on the attitudes and behaviours of Canadians and the nation's relationship with the United States.

While more Canadians discussed the nuclear threat in these years the majority did not join the debate. Polls showed the public supported a nuclear defence. They believed few would survive a nuclear attack but did not worry about nuclear war. Economic concerns always ranked higher. The public was, on the whole, not mobilized either in preparation or in protest. Diefenbaker questioned what else he could do to increase public concern about survival. Both the civil defence program and the nuclear disarmament movement struggled. Polls showed that most Canadians did nothing to prepare for a war fought at home. Anti-nuclear groups remained small, divided over their platforms and methods and faced financial constraints. The debate about survival grew in the period between 1957 and 1963 but was dominated by elected officials, civil defence

authorities and anti-nuclear activists. Even these groups found it difficult to balance the Soviet threat with the risk of a nuclear war and struggled to achieve policies that would provide security for the nation and its population.

Suite à la deuxième Guerre Mondiale, les Canadiens ont fait face à une menace sans précédent. Situé entre deux forces opposées, le Canada pourrait devenir le champ de bataille d'une troisième Guerre Mondiale. Quelle fut la réaction des Canadiens face à la menace d'une attaque nucléaire? Le gouvernement, sous le commandement de John Diefenbaker, a averti que des millions de Canadiens pourraient mourir lors d'une guerre nucléaire. Ceci n'a fait que renforcer la participation du Canada à la défense de l'Amérique du Nord et de l'Europe, ainsi que consacrer davantage des ressources à la défense civile. Entre 1957 et 1963, la combinaison entre la question sur l'acquisition d'armes nucléaires et la croissance des tensions provenant d'une guerre froide a attiré de l'attention à la menace. Les nouveaux groupes anti-nucléaire autant que les unions canadiennes, journaux, magazines, groupes d'étudiants, églises et organisations communautaires ont confronté les questions de nature nucléaire. Ces groupes partageaient une inquiétude commune à propos de la survie mais n'ont pas pu s'entendre sur une seule conclusion. Leurs tentatives dans l'affrontement contre les menaces nucléaires accentuèrent les motifs généraux de l'histoire d'après-guerre du Canada, incluant l'influence que la guerre froide a eu sur les attitudes et comportements des Canadiens et la relation du pays avec les États-Unis.

Malgré le fait que, durant ces années, de plus en plus de Canadiens discutaient de la menace nucléaire, la majorité ne s'est pas jointe aux délibérations. Les scrutins mirent en lumière que le public canadien supportait une défense nucléaire. Ils croyaient que peu d'entre eux survivraient une telle attaque mais ne s'inquiétaient pas à propos d'une guerre nucléaire. Les préoccupations de nature économique étaient toujours d'une plus grande importance. En général, le public ne fut pas mobilisé, ni en préparation, ni en protestation. Les élections de 1962 et 1963 ne se sont pas transformées en référendum sur les questions

nucléaires. Diefenbaker s'interrogea sur ce qui pourrait faire augmenter l'importance de la survie. Le programme de défense civile et le mouvement de désarmement nucléaire résistèrent. Les scrutins montraient également que la plupart des Canadiens n'avaient pas pris les mesures nécessaires pour pouvoir mener une guerre. Les groupes anti-nucléaires demeurèrent petits, divisés entre eux sur le plan politique et leurs méthodes et ont dû faire face à des contraintes financières. Les délibérations sur le sujet de la survie ont pris de l'amplitude entre 1957 et 1963 mais ont été dominés par les fonctionnaires élus, les autorités de la défense civile, les militants anti-nucléaire et les organisations. Cependant, même ces groupes eurent de la difficulté à équilibrer la menace soviétique avec les risques nucléaires et à atteindre un niveau de sécurité pour la nation et ses habitants.

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INTRODUCTION

In August 1945 the use of the atomic bomb against Japan signalled the start of a new age of warfare and brought the Second World War to a close. For close to six years Canadians had waged war. Almost half of the male population of military age, one million men, had served in Canada's military.¹ The public celebrated the end of the war with parades, dances and fireworks. Many Canadians remembered the 44 000 men who gave their lives in the conflict in special church services.² Plans began for the return of Canadian servicemen and the reconstruction of Canada's society and economy. The population anticipated secure futures and hoped to focus on families, homes and jobs after years of dislocation caused first by depression and then by war.³

Already there were signs of growing divisions between the war-time allies. The United States and the Soviet Union competed for influence in the postwar world. When the Americans announced they would keep the secret of the atomic bomb, the main threat of the postwar years appeared to shift from Nazism to Communism. As a result of its contribution to the war Canada gained international standing and became less dependent on Great Britain.⁴ Its place in the world continued to change in the nuclear age. It was no longer insulated from conflicts but was a buffer state between two superpowers with competing ideologies and interests. Canadians discovered that a nuclear attack on their

¹ Robert Bothwell, Ian Drummond and John English, *Canada since 1945: power, politics and provincialism*, Rev ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1989): 44.

² "Wild Rejoicing Across Canada Over Good News," *Globe and Mail*, August 15, 1945; "Beer and Liquor Stores Raided, Stock Taken; Disorders in Hamilton," *Globe and Mail*, August 16, 1945; "Problems Raised By Atomic Bomb Theme in Pulpits," *Globe and Mail*, August 13, 1945, 4; "Peace is Opportunity to Build Better World, Canon Wilkinson Says," *Globe and Mail*, August 20, 1945, 4.

³ Bothwell, Drummond and English, *Canada Since 1945*, 82-3; Doug Owsram, "Canadian Domesticity in the Postwar Era," in *The Veterans Charter and Post-World War II Canada*, ed. Peter Neary and J.L. Granatstein (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1998): 212.

⁴ Reg Whitaker and Steve Hewitt, *Canada and the Cold War*, (Toronto: James Lorimer & Co. Ltd., 2003): 58.

nation would inflict terrible destruction and that their own lives might be threatened with a painful death. Responsible government officials, like the Prime Minister, announced that Canada, not Europe or Asia, could be on the front line of the nuclear battlefield. The price to pay for such a conflict would be high; it could be the Poland of World War Three. Canadians had been fortunate to have experienced war from a physical distance. Unlike its two closest allies, Canada was spared attacks on its territory during the Second World War. The population was not familiar with the direct consequences of armed conflict including civilian loss of life, injury, sickness and homelessness. Between 1945 and 1963 Canadians discovered they could no longer expect to live sheltered or isolated from the threat of war. How did they respond to this new insecurity?

Canada's elected officials reacted to this new threat and took action to protect the population from nuclear attack. From 1945 to 1963 the governments, both Liberal and Conservative, undertook military arrangements to guard against the communist threat and defend the population from a nuclear attack. Canada's armed forces were trained in the tactics of nuclear combat. Authorities designated thirteen cities across Canada, from Vancouver to Halifax, as high-risk targets. Civilians learned that if they hoped to survive a nuclear strike they should build a shelter and learn civil defence techniques. As awareness about the dangers associated with radioactive fallout grew, the government monitored Canada's food and water supply and notified the public each time radiation levels rose. Canadians faced a seemingly terrible plight caught between two superpowers at odds with one another. Government officials openly outlined the risks and modified the nation's defence system, alliances and public programs to meet this threat. Nevertheless, individuals involved in the government, the military and civil defence urged the public not to panic about nuclear war or fallout. The preparations to meet an

attack, they explained, were a precaution, rather than a sign of an impending threat.⁵

Authorities admitted the consequences of a nuclear war for the country would be high yet, still hoped to reduce the number of casualties and the extent of destruction.

Descriptions of the cost of a nuclear attack for Canada grew by the late fifties and early sixties. As the nuclear arms race accelerated and cold war tensions rose, the Diefenbaker government, elected in 1957, offered warnings about the nuclear threat to Canadians. Members of the Liberal government, in power from 1935 to 1957, offered more general warnings and reassured the public that the risk of a nuclear attack on Canada was not serious. For example, Prime Minister Mackenzie King predicted "...that civilization could not survive an atomic war."⁶ The Liberal government committed the nation to a military contribution in the cold war. Canada entered a new alliance, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), in 1949. It also took steps to protect the homeland from an attack and reinstated the civil defence program disbanded at the end of the war. Canada deployed military forces to fight against the spread of communism in Asia and sent a permanent force to protect Europe under NATO. However, military planners still assumed that the next war would be centred in Europe; Canada would only be a secondary target. In the early 1950s nuclear arms became larger and more powerful. American leaders recognized that the threat of nuclear war might be the only way to deter the Soviet Union, armed with a much larger conventional force, from starting the Third World War. Lester Pearson, the Secretary of State for External Affairs in the Liberal government led by Louis St. Laurent, calculated that the hydrogen bomb meant extinction. He warned a gathering of young people about the high cost of a nuclear war.

⁵ "A Disaster May Happen," *Time*, (Canadian Edition) November 8, 1948, 30-1; John Diefenbaker, *Debates*, August 10, 1960, 7942.

⁶ Prime Minister Mackenzie King, House of Commons *Debates*, December 17, 1945, 3635.

“Should we ever get into World War III,” he cautioned, “there probably won’t be more than a handful of people left.”⁷ Canada could be physically touched by the next conflict. Radiation would not stop at its borders and Canadian territory would be attacked. Nevertheless, the Liberal government reassured the public that the threat of a full-scale nuclear war deterred both sides from deploying their nuclear arsenals.⁸

In a speech delivered in 1960 Prime Minister John Diefenbaker rated war as one of the nation’s main concerns, “We live under a continuing nuclear threat. It touches the hearts of Canadians.”⁹ Diefenbaker, a lawyer from Saskatchewan who began a career in politics at an early age, encouraged Canadians they could increase their chances of survival if they prepared for a war fought at home.¹⁰ His government geared up for a conflict that would involve Canada directly. Diefenbaker let the public know that millions of Canadians would die in the next war.¹¹ New arrangements for continental defence and the possibility that Canadian forces would be armed with nuclear weapons at home and abroad drew Canada further into the cold war. It also appeared more likely that nuclear weapons would be used to resolve standoffs between the United States and the Soviet Union like those over Berlin in 1961 and Cuba in 1962. The Conservative government reorganized civil defence planning and placed a higher priority on the preparation of the country for a third world war. At the same time it supported efforts to

⁷ “Pearson Says Bomb Means Extinction,” *Vancouver Sun*, March 29, 1954, 3.

⁸ Brooke Claxton, House of Commons *Debates*, May 20, 1954, 4904; “H-Bomb Bar to War, Says Pearson,” *Montreal Star*, May 16, 1957, 17.

⁹ Speech to the Canadian Club, Ottawa, November 24, 1960 in John G. Diefenbaker, *One Canada: The Memoirs of the Right Honourable John G. Diefenbaker*, vol. 3, *The Tumultuous Years, 1962-1967*, (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1977): 71; The Right Honourable John George Diefenbaker, “Address to the Canadian Club of Ottawa, November 24, 1960,” *First Among Equals: The Prime Minister in Canadian Life and Politics*, National Library of Canada and National Archives of Canada, <http://www.collectionscanada.ca/primeministers/>

¹⁰ John G. Diefenbaker, “Christmas Greeting,” *Civil Defence Bulletin* 2:6 (November-December 1959): 1.

¹¹ McMaster University, Ready Archives, CCND, Box 22 Publications Received, Loose, Clipping, “Predicts 2-6 Million Dead in Atomic War,” *Edmonton Journal*, September 25, 1961; “PM Talks Bluntly On War Terrors,” *Vancouver Sun*, September 25, 1961, 10.

achieve disarmament. The goals of providing a strong defence while furthering progress toward disarmament clashed. Diefenbaker came to believe that nuclear warheads in the hands of Canada's military threatened disarmament and did not assure peace. Canadians could become a "burnt sacrifice," not because of the Soviet Union's aggression, but because of Canada's contribution to continental defence and its alliance with the United States.¹² How did the Canadian government prepare to meet the threat of nuclear attack on Canadian territory and protect the population? How did its plans evolve from 1945 to 1963 to meet the shifting and escalating dangers of the cold war?

At the same time as the Diefenbaker government placed higher priority on preparations to meet a nuclear attack, the discussions of nuclear issues within Canadian society expanded. Concerned citizens feared that a nuclear war was imminent. They set up a number of groups with purposes that ranged from education about radiation hazards to support for nuclear disarmament. Unions and churches, newspapers and magazines, as well as a number of organizations entered the debate over the nuclear threat. They strove to pass resolutions to increase the security of Canadians in the cold war. These groups often found it difficult to reach a consensus on these issues. Their loyalty was frequently questioned and their motives scrutinized. The discussion of the nuclear threat peaked during the Diefenbaker years as a result of the combination of domestic and external factors. In what ways were Canadians mobilized to take action in the face of an unprecedented threat?

When the cold war ended in the late 1980s and the Berlin Wall fell, fears about a conflict between nuclear armed superpowers with competing values and ideologies declined. However, the threat to Canadian national security became less remote

¹² John Saywell, ed., *Canadian Annual Review*, (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1963): 312.

following terrorist attacks on the United States on September 11, 2001. Islamic fundamentalists hijacked four commercial planes after they took-off from American airports. They then used the planes as weapons against the World Trade Centre in New York City and the Pentagon, the headquarters of the American military, in Washington D.C. The casualties and destruction caused by these attacks exposed the insecurity of North America. Once again Canada appeared to be at risk because of its geographic position and its alliance with the United States. Canadian forces were deployed to assist the American military action against terrorism in Afghanistan. The fears about the vulnerability of Canadian cities, airplanes and commuter trains and the real threat to Canadian military personnel make a study of the vulnerability of Canadians from 1945 to 1963 particularly relevant. An investigation of the debate over Canada's defence contribution to its allies in the early cold war is also especially timely. The threat to domestic security is an important part of the Canadian postwar experience. The cold war exposed Canada to the risk of nuclear attack. Its location, postwar alliances and growing defence ties to the United States appeared to come at the cost of its safety. Canada could no longer expect that wars would be fought far from home or that the threat to their own homes and lives would be remote. It is important to address the postwar security of Canada and answer the question: between 1945 and 1963 did the nuclear threat play an important role or did it not?

The postwar period involved a number of sweeping changes for Canadians. The nation grew as marriage and birth rates rose. The arrival of new immigrants to Canada

also contributed to the population surge and changed the composition of the country.¹³

Canadian society was modernized and standardized. The wartime housing shortage ended and new suburbs encircled major cities across the country. In these years labour-saving conveniences, such as central heating, mechanical refrigeration, piped running water and flush toilets, became more widely accessible. More and more Canadians could afford to purchase cars, household appliances and televisions.¹⁴ The government introduced a network of social programs to address problems like unemployment, aging and health care. Steps were taken to provide returning veterans “Opportunity with Security.” Upon their return to Canada veterans received a number of benefits including university education, job training, housing, and rehabilitation.¹⁵ Building projects such as the Trans-Canada highway and the St. Lawrence Seaway signalled the growth and development of Canada.¹⁶ Yet, it was not a time of unlimited progress.

A number of factors challenged traditions and threatened the stability of Canadian life. Fears of an economic downturn remained. Couples, reunited after the war, experienced the stress of living together after lengthy separations. Divorce rates rose to a new high.¹⁷ Many women, employed in record number by war industries, lost their jobs. They found their postwar employment options became more limited.¹⁸ Modernity existed side-by-side with tradition. Sunday closing laws restricted the types of activities

¹³ Whitaker and Hewitt, *Canada and the Cold War*, 26; Doug Oram, *Born at the Right Time: A History of the Baby Boom Generation*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997): 4-5; Bothwell, Drummond and English, *Canada Since 1945*, 139.

¹⁴ Oram, “Canadian Domesticity in the Postwar Era,” 213-214.

¹⁵ Peter Neary, “Introduction,” in *The Veterans Charter and Post-World War II Canada*, ed, Peter Neary and J.L. Granatstein (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1998): 7-8.

¹⁶ Bothwell, Drummond and English, *Canada Since 1945*, 146-150, 165.

¹⁷ Jack Granatstein and Desmond Morton, *Canada and the Two World Wars*, (Toronto: Key Porter Books, 2003): 325; Oram, *Born at the Right Time*, 28-29.

¹⁸ Oram, “Canadian Domesticity in the Postwar Era,” 214-15, 219-220; Gail Cuthbert Brandt, “Pigeon-Holed and Forgotten”: The Work of the Subcommittee on the Post-War Problems of Women, 1943,” *Social History* xv:29 (May 1982): 257.

permitted on this day designated for rest and reflection. Montreal was the only large city where residents could easily be served alcohol on Sundays. However, movie houses began to open their doors on Sundays and offered Canadians a choice between entertainment and Christian activities. In 1957 the Very Reverend J.R. Mutchmor, a United Church Minister and a future moderator of the church, blamed the extension of liquor stores hours for increases in bootlegging and prostitution.¹⁹ At this time of internal change the population also confronted the challenge of a fragile international situation and a rising external threat. Canada's security in the face of an escalating nuclear peril was another hazard of the postwar period. Was the much anticipated safety of peacetime short lived? Did the atomic bomb and the cold war reduce the security of Canada after 1945? Was the nuclear age responsible for changes in Canadian society?

During the period under investigation the government prepared the public for the consequences of a third world war. Authorities erected warning sirens across the country and offered training in rescue, fire fighting, first aid and mass feeding techniques. Protection would be an individual responsibility. Canadians learned they should build and stock a bomb shelter where they could be protected from the blast and radiation produced by a nuclear explosion. The power of the hydrogen bomb meant that shelters no longer offered safety and civil defence policy shifted to evacuation by the mid 1950s. Individual Canadians were instructed to plan their escape routes in advance and have their car equipped with a full tank of gasoline and supplies so they could quickly flee a target zone when an attack appeared imminent. Civil defence received support from civic-minded Canadians involved in patriotic and service organizations with strong views

¹⁹ Bothwell, Drummond and English, *Canada Since 1945*, 161-2; "Mutchmor Finds Shameful Scenes In Winnipeg," *Globe and Mail*, June 6, 1957, 46.

against communism. These groups included the Royal Canadian Legion and its Ladies' Auxiliary, the Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire (IODE), the Catholic Women's League, the National Council of Women, the Red Cross Society, the Girl Guides and the Boy Scouts. Civil defence officials warned Canadians that a nuclear war would take place in their own backyards.²⁰ Along with Prime Minister Diefenbaker, they stressed that basic precautions could ensure that Canada would not be knocked out by an attack.²¹ The information included in civil defence pamphlets was the same information that the army provided Canadian troops preparing to fight on the nuclear battlefield in Europe.²²

Preparing the population for the effects of a nuclear war proved to be a difficult task. The rapid changes in nuclear technology complicated civil defence efforts. Officials worked to educate the public about a constantly shifting and escalating threat. They confronted a dilemma in their publicity efforts. If the public learned too much about the effects of blast, heat and radiation they could panic or become paralyzed with fear. On the other hand, if the effects were downplayed, they would not take the consequences of nuclear war seriously enough to adopt preparations that might save their lives. How did civil defence officials present the risks associated with nuclear war to the public? How many would survive? What steps would increase the chances of living through a nuclear war? As the government prepared to fight a nuclear war and set up procedures to protect the population, how did the Canadian population respond to the nuclear threat? Did they build shelters? Did they support civil defence measures? It was

²⁰ Op cit. Paul Martin, Minister of National Health and Welfare, *Civil Defence Bulletin*, December 1953, 1-2; Prime Minister John G. Diefenbaker, House of Commons *Debates*, August 10, 1960, 7943.

²¹ "Federal Co-Ordinator Addresses National Council of Women," *Civil Defence Bulletin* 33 (March 1954): 2.

²² Canadian Army. Manual of Training. *Survival Operations (1961)*, rev May 1962, Prepared Under the Direction of the Chief of the General Staff, (Ottawa: Army Headquarters, Queen's Printer, 1961): 8-9; Canada, Emergency Measures Organization, *Survival in Likely Target Areas*, Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1962.

one thing to prepare the Canadian military to fight the next war. However, could Canadians, eager to return to peacetime living after years of dislocation caused by depression and war, be convinced to live in a prolonged state of readiness for war? The *Globe and Mail* printed a cartoon, titled “Nuclear Age Logic,” in 1961 that pointed to the problem of gaining support for civil defence. It pictured a man following instructions to construct a basement fallout shelter. Armed with bricks and mortar, he remarked, “I sure hope this is a waste of money!!”²³ Given the choice between purchases like a new home, car or household appliances would Canadians volunteer to build a basement fallout shelter? A study of the fortunes of the civil defence program will demonstrate whether individual Canadians were mobilized to prepare for war. It will also reveal how they viewed their own role in ensuring survival.

By the late fifties Canadian students, professors, religious leaders, housewives, journalists and union leaders joined a number of different groups set up to confront the threat of nuclear war. They lobbied government officials to support disarmament, circulated petitions against nuclear tests and marched against the acquisition of nuclear arms by Canada. The Combined Universities Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CUCND), founded late in 1959, provided an outlet for university students across Canada to protest nuclear war. The Canadian Committee for the Control of Radiation Hazards, (CCCRH), joined concerned citizens in an educational campaign about the risks associated with radiation. Its member included prominent Canadians from academic, union and religious circles. By early 1961 it changed its name to the Canadian Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CCND). It focused on opposition to nuclear arms for Canada and, in the fall of 1961, its leaders presented the Prime Minister with a petition signed by

²³ “Nuclear Age Logic,” *Globe and Mail*, August 19, 1961, 6.

141 000 Canadians. Beginning in the spring of 1960 the Toronto Committee for Disarmament (TCD) campaigned against the government's defence and civil defence policies.²⁴ The group's leaders questioned whether the location of nuclear arms on Canadian soil or the arming of Canadian forces with these weapons could "really protect us or promote disarmament."²⁵ Around the same time, a group of mothers in Toronto, who feared that nuclear war was imminent, set up the Voice of Women (VOW). Its members protested nuclear weapons and lobbied the government to reduce cold war tensions. They hoped to provide a safer world for their children through their actions.²⁶ In 1961 the Canadian Peace Research Institute (CPRI) announced its plan to raise money to fund research into peace rather than defence so that war might be averted.²⁷ In late 1962 French Canadians joined together to establish the Mouvement du désarmement nucléaire (MDN). In the early sixties, others suggested an alternative, independent role for Canada in the cold war. They recommended the government should withdraw from both NORAD and NATO and abandon its plans for a nuclear defence. Neutralists re-evaluated Canada's relationship with the United States. They believed that the increased defence ties between the two nations elevated the risk of nuclear devastation for Canada and made its population expendable.²⁸ Neutralism found support from journalists,

²⁴ "Line Up 'Nobodies' To Stop H-Bombs," *Toronto Daily Star*, May 29, 1960, 7; "Noel-Baker Says Canada Could Be Poland of Third War," *Globe and Mail*, June 11, 1960, 4; "Disarm or Die, Peace Prize Winner Warns," *Toronto Daily Star*, June 11, 1960, 29; "Women in Tears At A-Bomb Horror," *Toronto Daily Star*, June 11, 1960, 9.

²⁵ National Archives, Rabbi Abraham Feinberg, MG 31 F9 Vol 4 TCD General Correspondence, "An Open Letter to Rt. Hon. John G. Diefenbaker Prime Minister of Canada;" "An Open Letter," *Toronto Daily Star*, July 16, 1960, 8.

²⁶ "Women in Tears At A-Bomb Horror," *Toronto Daily Star*, June 11, 1960, 9; "Green Backs 'Voice of Women'- Plan Seeks Female Peace Movement," *Montreal Gazette*, June 16, 1960 1; "Group to See Diefenbaker on Disarmament," *Toronto Daily Star*, June 11, 1960, 33; "Women of Canada Say 'No Atom War,'" *Toronto Daily Star*, July 29, 1960, 15; NA VOW, MG 28 I218 Vol 7, file 15, "VOW Declaration."

²⁷ "Canadian Scientist Halts Career to Plan for Peace," *Globe and Mail*, April 21, 1961, 7.

²⁸ J.M. Minifie, *Peacemaker or Powder-Monkey: Canada's Role in a Revolutionary World*. (Canada: McClelland and Stewart, 1960): 32; MURA CCND Box 9 Affiliates – CUCND, YCND, File 2, CUCND

professors, clergy members, communists and some segments within the nuclear disarmament movement and social democratic circles.

Anti-nuclear activists warned Canadians that they could not survive a nuclear war. If a nuclear weapon exploded on a Canadian target the victims faced two equally horrifying fates, "Agony or Ashes." Disarmers stressed the nuclear risks faced by Canadians and carried placards with slogans like "No Veterans after WWII" and "No Canadian Hiroshimas."²⁹ Helen Tucker, an active proponent of disarmament, explained, "If there is an atomic war (God forbid) we civilians will be the defenceless frontline."³⁰ Protestors condemned civil defence and argued it would not help Canadians survive. Shelters would become fiery tombs and nuclear war was not the picnic the government portrayed it to be. These groups voiced dissent against the cold war but presented their protests in traditional forms, often with either a maternal or a religious message. Some protestors adopted tactics of civil disobedience borrowed from civil rights protestors in the United States but these were not the norm.³¹ Student protestors were clean-cut, dressed in suits and ties and behaved in a calm and dignified manner. Housewives, mothers and grandmothers marched in the nation's capital carrying babies or pushing their children and grandchildren in carriages. Dissent against government policy and the questioning of authority figures was not an easy transition for many middle class Canadians. Many viewed public demonstrations as inappropriate behaviour and were

Correspondence, pamphlet, "Tim Buck, 'Neutrality Now!' Published by the Communist Party of Canada, July 1960;" Major W.H. Pope and the Defence Research Committee, *Let Canada Lead (A New Defence Policy)*, Montreal: Combined Universities Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, 1961?.

²⁹ "Varsity Students Back Disarm Rally," *Toronto Daily Star*, June 11, 1960, 9.

³⁰ "Join Rising Chorus Of Protests Against War," *Montreal Star*, September 1961 in Christine Ball, "The History of the Voice of Women/La Voix des Femmes: The Early Years, 1960-1963" (Ph.D. diss., University of Toronto, 1992): 233.

³¹ David Lewis Stein, "The Younger Generation: Banning the bomb is no longer enough – now they want to change the world that created it," *Maclean's*, June 20, 1964, 1.

torn between their desire to prevent nuclear war and behaving in a respectable and dignified manner. Mona Gleason studied the popularization of psychology in the postwar period and its creation of the category of “normal” behaviour. Psychological discourse created pressures to conform to specific, accepted behaviours. It stressed the importance of traditional values in family life, parenting, child development and gender roles. This message was spread to Canadians and Americans through magazines, advice manuals, radio broadcasts and school curricula. The members of the nuclear disarmament movement took part in heated debates over appropriate behaviour.³² These groups struggled to defend their reputations. They refuted allegations that they sympathized with communism and fought against suggestions they were too militant in their approach to the issues of war and peace. Anti-nuclear groups encountered divisions over their methods and programs. They tried to respond to the nuclear threat so that they gained the support for their cause and alienated the fewest number of Canadians. This proved to be a difficult task.

The population tackled the question of how best to confront the nuclear threat. Should they join in anti-nuclear activities and march against nuclear tests or sign petitions against nuclear arms? Should they endorse civil defence preparations and take steps to protect themselves against nuclear attack like building a shelter? Or, would nuclear weapons in the hands of Canada’s armed forces offer them the most security in the cold war? They evaluated what threat posed the biggest danger to their nation and their own lives, the Soviet Union or nuclear weapons. This study will address the ways in which Canadian leaders and everyday citizens prepared to meet the new dangers of the nuclear

³² Owsam, *Born at the Right Time*, 205; Whitaker, *Cold War Canada*, 17; Mona Gleason, *Normalizing the Ideal: Psychology, Schooling, and the Family in Postwar Canada*. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999): 4-5.

age. It will also assess whether or not the nuclear threat shaped Canadian society and, in what ways, between 1945 and 1963.

The historical record of the postwar years provides a rich resource for a study of the response to the nuclear threat to Canada. Elaine Tyler May, a historian who studied American domesticity in the postwar period, concluded that the cold war shaped the choices Americans made in their everyday lives. She argued that they embraced domesticity because of fears about communism and nuclear war. As a result the home and family became invested with a political purpose. Parenthood in the cold war, she concluded, did not involve a retreat into private life but was seen as a civic role benefiting the nation. She interpreted traditional gender roles, suburban living and consumption as ways in which Americans believed they could support democracy and contain the spread of communism.³³ Tyler May suggested that the cold war played a major role in the lives of Americans in the fifties and sixties. However, it is not clear that nuclear fears mobilized the American population more than they moved Canadians to take action. Dee Garrison studied the protests organized by thousands of women in New York City in the fifties against civil defence exercises. These radical pacifists were repeatedly arrested for refusing to take cover during air-raid drills. They believed that the drills were ridiculous since “in the event of nuclear war most of New York City would be incinerated.” JoAnne Brown detailed the incorporation of bomb drills into the routines of classrooms across the United States. She argued that the threat of nuclear war was “domesticated, cleanses of its alarming aspect, and assimilated into daily routine.” Brown concluded that these programs “taught a generation to equate emotional maturity with an attitude of calm

³³ Elaine Tyler May, *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era*. (New York: Basic Books, 1988): 10, 136.

acceptance toward nuclear war.” Laura McEnaney concluded that Federal Civil Defense Administration struggled to convince Americans to build shelters or adopt preparations in advance of a nuclear attack.³⁴ Paul Boyer and Lisle Rose both studied the influence of the nuclear age and anti-communism on American society from the end of the Second World War to the 1950s. While a comparison between the experience in Canada and the United States, would be of great interest, it is beyond the scope of this study.³⁵

A number of social historians assessed the attitudes of Canadians to the cold war and the danger of war. They argued the nuclear threat had a pervasive influence on the lives of Canadians. These scholars established that the dual threats of communism and the atomic bomb shaped the choices Canadians made in terms of their families, homes, neighbourhoods, patterns of consumption and leisure activities. Marianna Valverde, in her study of morality and gender in the post-war period, concluded that fears about teenage delinquency and promiscuity arose out of the context of the cold war. Inappropriate gender and sexual behaviour in Canada’s cities posed a challenge, not just to morality, but to Canadian democracy. Welfare agencies, school boards and training schools made efforts to combat the trends of young men dressed in colourful and flashy ‘zoot suits’ and promiscuous women. Their moral and social reform programs reflected the traditional, gendered roles of the postwar years; boys received training to be good

³⁴ Dee Garrison, “‘Our Skirts Gave Them Courage’ The Civil Defense Movement in New York City, 1955-1961,” in Joanne Meyerowitz, ed. *Not June Cleaver: Women and Gender in Postwar American, 1945-1960*, (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 1994): 201-226; Brown, JoAnne. “‘A is for Atom, B is for Bomb’: Civil Defense in American Public Education, 1945-1963.” *Journal of American History* 75 (June 1988): 68-90; Laura McEnaney, *Civil Defense Begins At Home: Militarization Meets Everyday Life in the Fifties*. (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2000).

³⁵ Paul Boyer, *By the Bomb’s Early Light: American thought and culture at the dawn of the atomic age*. 1st ed. (New York: Pantheon, 1985); Lisle Rose, *The Cold War Comes to Main Street: America in 1950*, (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1999).

citizens and girls learned to be good wives.³⁶ Franca Iacovetta, who studied the experience of women immigrants to Canada, discovered, that as a result of cold war anxieties, social workers taught female immigrants to adopt the model of the nuclear family and traditional gender roles. She explained, "Amid the Cold War, staff workers, like many other Canadians, associated the willingness of newcomers to adapt to a Canadian lifestyle and adopt Canadian citizenship as a victory in the struggle against the Soviet Union and as proof of the moral superiority of Western democracies like Canada."³⁷ The upheaval caused by the Second World War also contributed to the value placed on a middle class, and, according to Iacovetta, "unrealistic" model of the family. Efforts were made not only to select non-communist and anti-communist immigrants but to shape immigrants into 'New Canadians' so they would be less vulnerable to communist influences.³⁸ Both Valverde and Iacovetta relied on Tyler May's thesis and shared her approach to the study of women in the cold war. They addressed how social and political questions became influenced by the cold war and the ways in which public issues were displaced into the private realm of the family.

Veronica Strong-Boag, in her study of the domestic experience of women, also asserted that the reliance on traditional gender roles in the postwar years resulted from fears tied to the cold war. The suburb, she concluded, was not just a place to live. This space represented a political choice in favour of the western democracies and proof of

³⁶ Marianna Valverde, "Building Anti-Delinquent Communities: Morality, Gender and Generation in the City," in *A Diversity of Women: Ontario, 1945-1980*, ed. Joy Parr (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995): 22-23.

³⁷ Franca Iacovetta, "Making 'New Canadians': Social Workers, Women and the Reshaping of Immigrant Families," in *Gender Conflicts: New Essays in Women's History*, ed. Franca Iacovetta and Mariana Valverde (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992): 271, 263 and "Remaking Their Lives: Women Immigrants, Survivors, and Refugees," in *A Diversity of Women: Ontario, 1945-1980*, ed. Joy Parr (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995): 142-3.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 140, 143 and Franca Iacovetta, "Ordering in Bulk: Canada's Postwar Immigration Policy and the Recruitment of Contract Workers from Italy," *Journal of American Ethnic History* (Fall 1991): 53.

their superiority. She determined that the value placed on the family and home intersected with fears about the cold war and nuclear weapons. Private, domestic issues became politicized because, at the heart of the nuclear threat, lay the safety and future of the family. Conversely, consumption and a home in the suburbs proved the success of capitalism over communism:

New housing that enshrined a gendered division of labour also responded to a generation's anxiety about changes in the world around them. The threat of the Cold War and the Korean War encouraged citizens to prize the private consumption and accumulation of products in a nuclear family household as proof of capitalism's success. Stable families, full-time mothers, and the benefits produced in sound citizenship were to provide the first defence against the 'Red Menace' symbolized in Canada by the Gouzenko affair. Suburban housewives at home in ever larger houses epitomized the promise of prosperity would guarantee both individual happiness and final triumph over communism.³⁹

Christabelle Sethna shared Strong-Boag's conclusions about the predominant role of the cold war in shaping the values of Canadians. She argued that the cold war affected school curricula. Family education classes replaced sex education and, in place of biological information about topics like sexually transmitted diseases, educators taught students to restrict sex within marriage. They believed that promiscuity increased the risk of communism while traditional family values shored up democracy.⁴⁰ Shirley Tillotson examined the influence of the cold war on Ontario's public recreation program after 1945. She concluded that groups like the Lions, the Knights of Columbus, the Royal Canadian Legion and the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) supported recreation as a way to combat communism and promote a democratic way of life. Canadians could avoid

³⁹ Veronica Strong-Boag, "Home Dreams: Women and the Suburban Experiment in Canada, 1945-1960," *Canadian Historical Review* 72:4 (1991): 474.

⁴⁰ Christabelle Sethna, "The Cold War and the Sexual Chill: Freezing Girls Out of Sex Education," *Canadian Woman Studies* 17:4: 33.

frustration and resist communist influences through wholesome play and recreation.⁴¹

These scholars suggested the far-reaching effects of the cold war on Canadians and their society.

Doug Owrarn also relied on Elaine Tyler May's conclusions as a starting point for his investigation of domesticity in the postwar period. He traced the extent to which anxieties related to the cold war were responsible for the high rates of marriage, rising birth rates and the movement of the population to the suburbs that, together, made the postwar years a "baby boom." He concluded that the Canadian experience differed from the situation south of the border and that Canadians demonstrated limited concern toward the threats of the cold war. Fears about nuclear war remained distant from their everyday lives and did not direct their actions.⁴² Owrarn concluded that the public placed priority on homes, families and consumer goods more because of the lengthy disruption to their lives, caused by depression and war, than cold war anxieties.⁴³ He wrote, "For Canadians, the postwar values – which were indeed very much like those south of the border – seemed to have been derived from domestic experience rather than international politics."⁴⁴ He described the threat of the cold war as "a brooding presence" in their lives. These dangers had an "important psychological effect" on Canadians.⁴⁵ They reminded them of their tenuous status in the postwar world.⁴⁶ However, these anxieties were not the main reason why Canadians chose to marry, begin their families at younger ages, buy new homes in suburban areas or participate in child-centred activities.

⁴¹ Shirley Tillotson, *The Public at Play: Gender and the Politics of Recreation in Post-war Ontario*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000): 37-8.

⁴² Owrarn, "Canadian Domesticity in the Postwar Era," 212; 214, 240.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 206-7.

⁴⁴ Owrarn, *Born at the Right Time*, 207.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 161.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 52-3.

These scholars also assessed the values and behaviours of Canadians but differed in their evaluations of their priorities in the middle of the twentieth century. Owram suggested that, in contrast to the activism and social conscience of the baby-boom generation, conformity and materialism preoccupied their parents' generation in the fifties. When Canadians did join clubs they were child-centred and non-political.⁴⁷ Reg Whitaker and Gary Marcuse shared this view of the fifties as a period of domestic withdrawal. They argued that Canada was conservative and apolitical and dominated by the patriarchal family and traditional gender roles:

Despite the conformist face of pioneer suburbia, it was a world with little sense of collective community that had characterized early pioneer settlements. It tended instead to be a world of separate, privatized families with absent commuting fathers, isolated and often bored wives, and children with few organized activities to occupy their time and nowhere to go.⁴⁸

Strong-Boag also found that the activism of suburban women centred on their lives as mothers. They worked for better schools, improved services like sidewalks and garbage collection and greater community safety.⁴⁹ Valverde countered that Canadians in the fifties were neither naïve nor innocent. Just like Canadians in the sixties they experienced anxieties, valued social activism and became involved in their communities. She maintained that the fifties was “not the lost age of social naivety, political quiescence, and sexual conformity, an age in which – we imagine – women’s worst fear was getting a bad perm.” Valerie Korinek, in her study of *Chatelaine* magazine in the 1950s and 1960s, concluded that traditional female roles overlapped

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 205.

⁴⁸ Reg Whitaker and Gary Marcuse, *Cold War Canada: The Making of a National Insecurity State, 1945-1957*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994): 17.

⁴⁹ Strong-Boag, “Home Dreams,” 474.

with feminism in these two decades. There was not a clear demarcation between the dominant values and attitudes of the two decades.⁵⁰

Canadians responded to the nuclear threat, too, with a mixture of traditional and modern approaches. Conventional gender roles were reinforced at the same time as they were challenged in both the peace movement and the civil defence program. Maternal motivation influenced politicized protests against nuclear weapons. On the other hand, women supported civil defence in order to protect the nation and defend democracy. Members of the IODE, the National Council of Women (NCW) and the Catholic Women's League (CWL) received civil defence training to assist Canada's survivors of a nuclear war. In addition to the traditional female tasks of feeding and nursing they learned techniques in fire fighting and rescue work. During the Cuban crisis, the VOW conducted an impassioned fight against civil defence drills in Canada's schools. Members of the group worked for peace because of their maternal instincts. They argued that the lives of their children were more important than cold war politics or nuclear diplomacy.⁵¹ Traditional and non-traditional roles overlapped when Canadian women confronted the nuclear threat. Anti-nuclear activists employed familial arguments in their efforts to convince the public of the nuclear threat to Canada. T.C. "Tommy" Douglas, who as premier of Saskatchewan was responsible for the introduction of Canada's first universal health care program, became the first leader of the New Democratic Party in 1961. During the 1963 federal election he urged Canadians to refuse nuclear arms and

⁵⁰Valverde, "Building Anti-Delinquent Communities," 19; Valerie Korinek, *Roughing it in the Suburbs: Reading Chatelaine Magazine in the Fifties and Sixties*. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000.)

⁵¹"Object to Drills, War Talk Terrifies, VOW Says," *Globe and Mail*, October 26, 1962, 5.

expressed concern for the future of his grandchild.⁵² The family may have been a central part of the lives of Canadians in the fifties and sixties but it was not separate from the issue of survival. The personal and public spheres merged as a result of the dangers associated with radioactive fallout from nuclear tests and the possibility of a nuclear war. This study will examine the nuclear threat in terms of both the public and the private sphere. It will investigate the ways in which it touched Canadian lives, if at all, through government defence plans, civil defence preparations and nuclear disarmament activities. Did the possibility of a nuclear attack on Canada influence government planning or individual action? Did the anxieties that Strong-Boag and others discover translate into action either in preparation or protest? Or rather, was the nuclear threat an ominous but secondary priority for Canadians intent on rebuilding after years of economic uncertainty and armed conflict as Owram suggested? These histories examined the ways in which insecurities influenced behaviours in a number of implicit ways. This study will examine the more direct ways in which the population responded to the nuclear threat. It will investigate whether or not the real risk of a nuclear war involving Canada's territory and population mobilized the public to prepare for nuclear war or protest nuclear weapons. It will assess the ways in which Canadians perceived their safety in the cold war. The historical record provides a rich resource for a study of the ways in which the nuclear threat shaped the nation between 1945 and 1963. Their conclusions about the anxieties and priorities of Canadians in these years offer an opportunity to assess the ways in which the government as well as the population planned to meet the unprecedented threat of nuclear attack.

⁵² Peter C. Newman, *Renegade in Power: The Diefenbaker Years*, (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart Ltd, 1963): 389.

Many scholars pointed to the postwar period as a turning point in the history of Canadian society. Canada went through a period of transition. It declared war on its own and moved from a colony to a more independent nation. At the same time, the influence exerted by the United States grew in areas such as culture, the economy and defence.⁵³ The recognition Canada received from the United States competed with what appeared, to many, to be the disadvantage of an unequal relationship. The issues of defence and the nuclear threat illustrate the ways in which the changing relationship with the United States intersected with attitudes toward security and the debate over nuclear weapons. At the same time as Canadians assessed the nuclear threat they considered the influence of the Americans on their lives.

An examination of the response to the nuclear threat reveals that, after 1945, an uneasy balance existed between tradition and modernity. As the Secretary of State for External Affairs in the Diefenbaker government from 1959 to 1963, Howard Green religiously pursued Canadian leadership in disarmament at the United Nations. He opposed nuclear arms for Canadian forces as a threat to the nation's moral authority at international councils. Robert Bothwell, Ian Drummond and John English described Green's arguments in favour of disarmament "as the last-gasp of the Protestant conscience in an incompletely secularized disguise."⁵⁴ Green, the Conservative party representative from Vancouver, did not smoke or drink, refused to work on Sundays and never learned to drive a car. Prior to becoming Canada's top diplomat, his only trip outside North America was to France to serve in the First World War. It was there, Green

⁵³ Bothwell, Drummond and English, *Canada Since 1945*, 96-7, 172; Owsram, *Born at the Right Time*, 154-5, 92, 151.

⁵⁴ Bothwell, Drummond and English, *Canada Since 1945*, 231.

later recalled, that he first felt a deep concern for security and peace.⁵⁵ Owram described Maryon Pearson, the wife of Lester Pearson, as a product of the age of social gospel. She, like many other Canadians who belonged to Canada's university-educated, intellectual elite, was drawn to social action and joined the VOW.⁵⁶ Anti-nuclear activists believed they could make a difference, not only at the local but, at the international level. They represented a mixture of the older traditions and a changing, modern Canada.

The disarmament movement merged the past and the modern in its approach to the issue of nuclear war. Owram argued the CUCND was a bridge between the religious reformism of Canada's early twentieth century past and the more secular and modern nation that emerged in the sixties. It was both a "moralistic, protest, issue-oriented group" and the cradle of the New Left. Owram concluded, "The CUCND was... a link between traditional strains of Canadian reformism and the emergent activism of the 1960s."⁵⁷ Dimitri Roussopoulos, the chairman of the CUCND, an executive member of the CCND and a founder of *Our Generation Against Nuclear War*, described the student peace movement as "more a liberal pressure group than [sic] a social movement."⁵⁸ By 1964 the coalition between liberals and radicals intent on preventing nuclear war ceased. The more radical protestors who remained active demanded broad structural changes to society in place of single-issue protests.

Politicians and disarmers tried to establish the boundaries of the debate over nuclear weapons and define the nature of the nuclear weapons issue. This debate put

⁵⁵ He also opposed the rights of the Japanese in British Columbia during the Second World War. "Howard Green: Adding Ginger at Geneva," *Canadians in the World: An Educational Resource Site*, Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Canada, <http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/ciw-cdm/Green-en.asp>

⁵⁶ Doug Owram, review of *The Life of Lester Pearson* vol. 1, *Shadow of Heaven, 1897-1948*, by John English. *Canadian Historical Review* 72:2 (June 1991): 223.

⁵⁷ Owram, *Born at the Right Time*, 218, 219.

⁵⁸ Dimitrios J. Roussopoulos, ed. *The New Left in Canada*, (Montreal: Our Generation Press- Black Rose Books, 1970): 9.

traditional values at odds with modernity. Was the acquisition of nuclear arms for Canadian forces a moral and emotional issue or a political and military topic? Anti-nuclear activists argued survival was a moral issue. Many politicians countered that emotion and hysteria about nuclear annihilation clouded the reason of Canadians and distracted from the issue of defence in the cold war. The RCAF Association defended its position in support of nuclear arms for Canadian forces. In contrast to the sentimental arguments of the anti-nuclear groups, its leaders argued they were well informed and based the group's stand on detailed information.⁵⁹ What was the role of personal conscience in relation to security in the cold war? Owsram stressed the unlimited optimism of the postwar period, "From the end of the war until the 1970s, Canadians believed in their own ability to make their personal and collective lives better."⁶⁰ As Ann Gertler, a supporter of the VOW in Montreal, recalled, "We thought that, in the 20th century, there were better ways of doing things than bashing other human beings."⁶¹ Canadian voters confronted the dilemma of their own agency. Who was responsible for peace and defence? Could they influence policy or were they even well enough informed to voice an opinion? Was nuclear war an issue better left to the politicians?

Thomas Socknat studied Canadian pacifism before 1945 and concluded that, before 1945, Canada's anti-war movement failed each time it was put to the test. While it may have been unsuccessful in gaining public support, he argued it made an important contribution to Canadian society.⁶² In the years between the First and Second World

⁵⁹ "Biased Views Cloud Nuclear Arms Issue For Public: Harkness," *Globe and Mail*, March 22, 1963, 8; "PM turns down demand to accept nuclear arms," *The Ottawa Citizen*, November 16, 1962, 1.

⁶⁰ Owsram, *Born at the Right Time*, 310.

⁶¹ "600 rode '62 peace train," *Montreal Gazette*, March 5, 1989, D-6.

⁶² Thomas Socknat, *Witness Against War: Pacifism in Canada, 1900-1945*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987): 10; Veronica Strong-Boag, "Peace-making Women, 1919-1939," in Ruth Roach Pierson, ed.

Wars, pacifists failed to increase their numbers. By the middle of the twentieth century, however, their opposition to social violence had been adopted by the wider community. They laid a foundation for a politicized anti-nuclear movement after 1945.⁶³ Pacifism ensured the priority of questions of conscience in a changing Canadian society; it became a part of the moral principles underlying Canadian culture. Veronica Strong-Boag traced the role of Canadian women in the pre-Second World War peace movement. Women from a number of church, pacifist and women's groups joined together to discuss international affairs, demand an end to war and international friendship. They relied on maternal feminism and women's "particular sensitivity to the costs of armed conflict." She described the peace movement of the 1920s and 1930s as "fundamentally a middle class Protestant" in makeup.⁶⁴ By 1959 middle class and more moderate Canadians embraced the fight for peace. The disarmament movement, active from 1959 to 1964, showed the same uneasy blend of influences as Canadian pacifism from 1900 to 1945: religious and liberal goals competed with radical political agendas. The patterns established by Socknat and Strong-Boag in their studies of pacifism in the pre-nuclear age are useful for an investigation of the nuclear disarmament movement. Did Canadians place priority on moral issues in the nuclear age? Were Protestant Canadians who belonged to the middle class more likely to work for peace?

Women and Peace: theoretical, historical and practical perspectives, (London; NY: Croom Helm, 1987): 170-91.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 297.

⁶⁴ These groups included the United Church of Canada, its Christian Girls in Training (CGIT), League of Nations groups, the National Council of Women, the Young Women's Christian Association, the Women's Christian Temperance Union and the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom. Peace activists faced attacks for their efforts in the inter-war period. In 1920 Martha Black an IODE activist and future MP said that a critic of war should "be taken out and publicly whipped for the traitor that she is.". Veronica Strong-Boag, "Peace-making Women, 1919-1939," in Ruth Roach Pierson, ed. *Women and Peace: theoretical, historical and practical perspectives*, (London; NY: Croom Helm, 1987): 170-1; 172.

Socknat argued that Canada's post-Hiroshima peace movement moved to the left and adopted radical solutions to the problem of war. The anti-nuclear movement active from 1948 to the early 1950s confirmed Socknat's analysis. The Canadian Peace Congress (CdnPC), led by the Reverend James Endicott, a former United Church of Canada missionary to China, highlighted the special dangers Canadians faced from nuclear weapons. The group blamed the United States for the threat to world peace and maintained that the Soviet Union wanted to ban the bomb. Canada's communist party devoted all of its efforts to the peace campaign. It argued that Canada would become the "atomic cockpit of the next war."⁶⁵ In their study of national security, Reg Whitaker, a political scientist who specializes in the cold war and issues of national security, and Gary Marcuse, a journalist, argued that the peace movement was the victim of the state's anti-communist campaign from 1945 to 1957.⁶⁶ Gary Kinsman, Dieter K. Buse and Mercedes Steedman edited a collection of essays on national security. They focused on the effects of anti-communist campaigns on working class women, gays and lesbians, immigrants and students. They concluded that the state created categories of 'enemies' out of groups it felt endangered national security even when it lacked evidence to support its accusations.⁶⁷ Steve Hewitt examined the RCMP's secret surveillance of students enrolled at Canadian universities in *Spying 101*. He concluded that campus peace activities were closely observed for any indication of communist infiltration. Tommy Douglas claimed that the RCMP investigated members of the CCCRH in Saskatchewan.

⁶⁵ Tim Buck, *For Peace, Progress, Socialism*, Opening Address of LPP 2nd National Convention, Toronto, June 1-5, 1946, (Toronto: Progress Books, 1946): 54.

⁶⁶ Reg Whitaker and Gary Marcuse, *Cold War Canada: The Making of the National Insecurity State, 1945-1957*. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994): x-xi, 13.

⁶⁷ Gary Kinsman, Dieter K. Buse and Mercedes Steedman, eds. *Whose National Security? Canadian State Surveillance and the Creation of Enemies*, Toronto: Between the Lines, 2000.

Members of the VOW were also watched.⁶⁸ However, politicians met openly with disarmament delegations. Accusations of communist ties against these groups were challenged and, in some cases, retracted. State-led anti-communism does not appear to have been solely responsible for the failure of the movement against nuclear weapons.

Canada's nuclear weapons controversy has been studied as a political issue with important implications for the fate of the Diefenbaker government and American-Canadian relations. Peter Haydon assessed Canada's role in the Cuban Missile Crisis and focused on the part played by Canadian military officials and politicians.⁶⁹ Erika Simpson studied the attitudes of Canadian leaders toward NATO and nuclear weapons and Canada's place in the world.⁷⁰ Jamie Glazov investigated Canada's policy toward Nikita Khrushchev, the leader of the Soviet Union from 1953 to 1964. He contrasted the Liberal government's policy of accommodation with Diefenbaker's choice of a more confrontational approach. Glazov maintained that Diefenbaker's cold war policies became inconsistent following the election of John Kennedy. He switched from his strong position against the Soviet Union and pointed to the United States as a threat to peace and security. Glazov concluded that the Liberal government's approach to the Soviet Union, which combined strength with accommodation, was more consistent and

⁶⁸ Steve Hewitt, *Spying 101: The RCMP's Secret Activities at Canadian Universities, 1917-1997*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002); Gary Moffatt, *History of the Canadian Peace Movement*, 90.

⁶⁹ H. Basil Robinson, *Diefenbaker's World: A Populist in Foreign Affairs*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1989; Peter Stursberg, *Diefenbaker: Leadership Lost, 1962-67*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1976; John G. Diefenbaker, *One Canada: The Memoirs of the Right Honourable John G. Diefenbaker*, Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1975; John English, *The Life of Lester Pearson*, vol. 2, *The Worldly Years, 1949-1972*, Toronto: Alfred A. Knopf Canada, 1972; Lester Pearson, *Mike: The Memoirs of the Right Honourable Lester B. Pearson*, ed. J.A. Munro and A.I. Inglis Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972-5; Lester Pearson, *Words and Occasions: an anthology of speeches and articles selected from his papers*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1970; Peter Haydon, *The 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis: Canadian Involvement Reconsidered*, Toronto: Canadian Institute of Strategic Studies, 1993.

⁷⁰ Erika Simpson, *NATO and the Bomb: Canadian defenders confront critics*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2001.

more successful.⁷¹ This thesis will evaluate the intersection of political and moral arguments in the debate over the nuclear threat to Canada.

Individuals who supported the nuclear disarmament cause claimed they received strong support from the public and influenced decision-makers in Ottawa.⁷² Helen Tucker, a co-founder of the VOW, declared in 1962 that telegrams, letters and petitions signed by VOW members “played no small part in keeping Canada free ... from nuclear weapons.”⁷³ Around the same time leaders of the CCND claimed that the group succeeded in gaining public support and mobilizing opinion against nuclear weapons for Canadian forces.⁷⁴ Participants of the movement pointed to its successes.

A number of historians maintained the view that the peace movement provided a strong and vocal lobby against nuclear weapons. Bothwell, Drummond and English, in their study of Canada after 1945, asserted that by 1960 there was a large disarmament lobby in Canada.⁷⁵ Peyton Lyon, a professor of political science at the University of Western Ontario and a former civil servant in the Department of External Affairs, and Jocelyn Ghent, who studied the role of the Cuban crisis in the fall of the Diefenbaker

⁷¹ Jamie Glazov, *Canadian Policy toward Khrushchev's Soviet Union*, (Montreal & Kingston, McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002): xiv-xv.

⁷² Kay Macpherson, *When in Doubt, Do Both*. With C.M. Donald. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994): 92; Kay Macpherson and Meg Sears, “Voice of Women: A History,” in *Women in the Canadian Mosaic*, ed. Gwen Matheson (Toronto: Peter Martin Associates, 1976): 70-89; Simonne Chartrand Monet, *Les Québécoises et le mouvement pacifiste, 1939-1967*, Montreal: Éditions Écosociété, 1993; Thérèse Casgrain, *A Women in a Man's World*, trans Joyce Marshall, Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1972; Marion Scott Kerans, *Muriel Duckworth: A Very Active Pacifist: a Biography*, Halifax, NS: Fernwood, 1996.

⁷³ Helen Tucker, “Voice of Women: And the Conference For International Cooperation Year,” *Our Generation Against Nuclear War* 1:4 (summer 1962): 27.

⁷⁴ “Bomb-Banners To Meet MPs on Atomic Arms,” *Globe and Mail*, September 24, 1962, 4.

⁷⁵ Bothwell, Drummond and English, *Canada since 1945*, 231; Cheryl Osborn, “Speaking Their Peace, Feminist Pacifists in the Nuclear Age: Voice of Women, 1960-1972,” MA thesis, Concordia University, 1994; Margo Pineau and Cathy Reeves, *Voice of Women: The First Thirty Years*, Toronto: Pineau Productions, 1992. (film)

government, pointed to the strength of this movement in 1961.⁷⁶ Patricia McMahon, who examined Canada's nuclear weapons policy in a doctoral dissertation, highlighted the movement's influence over the Conservative government. She concluded that it "achieved great success with its national petition" and convinced the prime minister of the force of anti-nuclear opinion. She asserted that Diefenbaker was also influenced by the respectable and credible women of the VOW. Her thesis explained why the Prime Minister was reluctant, but willing, to accept nuclear arms. She discovered that electoral concerns rather than national security shaped his policy between 1957 and 1963.⁷⁷

Candace Loewen argued that the VOW gained support from Lester Pearson. Pearson had enlisted to serve in the First World War and was trained as a pilot in the Royal Flying Corps where he became known as "Mike." Pearson was a talented sportsman who had played football, baseball, basketball, lacrosse, rugby and played on Britain's 1922 Olympic hockey team. He taught history at the University of Toronto's Victoria College before working as a diplomat and then becoming a politician. She described the women's peace group and the leader of the Liberal party as allies.⁷⁸

Reg Whitaker and Steve Hewitt traced Canada's involvement in the cold war from the 1940s through the 1980s. They addressed a wide range of issues related to defence, civil defence, anti-communism, nuclear weapons and the peace movement. Whitaker and Hewitt argued that the peace movement became a force in Canadian society following the

⁷⁶ Peyton Lyon, *Canada in World Affairs, 1961-3*, (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1968): 103; Jocelyn Maynard Ghent, "Canadian-American Relations and the Nuclear Weapons Controversy, 1958-1963" (Ph.D. diss., University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 1976): 112; Jocelyn Maynard Ghent, "'Did he fall or was he pushed?': The Kennedy Administration and the Collapse of the Diefenbaker Government," *International History Review* 1:2 (April 1979): 246-270; Jocelyn Ghent, "Canada, the United States and the Cuban Missile Crisis," *Pacific Historical Review* (1979): 165-179.

⁷⁷ Patricia McMahon, "The Politics of Canada's Nuclear Policy, 1957-1963" (Ph.D. diss., University of Toronto, 1999): 8, 163.

⁷⁸ Candace Loewen, "Mike Hears Voices: Voice of Women and Lester Pearson, 1960-1963," *Atlantis* 12:2 (Spring 1987): 24-30.

Cuban crisis in October 1962. The close call with nuclear war caused more Canadians to question the policies of the United States.⁷⁹ These scholars may differ over their choice of dates but their conclusions remain the same. They maintain that anti-nuclear protestors gained access to the nation's leaders, received support from the public and were responsible for getting across the message that nuclear weapons threatened not just Canadians, but the world. The strength of the anti-nuclear movement, however, tends to be overestimated while its difficulties are downplayed. Canadians were well aware of this threat from better informed sources than pressure groups. Politicians, military and civil defence officials and even the prime minister, not just professors, church leaders, rabbis or housewives, outlined the risks to the population. This study will investigate the competing narratives concerning Canadian security or insecurity in the nuclear age.

Examinations of Canada's civil defence program also concentrate on the administration of these procedures. Marijan Salopek focused on preparations for nuclear war in western Canada from 1950 to 1953 and concluded that concern about civil defence quickly declined following the Korean War. G.W.L. Nicholson studied the reorganization of civil defence planning in the late fifties. He concentrated on the assignment of national survival responsibilities to Canada's militia and the heated debate about this unpopular new role.⁸⁰ These histories focus on the issues of defence and politics and the response to the nuclear and Soviet threats at the government level. They provide a valuable resource for a study of the response of Canadians to the nuclear threat and, in particular, the domestic consequences of the cold war. This study will combine

⁷⁹ Steve Hewitt, *Spying 101: The RCMP's Secret Activities at Canadian Universities, 1917-1977*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002); Whitaker and Hewitt, *Canada and the Cold War*, 148.

⁸⁰ Marijan Salopek, "Western Canadians and Civil Defence: The Korean War Years, 1950-1953," *Prairie Forum* 14:1 (1989): 74-88; G.W.L. Nicholson, "The Canadian Militia's Introduction to Civil Defence Training," in *Policy by Other Means: Essays in Honour of C.P. Stacey*, ed. Michael Cross and Robert Bothwell (Toronto: Clark and Irwin, 1972): 221-245.

the political and administrative levels with the actions of everyday Canadians. How did the government present the threat to the public? What was the response to this message?

Opinion polls are used in this thesis to supplement newspaper and magazine articles, the public statements of politicians, military officials, peace activists and civil defence authorities and documents produced by these groups. Prime Minister John Diefenbaker publicly dismissed polls:

As a dog-lover, I have said many times that dogs know best the appropriate treatment to give poles, and I believe that any assessment of the record shows my distrust of these samplings of public attitude to be amply justified. More than this, however, I believe that no political party worth its salt would determine its course on the basis of polls. If it does, out goes principle and in comes the temporary views [sic] of the population as a whole.⁸¹

He complained that these surveys sampled a very small group and were not an accurate representation of public sentiment. The Gallup poll sampled groups ranging from 500 to nearly 3000.⁸² He explained, "I would never have been prime minister if the Gallup polls were right." Diefenbaker chose other forms of evidence and relied on letters written to him by individual Canadians to evaluate public opinion.⁸³ Howard Green received 600 letters from VOW members while he participated in disarmament negotiations at the United Nations in 1961. He admitted that it "was an unusual volume of opinion" but was impressed by its high quality.⁸⁴ Douglas Harkness, the Minister of Defence in Diefenbaker's government from 1960 to 1963, explained that the Voice of Women and peace groups carried out a campaign against nuclear warheads for Canada. These groups sent hundreds of letters to the Prime Minister who, according to Harkness, was "very

⁸¹ John Diefenbaker, *The Wit and Wisdom of John Diefenbaker*, ed. John A. Munro (Edmonton: Hurtig, 1982.): 94.

⁸² Lyon, *Canada in World Affairs, 1961-63*, Appendix B, 540, 545.
542.

⁸³ John Diefenbaker, February 25, 1970, *The Wit and Wisdom of John Diefenbaker*, ed. John A. Munro (Edmonton: Hurtig, 1982.): 93.

⁸⁴ VOW, *Newsletter*, no. 9-10, March 15, 1961, 48.

prone to give a great deal of importance” to his mail. The Minister of Defence, who valued polls, pointed out, “He didn’t seem to realize that this was an organized campaign and that the letters coming in did not represent the feeling of the majority of the people of Canada to any extent at all.”⁸⁵ These two politicians relied on different sources and reached opposite conclusions about where Canadians stood on nuclear topics. Their conclusions about public opinion, however, raise questions about the techniques used to assess attitudes both qualitatively and quantitatively.

Daniel Robinson studied the Gallup surveys from the time they were introduced in Canada in 1941 until 1945. He explained that these polls promised to advance popular democracy. In reality women, the poor, French Canadians and African Americans were under-represented. Pollsters focused on election forecasting and, therefore, surveyed those most likely to vote. Robinson concluded that the poll results did not reflect the opinions of the general public.⁸⁶ There were other problems inherent in the wording of the questions. The Canadian Peace Research Institute polled Canadians for their views on issues related to war and peace. It strove to avoid the limitations of the Gallup poll’s “yes or no” responses and offered respondents a wider number of choices. It also distinguished between the respondents by age and occupation. The sample was not any larger than the Gallup poll, however, and just 1000 Canadians were questioned.⁸⁷ Keeping in mind their limitations, public opinion surveys supplement the other sources of evidence used in this thesis by showing trends in attitudes toward nuclear issues.

⁸⁵ Diefenbaker, January 28, 1975, *Wit and Wisdom*, ed. Munro, 94; Douglas Harkness in Peter Stursberg, *Diefenbaker: Leadership Lost*, vol. 3. 1962-67. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1976): 25.

⁸⁶ Daniel J. Robinson, *The Measure of Democracy: Polling, Market Research and Public Life, 1930-1945*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999): 7-8.

⁸⁷ Jerome Laulicht and George W. Strong, *In Your Opinion: Causes and Correlates of Foreign Policy Beliefs*, vol. 2, (Clarkson, ON: CPRI, 1968): 7-9.

This study is intended as a comprehensive study of the response to the nuclear threat in Canada between 1945 and 1963. As much as possible disarmament activities and civil defence efforts are examined in all regions across the country including French Canada. However, in these years Canada was very different from the bilingual nation it is today. Canada's flag remained the Union Jack and there was just one French Canadian in the Diefenbaker cabinet. Nuclear disarmament groups, like the Voice of Women, attracted high profile women but their members were primarily Anglo-Saxon in origin and English-speaking.⁸⁸ Nevertheless, the group attracted a number of French Canadian members and these women demanded the opportunity to speak their native tongue in meetings with politicians in the nation's capital.⁸⁹ Just one fifth of the members of Montreal's branch of the CCCRH were French speaking.⁹⁰

Disarmament groups active in the province of Quebec often approached the issue of nuclear weapons with a more ideological and less moderate approach. A flyer printed to advertise a forum set up by the Quebec CND was titled, "Active: Yes! Radioactive: No! Peace and Quebec Independence." Representatives of the Quebec Federation of Labour, the CNTU and the Rassemblement pour l'indépendance Nationale (RIN) considered what independent policy Quebec should adopt on the topics of nuclear arms, NATO and NORAD.⁹¹ The RIN, the forerunner to the Parti Québécois, outlined its views in a Manifesto published in 1960. It demanded national independence for the French Canadian nation. The Manifesto insisted that French Canada deserved to be free to determine its own future after being kept in a weak and inferior state since the time of the

⁸⁸ Ball, "History of the Voice of Women," 140.

⁸⁹ "300 Irate VOW Delegates Demand Canada Voice Stand on Arms," *Globe and Mail*, November, 2, 1962, 13.

⁹⁰ J.I. Gow, "Opinions of French Canadians in Quebec on the Problem of War and Peace, 1945-1960" (Ph.D. diss., Laval University, 1969): 986.

⁹¹ MURA, CCND, Box 18 Activities, File 3 Easter Demonstration, 1962. QCND Flyer, April 18, 1962.

British Conquest. Members of the MDN adopted more radical methods in their protests against nuclear arms. Following the 1963 election, they undertook a 24 hour hunger strike in downtown Montreal.⁹² Thérèse Casgrain seemed to differ in her approach to nuclear issues from other leading figures in the VOW. It is not easy, however, to conclude whether her views were shaped by her experiences as a French Canadian or by her upbringing in a politically active, upper class family. In a speech to a French organization she denounced NORAD and argued that the preparation of nuclear bases in Canada diminished the nation's international prestige. Casgrain's views appeared to verge on support for neutralism and clearly were at odds with the stand of the VOW. She read the group's brief to Howard Green in French.⁹³ The MDN emerged in late 1962 and Casgrain operated within the framework of the predominantly English VOW. The response of French Canadians to the nuclear threat offers a wide area for further study but is not examined in detail in this study.

Anti-nuclear activities were concentrated in those regions of the country where nuclear attack seemed more likely; the large cities of central Canada. The CCND found it difficult to gain support for its petition against nuclear weapons in both the Prairie Provinces and the Maritimes. A CCND delegation, made up of executive members from Montreal, Ottawa and Toronto, travelled to Ottawa in the spring of 1962. It recognized that the brief presented to Diefenbaker did not represent a national effort. McMahon described the delegation as predominantly Anglophone, despite the participation of representatives from the province of Quebec. Efforts to include high profile French

⁹² Simonne Monet Chartrand, *Les Québécoises et le mouvement pacifiste, 1939-1967*, (Montreal: Éditions Écosociété, 1993): 51.

⁹³ Ball, "History of the Voice of Women," 401; "Women's Group Fails to Sway PM," *Globe and Mail*, March 8, 1962, 21.

Canadians in this event, like Pierre Trudeau, had failed.⁹⁴ The sources used for this thesis are weighed in favour of the larger population centres located in central Canada. Toronto and Montreal were the centres of the nuclear disarmament movement and were both designated as high risk targets by civil defence officials. Attempts were made to address the overrepresentation of central Canada whenever possible. The records and newsletters of peace groups provide details of events across the country. The bulletins published by the government's civil defence agency also offered national coverage.

John Diefenbaker recalled the presence of the nuclear threat in the lives of Canadians from 1957 to 1963, "We lived in anticipation of nuclear war."⁹⁵ He suggested that the risk of nuclear attack shaped the attitudes and behaviour of Canadians. "If you're going to brood about the bomb," Janet Berton insisted, "you'll end up wondering if it's even worth while doing the dishes."⁹⁶ Mrs. Berton, a graduate of the University of British Columbia who had worked as a reporter and director of publicity for groups like the Red Cross, became a member of the VOW. The housewife and mother of five was the wife of Pierre Berton, a well-known journalist and regular panellist on Canada's most popular and longest running television program, *Front Page Challenge*. He, too, joined the anti-nuclear cause and supported the CCND and the CPRI. Berton signed a petition against nuclear weapons for Canada organized by Canadian artists, writers and personalities. He even penned protest songs, to the tunes of Christmas carols, for anti-nuclear demonstrations.⁹⁷ Janet Berton pointed to the scale and enormity of the nuclear threat.

She suggested that anxieties about nuclear war could weaken the resolve of Canadians to

⁹⁴ McMahon, "The Politics of Canada's Nuclear Policy, 1957-1963" 273.

⁹⁵ John G. Diefenbaker, *One Canada: The Memoirs of the Right Honourable John G. Diefenbaker*, vol. 2, *The Years of Achievement, 1957-1962*, (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1977): 296.

⁹⁶ Carol Chapman, "How Effective is the Voice of Women?" *Chatelaine*, June 1961, 119.

⁹⁷ MURA CCND, Box 1, File 6, Minutes Board of Directors, 1963, Pierre Berton, "Seven Carols for the Nuclear Age." n.p.; *Globe and Mail*, July 1, 1961, 27.

continue even their most routine day-to-day practices. Was it worthwhile to go on with mundane tasks if the world might end? Janet Berton indicated that the new and unprecedented nuclear threat had the potential to alter life for Canadians.

From 1945 onward the threat to Canada grew. The cold war escalated as the nuclear-armed superpowers competed over their interests and spheres of influence. The consequences of a nuclear war grew as technology advanced and larger bombs and faster methods of delivery became available. As a result of its geography and its close ties to the United States, Canada would be involved in a third world war. No longer was it possible to plan for a war that was similar to the two previous world wars; Canadian territory could become the battlefield of a nuclear war and millions of Canadians its victims. Canada faced an immense threat to its national security and the safety of its population. Elected officials and ordinary people were confronted with the challenge of the cold war and the nuclear bomb. Civil defence officials lobbied Canadians to recognize the threat under which they lived. The nuclear disarmament movement set up in the late fifties attracted the support of concerned citizens interested in an active response to a growing threat. They warned Canadians that they could not survive a nuclear war; disarmament was the only answer.

John Diefenbaker suggested that the nuclear threat formed the attitudes and behaviours of Canadians. Janet Berton indicated that the fear of war could challenge the resolve of the population. Yet, Canadians adjusted to life under the nuclear threat. Politicians, civil defence boosters and nuclear disarmers reported that they confronted the problem of public apathy. They complained that the population did not heed their

warnings.⁹⁸ Diefenbaker expressed dissatisfaction with the level of public preparedness. He questioned what more he could have done to convince the population of the peril under which they lived.⁹⁹ Polls consistently demonstrated that Canadians supported nuclear arms for their military forces but did not rank nuclear issues as a priority. Does the fact that a large percentage of Canadians showed strong support for nuclear arms in the hands of the nation's armed forces suggest that they are not so pacific? Canadians remained confident they could avoid a nuclear attack.¹⁰⁰ They showed greater anxiety during cold war crises but it quickly declined when the emergency passed. The population faced an unprecedented threat to its safety. Even peacetime appeared to pose a danger to the health and welfare of the population. Why, when faced with a significant threat bordered by two superpowers locked in a nuclear arms race, did so little appear to happen outside of the efforts of elected officials, civil defence boosters and anti-nuclear activists?

⁹⁸ Rabbi Asks Students Act for Disarmament," *Globe and Mail*, March 17, 1960, 9; MURA, CCND Box 9 Affiliates – CUCND, YCND, File 19 CUCND- OGANW Publications, "Professor C.B. Macpherson, 'Between Apathy and Paranoia – The Citizen's Nuclear Quandary,' speech for benefit dinner of *Our Generation Against Nuclear War*, University of Toronto, October 18, 1962, 1;" David Lewis, *Peace Center Bulletin*, (Toronto) 1:1 (summer 1963): 3-4 quoted in Gary Moffatt, *History of the Canadian Peace Movement*, (St. Catharines, ON: s.n., 1969): 43-4; *Time*, (Canadian Edition) September 30, 1957, 11; "I.O.D.E. Urges Civil Defence," *Echoes* no 217, (Christmas 1954): 24.

⁹⁹ *Time*, (Canadian Edition) November 10, 1961, 13.

¹⁰⁰ "Most Canadians don't believe nuclear war will break out," *Toronto Daily Star*, February 6, 1963, 5.

Chapter One:

“Your own backyard may be tomorrow’s front line:” Canada, the Cold War and the Atomic Bomb, 1945-1951.

In mid-August 1945 Mackenzie King, the Prime Minister of Canada, hastily organized a press conference to announce the surrender of Japan and the end of the Second World War. He offered a sober pronouncement about VJ-Day, “[N]o day in history... means so much to the people of Canada and the people of the world as today – a day which closes an old order and opens the era of a new one. We must, from this moment on, do all we possibly can for the human brotherhood and bring about an era of peace.”¹ The war-time alliance with the Soviet Union shifted to competition over influence in the postwar world. Canada was drawn into the cold war by its geography and its alliance with the United States. The hopes for peace and friendship between all nations were not realized. Canadians faced new insecurities in the cold war. The world was suddenly dangerous, even for them. How did the government respond to the new threat to the safety of population? Despite emerging world tensions and a weapon capable of unprecedented destruction it reduced defence preparations at the end of the war and reassured the public that Canada would not be the main battlefield in the next war. At the same time officials committed the nation to collective security and, for the first time in peacetime, joined a military alliance. By the early fifties, Canadian military forces were engaged in armed conflict in Asia and had been stationed in Europe to prevent the spread of communism. The government also took steps to protect the home front and prepare the population for an attack involving nuclear weapons. By the late forties, the government warned Canadians of the possibility that their homes, families and

¹ “Today V-Day, Premier King Announces,” *Globe and Mail*, August 15, 1945, 1.

communities could be targets in a third world war. Members of the government of Louis St. Laurent recognized that few would survive a nuclear war. At the same time the Liberal party put its faith in the nuclear deterrent to provide security against the Soviet Union and reassured the public about its security despite the escalation of the cold war and the acceleration of the nuclear arms race.

On August 6, 1945, the United States dropped the first atomic bomb on the Japanese city of Hiroshima. Paul Tibbets, the commander of the plane that delivered the bomb, described the site from the sky, "We turned back to look at Hiroshima. The city was hidden by that awful cloud ... boiling up, mushrooming, terrible and incredibly tall."² The attack killed seventy thousand people instantly. By the end of 1945, another 60 000 died. American authorities confirmed that just 3000 of the victims were military combatants. Over the next five years 70 000 became ill and died from the radiation produced by the bomb. Setsuko Thurlow, a survivor of the Hiroshima bombing and an expert on the Japanese peace movement, described the effects of the blast, heat and radiation produced by the atomic bomb, "The suddenness and totality of the destruction were simply too much for survivors to comprehend at the time." Many thought it was the end of the world. Even those who escaped immediate death from burns faced mysterious, prolonged deaths from radiation.³ When a second atomic bomb was used against the city of Nagasaki on August 9, 70 000 people died instantly. Over the next five years another 70 000 lost their lives from the effects of radiation.⁴

² Ronald Takaki, *Hiroshima: Why America Dropped the Atomic Bomb*, (Boston: Little Brown and Company, 1995): 43.

³ Setsuko Thurlow, "The Atomic Bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki: The Role of Women in the Japanese Peace Movement," in *Women and Peace: theoretical, historical and practical perspectives*, ed. Ruth Roach Pierson (London; New York: Croom Helm, 1987): 225-6.

⁴ *Ibid.*, Takaki, *Hiroshima*, 46-47.

What did Canadians know about the new weapon? News reports announced that the atomic bomb destroyed sixty percent of Hiroshima. The public learned that the city centre looked as if “some giant bulldozer had swept across it.”⁵ Tokyo radio broadcasts declared that “practically all living things, human and animal were literally seared to death.”⁶ A report in November described the Japanese as “still bewildered” by the atomic attacks.⁷ After the secret of the new weapon had been revealed with the attacks on Japan, American officials released details of the first atomic bomb explosion in New Mexico. The public learned that the test, conducted in July 1945, had produced “a great fire ball of smoke and flames three miles across and a blinding silver flash.” It also created a crater 25 feet deep and half a mile across and had turned sand into jade-coloured glass. Officials admitted that one month after the experimental explosion had been conducted high levels of radiation still made it dangerous to spend one day at the test site.⁸ These reports confirmed the unprecedented power of the new weapon.

Nevertheless, Canadians received conflicting reports about the silent killer produced by the new weapon. Two weeks after the bombing, Japanese reports had announced that civilians were still dying from exposure to radiation. An American journalist confirmed that one hundred people died daily from diseases caused by the atomic bomb.⁹ American scientists disagreed about the risks associated with emissions produced by the new weapon. Robert Oppenheimer, the head of the American atomic

⁵ “Atom Bomb Destroys Sixty P.C. of Hiroshima,” *Globe and Mail*, August 8, 1945, 1.

⁶ “Second Atomic Bomb Dropped on Nagasaki,” *Globe and Mail*, August 9, 1945, 1.

⁷ “Rays from Atom Bomb Linger Only Short Time,” *Globe and Mail*, August 9, 1945, 7; “Jap Broadcasts Say Atomic Bomb Still Killing Men,” *Globe and Mail*, August 25, 1945, 1; “Japs Injured in Atom Blast Dying Daily,” *Globe and Mail*, August 23, 1945, 1; “100 Japs Dying Daily From Diseases,” *Globe and Mail*, September 5, 1945, 3; “Japs Still Bewildered by Bombs,” *Globe and Mail*, November 2, 1945, 2.

⁸ “Sand Mile in Diameter Melted by Atomic Bomb,” *Globe and Mail*, August 25, 1945, 5; “Explode Jap Claims Atomic Bomb Proves Tokyo Misrepresents Postexplosion Injuries,” *Globe and Mail*, September 12, 1945, 13.

⁹ “100 Japs Dying,” *Globe and Mail*, September 5, 1945, 3.

research project, who would later campaign against nuclear weapons, assured the public that radioactivity would remain for just a few hours and would then disappear. Dr. Harold Jacobson, another scientist involved in atomic bomb research, warned the public that the rays emitted by nuclear explosions would remain for long periods of times and humans could be exposed to this harmful substance for up to seventy years.¹⁰ The immediate and long-term effects of the new weapon remained unclear.

As Canadians discovered more details about the atomic bomb, C.D. Howe, the Minister of Munitions in the King government, revealed “one of the country’s top war secrets.”¹¹ Canada had participated in the development of the new weapon. Beginning in 1942 Canadian and British scientists had contributed to the atomic research project that had been directed, and largely funded, by the United States. It was Canadian scientists who provided much of the knowledge in explosives, optics and radar while working with a team of British scientists in laboratories set up in Montreal. This group carried out heavy water experiments and began to build a reactor at Chalk River on the Ottawa River, north of Ottawa. By the end of the war, construction on this research site was completed but it was not yet operational. As a result of tight security, however, the Canadian and British researchers had not been granted access to most of the most important information discovered by the Americans.¹² Howe made it known that Canada possessed large deposits of uranium, the rare explosive medium required for the atomic bomb to work. The government announced it had nationalized this resource and was surveying areas in northern Alberta with the hope of locating more of the valuable commodity. Canada had

¹⁰ “Rays from Atom Bomb,” *Globe and Mail*, August 9, 1945, 7.

¹¹ Mackenzie King, House of Commons *Debates*, December 17, 1945, 3633-5

¹² Robert Bothwell and J.L. Granatstein, ed., *The Gouzenko Transcripts: The Evidence Presented to the Kellock-Taschereau Royal Commission of 1946*, (Ottawa: Deneau Publ. & Co. Ltd., 1982): 8.

supplied the United States with uranium for its atomic bomb project and for both of the bombs dropped on Japan.¹³ The revelations about atomic bomb research demonstrated Canada's new international position as a partner of the United States in matters of defence and its links to nuclear weapons.

The details of the new weapon and Canada's role in its development seemed to peak the interest of the public. The Canadian Institute for Public Opinion pointed to the interest in polls conducted on atomic issues: "... [T]here can be no doubt that the subject of atomic energy and the atomic bomb is one of the most popular controversial topics at the present time."¹⁴ The widespread reaction to the atomic bomb was positive. Polls showed 77 percent of those surveyed supported the use of the atomic bomb against Japan, just 12 percent opposed the bombings and 11 percent remained undecided. Residents of Quebec and Canadian women showed slightly less support for the bombings. The CIPO concluded, "[The] Apparent Japanese propaganda line, centring around [sic] the horrendous effects of the atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki has not had much effect on the views of the Canadian public."¹⁵

Canadian communists shared in the jubilation over the defeat of Japan and applauded the use of the atomic bomb. The *Canadian Tribune*, the paper of the Labour-Progressive Party, announced, "Imperial Japan caved in this week under the combined blows of Soviet armies and the terrible atomic bomb explosion which obliterated whole cities with their inhabitants." Headlines in the *Canadian Tribune* proclaimed, "U.S.S.R.,

¹³ Mackenzie King, *Debates*, December 17, 1945, 3632-3; Bothwell and Granatstein, eds., *Gouzenko Transcripts*, 7-8; "Canada Provides Rare Radium for A-Bomb," *Globe and Mail*, August 7, 1945, 13.

¹⁴ Canadian Institute for Public Opinion, *Gallup Poll*, December 5, 1945.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, October 3, 1945. An American *Gallup Poll* showed that 85 percent approved of the use of the new weapon on Japanese cities compared to 10 percent who disapproved. Just 5 percent remained undecided. The majority believed the bomb ended the war quickly and saved lives. In Britain, 21 percent disapproved of the American action. John Minnion and Philip Bolsover, ed., *The CND Story: the first 25 years of CND in the words of the people involved*. (London: Allison & Busby, 1983): 11.

Atom Bomb K.O. Japan Warlords.”¹⁶ The LPP had attacked Canada’s war effort while the Soviet Union was protected from the Germans by their non-aggression pact. However, when the Germans turned on the Soviet Union in 1942, Canadian communists enthusiastically supported Canada’s war effort.¹⁷ As the cold war escalated, however, they would become outspoken critics of the atomic bomb as part of their support for the Soviet Union.

Canadian pacifists stood alone in their opposition to the use of the atomic bomb. The Canadian branch of the international pacifist organization, the Fellowship of Reconciliation (FOR), described the atomic bombings as an “atrocity.” FOR also censured the leaders of the United States for ordering the attack.¹⁸ They evaluated the bombing as a matter of conscience. Most Canadians, on the other hand, viewed the American action within the context of the war. They were satisfied that the war was over and showed little empathy for their enemy. When Canada’s Governor General opened Parliament in September he expressed relief that “the devastating use of the atomic bomb against Japanese cities” brought hostilities to an end. He continued, “Thus the world-encircling conflict, the most terrible of wars in human history, was brought to its close. Not only has victory been complete, it has been won over strongly organized and sinister forces working in combination in an attempt at world conquest and domination.”¹⁹ An editorial in *Saturday Night* magazine described the attack on Hiroshima as “the greatest terror attack of the war.” However, it concluded that its use had been necessary in order

¹⁶ “U.S.S.R., Atom Bomb K.O. Japan Warlords,” *Canadian Tribune*, August 18, 1945, in Norman Penner, *Canadian Communism: the Stalin Years and Beyond*, (Toronto: Metheun Publications, 1988): 207-8.

¹⁷ Reg Whitaker and Steve Hewitt, *Canada and the Cold War*, (Toronto: Lorimer & Co. Ltd, 2003): 32.

¹⁸ The Fellowship of Reconciliation “The Atomic Bomb Demands That War Be Abolished,” in Thomas Socknat, *Witness Against War: Pacifism in Canada, 1900-1945*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987): 128-9.

¹⁹ Throne Speech, House of Commons *Debates*, September 6, 1945, 7.

to end the war quickly; there were few who would choose to save the lives of the Japanese if it meant losing the lives of Canadians instead.²⁰ In the spring of 1945 the Canadian government had begun plans for its military forces once fighting in Europe came to an end. It decided that it would support the American operations in the Pacific theatre and would provide one division composed of men who had been serving in Europe and who agreed to volunteer for service with the Americans.²¹ These plans proved unnecessary, however, when the atomic bomb attacks pushed Japan to surrender. Brian Buckley, who examined the reasons behind Canada's 1945 decision not to develop atomic weapons, explained that the high civilian casualties in the atomic bomb attacks were not unique. He pointed to the significant casualties inflicted in the Allied attacks on Dresden, Germany and Tokyo, Japan.²² At the same time as Canadians learned details about the atomic bomb attacks, press reports also described the Nazis' "studied and ruthless program of extermination" of Europe's Jews. It was estimated at this time that nine out of ten European Jews had lost their lives because of Nazi anti-Semitism.²³ The bombings, therefore, and their cost were evaluated within the context of the war.

Doug O'ram, who studied the attitudes of veterans returning to Canada from the conflict, argued that images of home had sustained them during the war:

By the end of the war, the idea of home ... contained very powerful connotations, ranging from material comfort and renewed relationships to the end of war itself. Underlying it all was a search for stability by a generation that had known nothing

²⁰ "Should We Have Used It?" *Saturday Night*, September 8, 1945, 1.

²¹ Jack Granatstein and Desmond Morton, *Canada and the Two World Wars*, (Toronto: Key Porter Books, 2003): 321.

²² In the attack on Dresden 135 000 civilians died. The firebombing of Tokyo left 83 000 dead and 102 000 injured. Brian Buckley, *Canada's Early Nuclear Policy: fate, chance and character*, (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2000): 35.

²³ "Nazi Effort Wiped Out All But Tenth of Jews," *Hamilton Spectator*, August 25, 1945.

but instability. The home, coming home, and the formation of the family as a point of reference in an unstable world all merged into one vision.²⁴

Since the atomic bomb brought the conflict to an end it is not surprising that most Canadians accepted its use. Postwar reconstruction also took priority over issues related to the atomic bomb. The executive of the Trades and Labour Congress (TLC) expressed its concerns about the economy in a memorandum to Prime Minister King: "The atomic bomb has brought a welcomed early Victory, as well as a crisis in unemployment, which must be dealt with immediately."²⁵ Canadian communists concluded that only "mass layoffs" and "cut backs in war production" weakened the "universal rejoicing" in Canada.²⁶ Canadian churches and the Fellowship of Reconciliation undertook humanitarian projects to help Europeans faced with food and clothing shortages and to aid displaced persons.²⁷ Canadians expressed relief that the hostilities of the war were over but worried about reconstruction both at home and in Europe. By the end of the year surveys showed that economic issues, such as unemployment, re-conversion and rehabilitation, concerned Canadians more than issues related to peace and war.²⁸

Prime Minister King expressed his views on the new weapon in the House of Commons at the end of 1945. He referred to the "appalling destruction of life and

²⁴ Doug Oram, "Canadian Domesticity in the Postwar Era," in *The Veterans Charter and Post-World War II Canada*, ed. Peter Neary and J.L. Granatstein (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1998), 212.

²⁵ "Congress Executive Meeting," *Trades and Labour Congress Journal*, September 1945, 19.

²⁶ "U.S.S.R., Atom Bomb K.O. Japan Warlords," in Penner, *Canadian Communism*, 207-8.

²⁷ In September, the United Church of Canada supported government controls of the economy and asked Canadians to continue to ration and conserve scarce goods. It also increased its support of Red Cross programs in Europe. United Church of Canada, *Record of Proceedings*, 12th General Council, Montreal, September 1946, 382-3. FOR worked with the Quakers to provide blankets, clothing, medicine and food in Europe and Asia and expressed fears about postwar unemployment in North America. Socknat, *Witness Against War*, 284.

²⁸ CIPO, *Gallup Poll*, Late 1945. "What is the most pressing problem facing Canada?" 40 percent said unemployment, 27 percent said rehabilitation, 8 percent said reconversion and 1 percent said peace problems and maintaining world power. John Holmes, *The Shaping of Peace: Canada and the Search for World Order*, vol. 1, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1979): 224.

property” in Hiroshima and Nagasaki.²⁹ He concluded that the nuclear age brought with it opportunities as well as risks: “No discovery, in all time, has equalled in interest that of the release of atomic energy. No discovery has been fraught with possibilities which may prove to be either so baneful or so beneficial to mankind.”³⁰ *Maclean’s* reported that the weapon could be either “the source of inexhaustible wealth” or “a power of inconceivable destruction.”³¹ Canadians learned of plans to harness the power of the atom, not just for military uses, but for peacetime applications. Officials detailed the vast potential of atomic energy and declared it provided a safe and limitless resource.³² Scientists working at the Chalk River site also emphasized the future benefits of its research. Atomic power could provide advances like inexpensive energy and radioactive cancer treatments. Officials reassured the public that neither the atomic bomb nor atomic energy posed a threat to their safety. R.W. Boyle, the director of the physics division of the National Research Council, reassured the public about the nuclear threat. He declared that atomic destruction was unlikely within the lifetime of the present generation. The atomic bomb, he alleged, was no different from other scientific developments. He guaranteed Canadians that neither the effects of the Japanese atomic blasts nor those of the tests carried out in the south western United States would be felt in Canada.³³ Howe explained there was “absolutely no danger” of radioactivity entering the Ottawa River from the Chalk River installation. He pointed out that it would be carefully protected. Both the atomic technology and the names of the Canadian researchers would be kept secret in order to prevent infiltration by enemy agents. Visits to the Chalk River installation would

²⁹ Mackenzie King, House of Commons *Debates*, December 17, 1945, 3632-3.

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ “For Good or For Evil,” *Maclean’s*, September 15, 1945, 1.

³² “Use Atomic Bomb Plant to Help Fight Diseases,” *Globe and Mail*, October 19, 1945, 1.

³³ “Canada Building Plant Near Petawawa Camp to Develop Atom Bomb,” *Globe and Mail*, August 7, 1945, 1; “Can’t Keep Secret of A Bomb, Boyle Convinced,” *Globe and Mail*, October 31, 1945, 15.

also require a pass.³⁴ Researchers at the plant admitted the radioactive materials were not safe enough to be made freely available to Canadians. One researcher joked, "They cannot be sold in toothpaste over a drug counter."³⁵ Atomic energy required tight controls to protect the population. A poll released at the start of 1946 suggested most Canadians, however, believed that the discovery of atomic energy represented the beginning of a new age rather than a sign that the end of the world was near.³⁶

Concerns about the nuclear threat to North America grew even though the United States enjoyed a monopoly of the atomic secret. In September 1945 Igor Gouzenko, a cipher clerk employed in the Russian embassy in Ottawa, attempted to defect with his wife and small child. The sensitive documents in his possession confirmed that a Soviet spy ring was, in fact, operating in Ottawa. Its goal was to gain access to the atomic secret.³⁷ While the Canadian government claimed to be surprised by Gouzenko's revelations the episode provoked mistrust of the Soviets. Fears grew that the tensions between former war-time allies could grow and might end in a third world war. Wartime cooperation appeared to have been temporary.³⁸ News of the Gouzenko case became public in February 1946. Eleven Canadians were convicted of spying or conspiracy and sentenced to serve time in prison.³⁹ According to David Mackenzie, who studied anti-communism in the early postwar period, public attitudes toward the Soviet Union shifted

³⁴ "Sees No Danger Atomic Bomb Plant Will Affect River," *Globe and Mail*, September 26, 1945, 3; "Canada Building Plant," *Globe and Mail*, August 7, 1945, 1.

³⁵ "Use Atom Bomb Plant," *Globe and Mail*, October 19, 1945, 1.

³⁶ CIPO, *Gallup Poll*, January 26, 1946. "Do you think the discovery of atomic energy means the end of the world is coming near, or do you think it is the beginning of a new age?" 8 percent thought the end was near, 64 percent thought the discovery was the beginning of a new age. (7 percent expressed a qualified opinion and 21 percent remained undecided.)

³⁷ David MacKenzie, *Canada's Red Scare, 1945-1957*, Canadian Historical Association Historical Booklet, no. 61, (Ottawa: Canadian Historical Association, 2001): 4-5; Jamie Glazov, *Canadian Policy toward Krushchev's Soviet Union*, (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002): 3; Bothwell and Granatstein, eds., *Gouzenko Transcripts*, 1, 3-4.

³⁸ Mackenzie, *The Red Scare: 1945-1957*, 1.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 7.

“from trust and good-will to fear and suspicion.”⁴⁰ Gouzenko, terrified that the Soviets would retaliate against him for defecting, refused to show his face in public.⁴¹ The image of the faceless, hooded informant did seem to support the view that the biggest threat facing Canada in 1945 was the Soviet Union. Reg Whitaker and Steve Hewitt argued that the Gouzenko defection changed Canada’s position in the cold war and concluded, “Even if it wanted to, Canada could not return to its pre-war isolationism.”⁴² The revelations signalled Canada’s involvement in the cold war. Distrust and suspicion appeared to replace the hopes for peace and international cooperation symbolized with the founding of the United Nations at the end of the war. Signs of a new ideological war emerged.⁴³

The Gouzenko incident took place amidst uncertainty about how the atomic bomb would be controlled. The issue of control intersected with the emerging cold war. Was it possible for friendship between the war-time allies or was competition for influence in the postwar world and an arms race inevitable? On the same day as the attack on Nagasaki took place, American authorities announced that the secret of the atomic bomb would not be given to the Soviet Union.⁴⁴ Tensions had been growing between the two powers even before the end of the war. The Americans had feared that the Russians would take advantage of the devastation produced by the war and expand their influence in Europe.⁴⁵ In November King met with Harry Truman, the American President, and Clement Atlee, the British Prime Minister, to discuss atomic issues. Truman announced, to the surprise of reporters, that the United States still manufactured atomic bombs for experimental purposes. The three leaders signed an agreement on atomic energy under which the

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 15.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 4; Bothwell and Granatstein, eds., *Gouzenko Transcripts*, 8-9.

⁴² Whitaker and Hewitt, *Canada and the Cold War*, 9.

⁴³ Bothwell and Granatstein, eds., *Gouzenko Transcripts*, 8-10.

⁴⁴ “Atomic Bomb Secrets Won’t Be Given Russia,” *Globe and Mail*, August 9, 1945, 1.

⁴⁵ Takaki, *Hiroshima*, 54.

Americans would retain the monopoly of the bomb. Truman defended his decision and promised that he would use the atomic secret for peace not war. Any other course, he warned, would lead to destruction.⁴⁶ A poll found that most Canadians did not blame the American monopoly for the escalation of tensions. A significant number of those surveyed believed that the Soviets already had part of the secret.⁴⁷ In December King announced Canada would not develop its own nuclear weapons. Instead, his government planned to support the control of atomic energy by the United Nations and the investigation into the peaceful uses of the atom.⁴⁸

Robert Oppenheimer had been a physics professor at the University of California before he became the director of the American atomic bomb research program, the Manhattan Project. Unlike the American President and military leaders, Oppenheimer regretted the use of the bomb. He felt “terrible moral scruples” over the deaths at Hiroshima. By the fall of 1945 he called for international control of the new weapon and an end to war.⁴⁹ Atomic scientists popularized the slogan “One World or None.” They viewed the United Nations as the only means to limit the atomic threat. Its supporters argued that the new atomic technology must be governed by a world body or it would

⁴⁶ “Still Making Atomic Bomb, Says Truman,” *Globe and Mail*, November 21, 1945, 1.

⁴⁷ CIPO, *Gallup Poll*, June 8, 1946. “Do you think Russia’s attitude in the past few months has been due mainly to our withholding of the secret of the atomic bomb?” 25 percent said yes, 56 percent said no and 19 percent remained undecided. “Do you think Russia has the formula for the atomic bomb?” 31 percent believed it had the formula, 30 percent believed it had part of the formula, 22 percent did not believe it had formula and 17 percent had no opinion.

⁴⁸ Mackenzie King, House of Commons *Debates*, December 17, 1945, 3635; Lawrence S. Wittner, who examined the world nuclear disarmament movement in his two volume work, *The Struggle Against the Bomb*, argued that King’s statement reduced public concern about nuclear issues. Lawrence S. Wittner, *The Struggle Against the Bomb*, vol. 1, *One World or None: A History of the World Nuclear Disarmament Movement Through 1953* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1993): 100.

⁴⁸ Mackenzie King, House of Commons *Debates*, December 17, 1945, 3635.

⁴⁹ Takaki, *Hiroshima*, 138-40.

destroy the world.⁵⁰ A number of Canadian scientists, like their American counterparts, condemned the American monopoly of the atomic secret. In October R.W. Boyle of the NRC advised the public that the atomic secret could not be kept.⁵¹ Over one hundred British and Canadian scientists employed in atomic research described the new weapon as “the most destructive force known to mankind.” If nations depended on nuclear superiority, they warned, an arms race would result in which “both great and small nations will face sudden destruction.”⁵² The Canadian Association of Scientific Workers (CAsCW) pressured the government to work for “effective international control of the atomic bomb” through the United Nations. It agreed that the secret of the bomb could not be kept from the Soviet Union and believed that no country had the right to monopolize the secret. Paul Dufour, who studied the involvement of scientists in the Gouzenko affair, argued that the organization suffered because the spy revelations contributed to suspicion about the loyalties of Canadian scientists. It did not exert a significant influence and was no longer active by the mid 1950s.⁵³

M.J. Coldwell, the leader of the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation (CCF), remained optimistic that if it was controlled by a world government the atomic bomb could be changed “from an instrument of war into a means of enforcing peace.”⁵⁴ Coldwell, a British immigrant to Western Canada, worked as a schoolteacher before beginning a career in politics. One of the founders of the CCF, he served in Ottawa from 1935 to 1960 and was a delegate to the founding conference of the United Nations in San

⁵⁰ JoAnne Brown, “‘A is for Atom, B is for Bomb’: Civil Defense in American Public Education, 1945-1963,” *Journal of American History* 75 (June 1988): 72-3.

⁵¹ “Can’t keep Secret,” *Globe and Mail*, October 31, 1945, 15.

⁵² Wittner, *The Struggle Against the Bomb*, vol. 1, *One World or None*, 100.

⁵³ “The Atomic Bomb,” *The Canadian Scientist* 1:1 (October 1945): 1. Paul Dufour, “‘Eggheads’ and Espionage: The Gouzenko Affair in Canada,” *Journal of Canadian Studies* 16: 3-4 (Autumn- Winter 1981): 196.

⁵⁴ “Coldwell Urges Control of Bomb,” *Globe and Mail*, August 13, 1945, 4.

Francisco in 1945. Coldwell warned against “a new age of Atomic imperialism.” He suggested that, unless Canada used its uranium supply for peace, the result could be “enslavement or world extinction.”⁵⁵ Coldwell did not believe another war was inevitable and urged Canadians to seek understanding with the Soviet Union.⁵⁶

Rabbi A.L. Feinberg, of the Holy Blossom Temple, also spoke out against the cold war and the consequences of a nuclear arms race. He warned that ‘power politics’ could “plunge the world into suicide.” Feinberg alerted Canadians that a nuclear war could turn the world into “a vast cemetery of carnage and death.”⁵⁷ Feinberg was a colourful character. Disillusioned by his religious role, he left his congregation in New York and pursued a career as an opera singer before taking up his position at Toronto’s Holy Blossom temple. He was active in many causes. As a leader of the Toronto Civil Liberties Association he opposed plans for the expulsion of Japanese Canadians from Canada during the war. Feinberg also fought against religious instruction in public schools and the postwar immigration of Nazis to Canada.⁵⁸

In addition to the warnings provided by concerned individuals Canada’s communists spoke out loudly against the American atomic monopoly. Fred Rose, the only LPP member in the House of Commons and the representative for the riding of Montreal-Cartier, criticized the exclusion of the Soviet Union from the Allied atomic energy agreement.⁵⁹ He expressed his concerns about the maintenance of peace, “It is regrettable that only a few months after the war we should have here a discussion of so

⁵⁵ “Canada’s Uranium Can Keep Peace, Coldwell Says,” *Globe and Mail*, August 22, 1945, 3.

⁵⁶ “Coldwell Sees Understanding with Russians,” *Globe and Mail*, October 4, 1945, 3.

⁵⁷ “Rabbi Deplores Power Politics,” *Globe and Mail*, October 1, 1945, 4; “Rabbi Is Speaker At Commencement,” *Globe and Mail*, November 17, 1945, 4.

⁵⁸ Socknat, *Witness Against War*, 278.

⁵⁹ Buckley, *Canada’s Early Nuclear Policy*, 52.

serious a problem as the prevention of another war.”⁶⁰ Rose’s political career ended abruptly the following year when he was arrested for espionage during the Gouzenko spy scandal and convicted for conspiracy in 1946. Tim Buck, who had been a British immigrant to Canada, worked as a skilled tradesman before becoming the General Secretary of Canada’s communist party in 1929. He served in this position until 1962. Buck argued that the only sure way to protect Canadians would be for the United States to share the atomic bomb with the Soviet Union. Buck cautioned the population that a third world war would mean “devastation and ruin for our country.”⁶¹ Canada, because of its geography and uranium deposits, would become a “northern war base” occupied by foreign armies. It would become the atomic bomb launch site and the “cockpit of World War III.”⁶² He concluded that American ‘Atomic diplomacy’ threatened world peace.⁶³ Buck accused Canada’s government of being involved in a “plot against peace” and for intentionally fuelling anti-Soviet propaganda.⁶⁴ Those warnings provided by communists like Rose and Buck served a clear ideological purpose. From the start of the atomic age this group used the nuclear threat as a political tactic to gain support. The evaluation of the risk to Canada took place against the background of the escalating competition between the United States and the Soviet Union.

New information about the atomic bomb also shaped attitudes toward the risks of the nuclear age. In 1946 the Americans conducted nuclear tests in the Bikini Atoll in the Marshall Islands. Spectators and reporters watched these tests which were conducted on

⁶⁰ Fred Rose, House of Commons *Debates*, December 17, 1945, 3646.

⁶¹ Tim Buck, *For Peace, Progress, Socialism*, Opening Address of LPP 2nd National Convention, Toronto, June 1-5, 1946, (Toronto: Progress Books, 1946): 54.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 52-3.

⁶³ Tim Buck, *Atomic Diplomacy: A Threat to World Peace! Text of Address delivered at Massey Hall, Toronto, November 8, 1945*, (Toronto: Published by the Labor-Progressive Party, 1945): 21.

⁶⁴ Dufour, “‘Eggheads’ and Espionage,” 194.

a fleet of surplus ships anchored off-shore. The bomb, decorated with a photo of Rita Hayworth, a popular American actress, did not fulfill expectations about the new weapon's power. Eyewitnesses complained that the mushroom cloud was only half the size of previous tests. The *Vancouver Sun* concluded that the explosion was "a second-rate show."⁶⁵ Spectators had expected to experience an awesome spectacle including huge winds and tidal waves. The blast did not even sink the entire fleet and its effects seemed unimpressive at first. Nevertheless, the press soon reported that the test proved the silent and invisible dangers of the radiation produced by atomic weapons. Radioactivity from a later explosion in the test series spread over an area of fifty miles beyond the target area. One ship was so contaminated that it was closed to its crew for twenty four hours.⁶⁶ However, the initial impression that the bomb's power had been exaggerated appeared to persist despite evidence of the risks posed by radiation.⁶⁷

By 1947 and 1948 relations between the Soviet Union and the United States deteriorated and international tensions grew. The United States adopted policies designed to prevent the expansion of Soviet influence. The Soviets expanded their influence throughout Eastern Europe. The Americans hoped to reduce the appeal of communism; the Marshall Plan, introduced in 1947, offered European nations financial assistance for postwar reconstruction.⁶⁸ Truman outlined his approach to the communist threat in what became known as the Truman Doctrine. The United States would provide financial support to any free people prepared to fight against communist insurgents. Greece and

⁶⁵ "Blazing Ball of Fire Soars Into Sky From Bikini Blast," *Vancouver Sun*, July 2, 1946, 12; "Atom Bomb Sinks Only 2 Ships; No Big Tidal Wave After Bikini Blast," *Globe and Mail*, July 1, 1946, 1.

⁶⁶ "New Poison Warfare Revealed by A-Bomb," *Vancouver Sun*, August 5, 1946, 1.

⁶⁷ Milton S. Katz, *Ban the Bomb: A History of SANE, the Committee for a SANE Nuclear Policy, 1957-1985*, (New York: Greenwood Press, 1986): 9.

⁶⁸ Whitaker and Hewitt, *Canada and the Cold War*, 60-3.

Turkey received some of the first aid under this plan.⁶⁹ American policy came to be founded on a policy of containment; the spread of Communism had to be stopped locally or else Soviet power would expand around the world. In June 1948 the Soviet Union attempted to seize control of the divided city of Berlin. To accomplish this goal the Soviets cut off land access to those sections of the city governed by France, Britain and the United States and isolated within East Germany. Truman pledged American support to the two million people of West Berlin. For one and a half years the United States and its allies carried out the immense task of providing food, fuel and other necessities to Berlin by plane. Colonel Douglas Harkness, a veteran of the Second World War and the Conservative Party Member of Parliament for a Calgary riding, described the threat of war in 1948 as “ominous” and “imminent.”⁷⁰

At the same time, concerns about communist infiltration at home rose. In the United States anti-communist sentiment and fears about communist infiltration resulted in government action. Anyone who had ever been a member of the communist party at any time risked being blacklisted. In 1947 the United States House Committee on Un-American Activities (HUAC) began its inquiry into communist influence in Hollywood. It responded to fears that communist directors and screen writers used films to spread their ideological message to millions of Americans. Those who were called to testify faced the unpleasant choice of being labelled either a communist or an informant.⁷¹ By the early 1950s, Senator Joseph McCarthy, the Republican representative for West Virginia, made the search for communists in the American government his crusade. He announced that he had a list of over two hundred communists who worked in the United

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 59-60.

⁷⁰ Douglas Harkness, House of Commons, *Debates*, February 28, 1949, 989.

⁷¹ Whitaker and Hewitt, *Canada and the Cold War*, 10.

State Department and accused the Democrat government of being soft on communism.⁷²

Anti-communism became synonymous with McCarthyism.

Even though many Canadians criticized the Americans for a practice they considered similar to witch-hunting, Canadian society experienced the same type of insecurity about communist infiltration. John Diefenbaker, a Conservative Member of Parliament from Saskatchewan, attacked the tactics of McCarthyism. He believed that it was an attempt to give political respectability to the tactic of tarring and feathering the opposition.⁷³ Dan Azoulay, who studied the expulsion of communist women from the CCF, described the late 1940s as the high point of anti-communist activity in Canada.⁷⁴ The government reinforced its national security program. It relied on the Royal Canadian Mounted Police to monitor the actions and beliefs of citizens. The RCMP worked to ensure the loyalty of government employees.⁷⁵ A number of organizations supported anti-communist measures including the Canadian Chamber of Commerce (CCC), the Royal Canadian Legion and the Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire (IODE), a patriotic women's group dedicated to democracy and the British Empire. They warned of a Soviet threat to Canada. Canadian unions experienced divisions as communists and non-communists fought for control. Even the battle to close Toronto's day care programs, originally set up during the war to help working women, took on an anti-communist agenda.⁷⁶

⁷² *Ibid.*, 35.

⁷³ *Ibid.* 79; "Attacks Communism: Don't Don Cloak of Evil Dief Warns," *Globe and Mail*, March 29, 1954, 5; "McCarthy Will Not Visit B.C.," *Vancouver Sun*, March 17, 1954, 1.

⁷⁴ Dan Azoulay, "'Ruthless in a Ladylike Way': CCF Women Confront the Postwar 'Communist Menace,'" *Ontario History* 89:1 (March 1997): 32-3.

⁷⁵ David Mackenzie, *The Red Scare, 1945-1957*, 3.

⁷⁶ Susan Prentice, "Workers, Mothers and Reds: Toronto's Postwar Daycare Fight," *Studies in Political Economy* 30 (Autumn, 1989): 115-16.

Louis St. Laurent, the minister of external affairs in King's government, pledged that Canada would accept its international responsibilities. In early 1947 he proclaimed, "A threat to the liberty of Western Europe is a threat to our own way of life."⁷⁷ Despite fears of communist infiltration and warnings that Canada could not remain isolated from international conflicts, Canada's defences, in fact, remained weak. Robert Bothwell, Ian Drummond and John English pointed out that rearming had not been a priority since demobilization in 1945. They concluded that, by 1948, "Canada was practically disarmed." Military spending and manpower levels fell to a post-war low.⁷⁸

Government planning had continued to be based on the assumption that a third world war would be fought in the same manner as previous wars. St. Laurent insisted Canada was in "no immediate danger."⁷⁹ While Brooke Claxton, the minister of national defence, admitted that geography no longer protected Canada, he reassured the public they were secure. He believed it was unlikely that Canada would be a target in the next war; it would have much the same role as it had had in World War Two.⁸⁰ Claxton explained that the main fighting in the next war would again take place in Europe and Canadian cities would be secondary, rather than primary, targets. He warned against growing anxieties about new types of conflict including 'push-button wars.'⁸¹ Instead, the minister of national defence advised Canadians to remain calm, "We should keep our

⁷⁷ Robert Bothwell, Ian Drummond and John English, *Canada since 1945: power, politics and provincialism*, Rev ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1989): 89.

⁷⁸ Bothwell, Drummond and English, *Canada Since 1945*, 119.

⁷⁹ James Eayrs, *In Defence of Canada*, vol. 3, *Peacemaking and Deterrence* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972): 100.

⁸⁰ Joseph Jockel, *No Boundaries Upstairs: Canada, the United States, and the origins of North American air defence, 1945-1958*, (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1987): 37-8, 41; Eayrs, *In Defence of Canada*, vol. 3, *Peacemaking and Deterrence*, 100.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*

feet on the ground.”⁸² He planned to avoid making speeches about atom bombs, guided missiles, jet-propelled planes or, other things to make people’s flesh creep.⁸³

Lieutenant General Charles Foulkes, the Chief of the General Staff, spoke to the officers of the Army headquarters in early 1948 about the effect of the next war on Canada. He posed the question, “Will we be invaded, will we be bombed, or will we just be frightened to death?” Foulkes was much less optimistic than Claxton in his evaluation of Canada’s fate in the next conflict. He estimated that, either by accident or on purpose, Canada would be attacked by some atomic bombs. He concluded, “The one thing we can be sure about is that there will be destruction, chaos, casualties in the thousands, cities laid waste, essential services destroyed, complete and utter confusion, panic and distress in certain areas in Canada at the beginning of the war.”⁸⁴ Nevertheless, the Chief of the General Staff presented an inspiring portrait of Canadians on the home front in a third world war, “I’m quite sure we will stand up to the bombing just as well perhaps a lot better than the Russians.”⁸⁵ At the same time, Foulkes agreed with Claxton that the chance of attack was not high and referred to fears of a major attack on North America as “sheer nonsense.”⁸⁶ The message regarding the security of Canada was mixed.

The government reintroduced wartime emergency measures in 1948. Major-General F.F. Worthington, appointed Federal Civil Defence Coordinator in November 1948, had worked as a cabin boy and gold prospector before his career in the Canadian

⁸² Eayrs, *In Defence of Canada*, vol. 3, *Peacemaking and Deterrence*, 91.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 95-6.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 100.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 391; 394.

⁸⁶ Walter Goforth, “If Atomic War Comes...” *Maclean’s*, October 15, 1947, 66.

military.⁸⁷ He described the nature of the nuclear threat to Canada. Peacetime civil defence, he explained, “[was] not a thing you want to alarm people about and get them in a flap.” Yet, Ottawa “[was] seriously concerned” about war with Russia, especially air strikes and diversionary attacks. Yet, he explained the risk was low enough that he had no plans for a publicity campaign or a bomb shelter program. Instead, he would focus on planning and organization. Worthington toured European countries with experience of bombing in the last war, discussed the problem with provincial governments and civil defence officials in the United States and received training in England. He began courses for volunteers, prepared guides and labelled potential target areas. The government’s efforts to protect the population from attack pointed to Canada’s growing insecurity. Worthington admitted, however, he had no experience in this area and, at this early stage, “didn’t have a clue.”⁸⁸ The task of assigning responsibility for this daunting task proved immense. Officials focused on assigning responsibility between the three levels of government. One of their most time consuming projects involved making the nation’s fire hydrants uniform so that one fire department could use its hoses in neighbouring communities. About 100 000 dollars was spent per year on civil defence.⁸⁹ Press reports detailed the limited civil defence plans in place by 1950. The nation was still unprepared. Even in Toronto, where more had been done than in other major cities, the results were not encouraging. City authorities remained hopeful an attack would not happen and did

⁸⁷ “A Disaster May Happen,” *Time*, (Canadian Edition) November 8, 1948, 30-1; G.W.L. Nicholson, “The Canadian Militia’s Introduction to Civil Defence Training,” in *Policy by Other Means: Essays in Honour of C.P. Stacey*, ed. Michael Cross and Robert Bothwell (Toronto: Clark and Irwin, 1972): 226.

⁸⁸ “A Disaster May Happen,” *Time*, (Canadian Edition) November 8, 1948, 30-1; Michael Barkway, “Civil Defence: Are We Doing Enough?” *Saturday Night*, June 5, 1951, 9.

⁸⁹ “How Ready Are We In Home Defense?” *Financial Post*, August 12, 1950, 13; August 26, 1950, 1.

not want to alarm the population. They decided, instead, to wait for directions from federal or provincial authorities.⁹⁰

Canada's increased military preparations continued in 1949 when it joined the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). This new alliance would defend North America and Western Europe from communist aggression. Canada pledged itself to collective security and a military contribution to the new alliance. Polls showed a clear majority of Canadians supported NATO because they believed it would make war less likely. The LPP condemned Canada's role in NATO and in Quebec two nationalist newspapers, *Le Devoir* and *Montreal Matin*, believed Canada should remain neutral.⁹¹ When the Soviet Union developed its own atomic bomb that same year the threat of a nuclear attack on North American targets rose. St. Laurent hoped that Soviet membership in the nuclear club might increase the chances of peace. He anticipated that there might be "a new sense of shared responsibility for and an equal interest in agreeing on an effective international control of atomic energy so that this new force can be solely used for peaceful purposes."⁹² Coldwell also greeted the news with optimism, "Now that the Russians at least have the atomic bomb and the monopoly on our side has gone, perhaps there may be greater chances of success in reaching an agreement than there was before; I do not know."⁹³ Polls, on the other hand, showed that a majority of Canadians believed war had become more likely with this development.⁹⁴

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 13.

⁹¹ Gary Moffatt, *History of the Canadian Peace Movement*, (St. Catharines, ON, n.p. 1969): 23-4.

⁹² Louis St. Laurent, House of Commons *Debates*, September 23, 1949, 187.

⁹³ M.J. Coldwell, House of Commons *Debates*, February 20, 1950, 66.

⁹⁴ CIPO, *Gallup Poll*, December 1949. "Does the fact that the Soviet Union has both atomic and hydrogen weapons in its possession made war more or less likely?" 28 percent said war was less likely, 45 percent said war more likely, 17 percent said the chance remained about the same and 10 percent remained undecided or had no opinion.

Even before the Soviet Union developed its own atomic bomb a few Canadians began to call for a ban on the weapon. Pacifists in the Fellowship of Reconciliation warned Canadians they lived on “the slope of volcano.” The time in which to avoid a nuclear catastrophe, they insisted, was short.⁹⁵ The Fellowship of Reconciliation insisted that the atomic bomb be abolished. Its members asked the Canadian government to renounce war, stop the production of atomic weapons and cease its export of uranium. They promoted understanding and friendship between the Soviet Union and Canada. FOR believed disarmament was “the single most important step to preventing another war.” It circulated literature highlighting the dangers of the atomic bomb.⁹⁶ Yet, this group did not focus on nuclear issues after 1945. Instead, it placed priority on protests against cadet training in public schools.⁹⁷ By 1947 FOR had just 300 members and could no longer afford to publish its journal and complained of public apathy. Carlyle King, the leader of the Canadian branch of FOR, a professor and a supporter of the CCF, admitted that FOR’s pacifism failed to match the realities of the atomic age.⁹⁸

By 1948, a group of concerned citizens met in Toronto to set up the Canadian Peace Congress (CdnPC). Members chose the Reverend James Endicott to lead the group. He had served in the First World War and had worked as a United Church of Canada missionary in China. He resigned from the Church in 1946 and created controversy with his vocal support of communist forces in China. The United Church of Canada feared embarrassment because of its association with Endicott and, in 1948, the South York CCF refused to grant him membership. From 1949 to 1979, Endicott would

⁹⁵ “The Challenge of the Atom,” *Reconciliation* [Canada] 2 (December 1945): 1, 2, in Wittner, *The Struggle Against the Bomb*, vol. 1, *One World or None*, 98.

⁹⁶ Socknat, *Witness Against War*, 286-7.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 286.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 288-289.

be banned from entering the United States because of his political beliefs.⁹⁹ Endicott explained that, unlike the nation's leaders who thought about nuclear war only in terms of the enemy, he considered what a nuclear war would mean for average Canadians. Peace, he argued, was more important to the people who would die in a nuclear war, than the politicians who would cause one.¹⁰⁰ The group organized rallies and petitions to speak out against the threat of nuclear war. It labelled the United States as the main threat to world peace. The group's message did not change even after the Soviets became an atomic power. It still maintained the Soviet Union genuinely wanted to ban the bomb. The group developed ties with foreign peace activists like the Reverend Hewlett Johnson, the Dean of Canterbury, nicknamed the 'Red Dean.' Johnson compared what he considered to be the peaceful intentions of the Soviet Union with its "encirclement... by 484 American military bases."¹⁰¹ In an address to a crowd of ten thousand people in Toronto, he alleged that the Soviets threatened neither peace nor the security of the west.¹⁰² Lester Pearson asserted that Johnson's visit made "no contribution to international peace" and only attracted "communists and their friends."¹⁰³ The IODE sent a resolution to the federal government to protest the Red Dean's trip and asked it to deny his entry visa since he supported Russian communism.

The Canadian Congress of Women (CCW) joined the campaign for peace in the early 1950s. Rae Luckock, redirected her efforts from consumer issues as the president of

⁹⁹ Stephen Endicott, *James G. Endicott: Rebel Out of China*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980): 247, 245, 252, 269.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 329.

¹⁰¹ Hewlett Johnson, *The Dean Speaks: for a peaceful world – free from want and fear*, (Toronto: Provisional Committee, Canadian Peace Congress, 1949): 13.

¹⁰² "10, 000 Cheer Red Dean, Says World Wants Peace," *Toronto Daily Star*, May 8, 1950, 8.

¹⁰³ Lester Pearson, House of Commons, *Debates*, April 28, 1950, 1982; NA MG 28 I17 IODE vol 3 file 14 "Anti-Communist Activities, 1948-1966." Gary Moffatt, *History of the Canadian Peace Movement*, 69; Stephen Endicott, *James G. Endicott*, 268-9.

the Housewives Consumer Association, (HCA), to work for peace as the leader of the CCW. Luckock had been an active member of the CCF, and, in 1943, became one of the first women elected to the Ontario Legislature. Luckock did not retain her nomination in 1945 and chose to leave the CCF because the party prohibited its members from participating in the HCA.¹⁰⁴ The United States blacklisted Luckock and a trip to China in 1956 increased suspicion about her political beliefs. Luckock's family denied that she was ever a communist. Mary Endicott, the wife of the CdnPC leader, also joined the CCW. This group spoke out on behalf of the nation's mothers and wives and expressed the belief that the first right of Canadian women was peace. In addition women deserved fair prices and wages, increased family allowance, old age pension and veterans' pension, improved housing and health care and, finally, equal rights for women.¹⁰⁵ The CCW advocated the abolition of atomic weapons and the criminalization of their use. Its members opposed "an insane armaments race." Luckock outlined the CCW's opposition to nuclear war, "We reject the hideous, inhuman idea that says that a Third World War with its atomic horrors is inevitable. We say that there must never be a Third World War!" She stressed the appeal of peace to Canadian mothers, "If Canada's seven million women with one voice declared that our country must firmly tread the road of peace ... there would be no power that could engulf Canada in a Third World War!"¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁴ She lost the nomination "presumably because she supported United Front work with the LPP." Joan Sangster, *Dreams of Equality: Women on the Canadian Left, 1920-1950*, (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1989): 187-8; Michael Dawber, *After You, Agnes: Mrs. Rae Luckock, M.P.P.*, (Tweed, ON: Quinte-Web Press, 1994): 10, 47.

¹⁰⁵ Congress of Canadian Women, *Women on the March... for Freedom, Equality and Peace*, (Toronto: CCW, 1951): 13-14.

¹⁰⁶ CCW, *Women on the March*, 7, 9, 6.

The LPP made peace its number one objective and Communists supported the campaigns of the CdnPC and the CCW.¹⁰⁷ Buck pointed to the threat Canadians faced, “For Canada a third world war would be disastrous indeed. To pretend otherwise would be mischievous nonsense... [It] is Canadians and their homes that will suffer if war is allowed to start. Canada would be an occupied country, the receiving end as well as the launching site for rocket-borne atomic bombs.” The LPP also condemned the “terrifying” atom bomb tests carried out by the “imperialists.”¹⁰⁸ “If the atomic bomb is outlawed today,” the party insisted, “Canadian cities would no longer need to fear the searing, radioactive flash and terrible destruction of super bombs.”¹⁰⁹ The *Canadian Tribune* warned that Canadian cities were “potential Hiroshimas, Nagasakis.”¹¹⁰ Joan Sangster, who studied Canadian women’s participation in left-wing politics, concluded that communist women embraced peace activism, “Unnerved by escalating international tensions, the formation of NATO, and the atomic bomb, Party women responded positively to calls for a vibrant peace lobby.”¹¹¹ Before 1949 peace activism also proved beneficial to Communists. The abolition of the atomic bomb would rob the west of its most powerful weapon against the Soviet Union.

The Canadian peace movement substituted the Stockholm Petition for its own appeal to ban the bomb in 1950. The petition was drafted by delegates of the World Peace Council in 1950, including Canada’s representative, James Endicott. It condemned the atomic bomb as an instrument of aggression and mass extermination and suggested

¹⁰⁷ Buck, *Fight for Peace*, 47.

¹⁰⁸ Tim Buck, *Canada: The Communist Viewpoint*, (Toronto: Progress Books, 1948): 115-116.

¹⁰⁹ *Canadian Tribune*, January 1950, in Gerald Waring, “Movement is Viewed as Mask,” *Montreal Star*, August 19, 1950, 7.

¹¹⁰ Tim Buck, *For Peace, Progress, Socialism*, Opening Address of LPP 2nd National Convention, Toronto, June 1-5, 1946, (Toronto: Progress Books, 1946): 8.

¹¹¹ Sangster, *Dreams of Equality*, 189-91.

that the first government to use the bomb be named a war criminal.¹¹² The CdnPC advertised the petition in the *Canadian Tribune* and relied on a traditional, sentimental argument: “We are asking Canadians to sign up for peace so their children may continue to live in a peaceful Canada.”¹¹³ George Drew, the former premier of Ontario who had become the leader of the federal Conservative party in 1948, was one of the most vocal critics of Endicott and the CdnPC. He rejected peace appeals as Soviet propaganda and accused activists of “spreading lies” and being “entirely misguided.”¹¹⁴ M.J. Coldwell refused to meet anyone believed to have communist ties and also condemned the peace petition. Delegates at the CCF’s 1950 national convention unanimously confirmed their leader’s stand “and designated it ... a document circulated by a communist-front organization.”¹¹⁵ The Sacred Heart League, a lay organization with branches in most Roman Catholic parishes across the province of Quebec, organized its own appeal to counter the influence of the Stockholm petition. It called for peace but demanded that the government ban the distribution of Communist propaganda through the mail. The League was fearful about communist inroads among the villages and towns of rural Quebec after sixty mayors had endorsed the ban-the-bomb petition. Members of one town council, for example, had been “shocked to find out that they had been taken in by a Communist propaganda dodge.” *L’Action Catholique*, a Catholic newspaper, also warned the public that the petition followed the “Commie-line” and was part of “the Reds’ worldwide phony peace campaign.”¹¹⁶ Was it possible to reduce the vulnerability of Canada as the cold war and the threat posed by the Soviet Union escalated? Those who embraced

¹¹² “The Stockholm Appeal, March 19, 1950,” in *The Best of Jim Endicott*, ed. James G. Endicott (Toronto: NC Press, 1982): 55.

¹¹³ Waring, “Movement Is Viewed As Mask for Program of Sabotage,” *Montreal Star*, August 19, 1950, 7.

¹¹⁴ George Drew, House of Commons *Debates*, May 2, 1950, 2079.

¹¹⁵ Whitaker and Marcuse, *Cold War Canada*, 271-2.

¹¹⁶ *Time*, Canadian Edition, July 31, 1950, 13.

Canada's peace campaign believed Canada would be more secure if nuclear weapons were abolished. The government worked to keep the population safe by contributing to collective security and drafting plans to protect the population during a nuclear attack.

In early 1950 Pearson repeated his commitment to fight against communism: "We must take every necessary measure, moral, economic and military, to defend ourselves collectively against aggression from those reactionary forces which have hitherto blocked the road to peace."¹¹⁷ His position would be tested when the cold war broke into open conflict. In June 1950 Communist forces from North Korea, backed by China, invaded democratic South Korea. Communists quickly seized control of the entire Korean peninsula with the exception of a small area in the southeast. The United Nations Security Council condemned North Korea as the aggressor and appealed for a cease-fire. It deployed a peacekeeping force, headed by the United States, to contain the communists. The United Nations and the Americans announced plans to restore the original borders in Korea established at the end of the Second World War.¹¹⁸ The St. Laurent government dramatically increased defence spending and doubled manpower.¹¹⁹ Canada provided a military contribution to hold back the spread of communism in Korea. Twenty five thousand Canadians served in Korea and three hundred lost their lives. J.L. Granatstein, a historian whose research focuses on the Second World War and foreign policy, explained the place of this conflict within the cold war, "In western capitals, the Korean War was seen as part and parcel of a coordinated Moscow-directed scheme for

¹¹⁷ *Time*, (Canadian Edition) March 13, 1950, 27.

¹¹⁸ David J. Bercuson, "Fighting the Defensive Battle on the Jamestown Line: The Canadians in Korea, November 1951," *Canadian Military History* 7:3 (1998): 7; Robert S. Prince, "The Limits of Constraint: Canadian-American Relations and the Korean War, 1950-51," *Journal of Canadian Studies* 27:4 (winter 1992-3): 141-2.

¹¹⁹ Bothwell, Drummond and English, *Canada Since 1945*, 123, 134.

world domination.”¹²⁰ The CCF supported Canada’s entry into the war and pushed for a larger Canadian contingent. Stanley Knowles, the deputy leader, even criticized the government for being too slow in supplying troops.¹²¹

Criticism of the war in Korea remained restricted to those groups involved in the peace campaign. Endicott led a lobby of 200 Peace Congress members on Parliament Hill to demand an end to the Korean War. Drew and Coldwell both denounced the delegation.¹²² Members of the CCW marched for peace on Parliament Hill. They carried signs with slogans like, ‘Let our Children Live,’ ‘Ban the Bomb,’ ‘We Want to Live,’ and ‘We Demand Mediation in Korea.’ Luckock spoke out against Canada’s participation in Korea, “We do not want war with the peoples of China or Korea. Our boys must not be sent 6,000 miles across the Pacific Ocean to fight to uphold despotic dictators.”¹²³ Tim Buck criticized “the Yankee war in Korea.” The LPP opposed Canadian support of the war effort and demanded that the Liberal government ‘Bring our boys home.’ Communists put up posters in cities such as Montreal and Quebec City with the slogan, “No Canadian Lives for the Yankee War in Korea.”¹²⁴ They also praised the victories of North Korean army and the Chinese volunteers.¹²⁵

The conflict in Korea escalated when American forces crossed over the northern border of Korea at the Yalu River and entered China. It was at this point that Chinese

¹²⁰ J.L. Granatstein, “‘Strictly on Its Merits’”: The Conscription Issue in Canada After 1945,” *Queen’s Quarterly* 79:2 (summer 1972): 198.

¹²¹ Some in the left-wing of the CCF criticized the government for its complete support of American foreign policy. Moffatt, *History of the Canadian Peace Movement*, 36; Nancy Knickerbocker, *No plaster saint, the life of Mildred Osterhout Fahrni, 1900-92*, (Vancouver: Talon Books, 2001): 190.

¹²² *Ottawa Citizen*, September 7, 1950, in Endicott, *James G. Endicott*, 283.

¹²³ CCW, *Women on the March*, 7.

¹²⁴ Ronald Williams, “How the Reds Would Trick You With Peace Petition,” *Financial Post*, August 12, 1950, 13.

¹²⁵ Ivan Avakumovic, *The Communist Party in Canada: A History*, (Toronto: McClellan & Stewart, 1975): 184.

troops joined the conflict on the side of North Korea. Late in 1950 as the fighting expanded, President Truman made an off-hand statement to reporters and announced he had not ruled out using atomic bombs in Korean. It appeared that the conflict could become the first nuclear war. Truman's British and Canadian allies, however, expressed concern about this possibility. Prime Minister Atlee immediately travelled from London to Washington to meet with the President. He informed Truman that, since the mission in Korea was a joint mission under the United Nations, the United States could not use the atomic bomb without consultation. Truman qualified his position following this visit and expressed his hope that international conditions would never require the use of the atomic bomb.¹²⁶ Pearson also objected to Truman's unilateral decision to use atomic weapons in Korea. Canada's Secretary of State for External Affairs argued that the atomic bomb generated great anxiety and its use would have great political, military and psychological consequences. Pearson described the atomic bomb as the ultimate weapon. Its value as a deterrent was greatest, he concluded, if it was not used.¹²⁷

The groups who were outspoken in their criticism of nuclear weapons also condemned Truman for suggesting he might use atomic weapons. The members of FOR explained, "We believe that the use of the Atomic bomb at any time or in any place would be an act of utter desperation." Its use represented "the abandonment of all decency and the deliberate choice of death or ruination for millions."¹²⁸ The LPP opposed the

¹²⁶ Buckley, *Canada's Early Nuclear Policy*, 88.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, 89-90. Yet, by early 1951, Pearson described the atomic bomb as a weapon like any other. He declared, "A victim is just as dead whether he is killed by a bayonet or an atom bomb." Endicott, *James G. Endicott*, 285.

¹²⁸ "Canadian F.O.R. and the International Situation, December 1950," in Knickerbocker, *No Plaster Saint*, 190, Wittner, *Struggle Against the Bomb*, vol. 1, *One World or None*, 99.

expansion of the war: “No war with China! No A-Bomb!”¹²⁹ Buck alleged that Truman’s ‘bellicose’ threat “brought mankind to the very brink of a third world war during 1950; a war of atomic horror, aimed at wiping out helpless civilians – men, women and children– the destruction of entire communities, endangering the very existence of civilization.” It was only the pressure from his allies that prevented him from carrying out his threat.¹³⁰ FOR congratulated Pearson and Atlee for “their policy of caution and restraint, and their unwillingness to consent to the use of the Atomic bomb.”¹³¹ However, neither FOR nor the LPP praised Truman for his decision not to use atomic bombs against Chinese troops.¹³² Pearson condemned peace activists and suggested they were “merely bait on the end of a Red hook.” He added, “Through exploiting the fear of war, the communists, under orders from Moscow, then launch “peace offensives” designed to weaken those essential defensive measures which their own aggressive policies make necessary.”¹³³ He accused the peace movement of “exploiting the fear of war.”¹³⁴

Canada moved toward a growing military commitment to collective security. At the same time as thousands of Canadians fought to push back communism in Korea, thousands more were stationed in Germany as part of a permanent infantry brigade under NATO.¹³⁵ Did the attitude toward the nuclear threat change to meet this elevated risk? Armed conflict in Korea forced the government to recognize the threat to Canada. Claxton explained, in 1950, that a raid on Canada was “an actual possibility.” By 1951 he announced that, in the next war, the Soviet Union would likely strike North American

¹²⁹ Leslie Morris, “Back from the Nuclear Brink” *Canadian Tribune*, December 11, 18, 26, 1950, in *Look on Canada, now... Selected writings of Leslie Morris, 1923-1964*, (Toronto: Progress Books, 1970): 99.

¹³⁰ Buck, *Fight for Peace*, 7.

¹³¹ Knickerbocker, *No Plaster Saint*, 190.

¹³² *Ibid.*, 192-3; 196.

¹³³ Lester Pearson, House of Commons, *Debates*, March 3, 1950, 427; May 12, 1952, 1201.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*

¹³⁵ Whitaker and Hewitt, *Canada and the Cold War*, 62.

targets with either atomic or conventional weapons. Claxton still maintained that any attack would be limited because the Soviets would focus on American, rather than Canadian, targets.¹³⁶ The fear of a war involving Canadian territory grew in the early fifties. A CIPO press release described the attitudes to security during the Korean conflict: "While Canadians have displayed no observable 'war hysteria,' recent opinion studies ... have revealed evidence of wide and earnest awareness of the danger to the security of Canada and her allies."¹³⁷ Polls showed that, for the first time during the cold war, Canadians ranked war as the nation's top problem. Canadians were more anxious about their security. Six out of ten Canadians believed a war was likely in the next five years. A clear majority ranked war as the biggest problem Canada faced in 1951. A poll taken the year before had shown that just 4 percent rated war as a priority. Surveys showed that a majority of respondents feared that the Soviets wanted war with the west.¹³⁸ The CIPO showed that a significant number of Canadians feared they would be directly involved in the next war. Just over half remained confident that the fighting would be removed from North America and that Europe would remain the primary battlefield. Nevertheless, 36 percent believed Canada would be attacked and half of this group felt sure that the attack would involve nuclear weapons.¹³⁹ Most remained

¹³⁶ Jockel, *No Boundaries Upstairs*, 41.

¹³⁷ CIPO, *Gallup Poll*, June 1950. "Do you think another war is likely in the next five years, ten years or unlikely?" 60 percent feared another war in five years. January 6, 1951. "What are the greatest problems faced Canada?" 53 percent of those responded that war was the main problem (compared to just 4 percent for the same question the previous year).

¹³⁸ CIPO, *Gallup Poll*, October 1951. "Do you think Russia wants war at this time?" 57 percent responded yes, 22 percent said no, and 21 percent had no opinion.

¹³⁹ CIPO, *Gallup Poll*, May 5, 1951. "Where do you expect a Third World War would be fought, Europe or North America?" 34 percent thought most of the fighting would still be in Europe, 8 percent believed it would spread to North America, 16 percent believed there would be fighting in Canada, "Do you think there is any chance that Canada will be directly attacked by enemy forces in 1951 or do you think there will be no chance at all?" 36 percent thought there was a chance, 50 percent thought there was no chance and 14 percent had no opinion. "Do you think in such an attack atomic bombs would be used by the enemy?" Out

confident about the outcome of such a war if one broke out. A poll found that a clear majority believed the Western countries would win a war against Russia. Canadian perceptions of the Soviet Union also deteriorated as a clear majority of the population expressed their willingness to fight against the Soviets.¹⁴⁰

In addition to the evidence suggested in public opinion surveys, popular magazines like *Maclean's*, pointed to mounting fears of a Russian nuclear attack on Canada. Walter Goforth, a defence scientist who wrote on military strategy after he had retired from the General Staff of the Canadian Army, and Sidney Katz, an assistant editor at *Maclean's* who had served in the RCAF, informed Canadians what would happen, "If the Russians Attack."¹⁴¹ They reported that at least nine Canadian cities would be hit by atomic bombs with a total of 325 000 dead and 425 000 wounded. They claimed that Canadians viewed the risk of nuclear war with "a mixture of fear, apathy and ignorance." However, they concluded, "There is ample evidence that many are deeply worried about the possibility of attack by a foreign enemy using atomic weapons." Despite the growing fears about a war involving Canadian territory, the public did not adopt civil defence procedures. Katz and Goforth explained this paradox, "Perhaps because the possibility of an atomic bomb exploding in our own towns is too horrible to face, most of us are apathetic about taking steps to protect ourselves." In Vancouver when a radio station offered free advice on shelters it received only three enquiries. Katz and Goforth cited polls that showed two thirds of respondents did not feel the government had done enough to instruct them how to protect themselves from attack. One third of those surveyed did

of the 36 percent who said yes there was a chance of enemy attack in 1951, 17 percent believed it would involve atomic bombs, 13 percent believed it would not and 6 percent had no opinion.

¹⁴⁰ CIPO, *Gallup Poll*, January 1952. "In a war between Western countries and Russia, do you think we would win or lose?" In a survey of all of Canada 68 percent believed the west would win compared to 57 percent in French Quebec. Gow, *Opinions of French Quebec*, 897.

¹⁴¹ Walter Goforth, "If the Russians Attack Canada," *Maclean's*, June 15, 1951, 7.

not have any idea what to do in the event of an atomic explosion. Many of the suggestions from the rest were vague and included hiding under a bed or fleeing to the country.¹⁴² Goforth compared the security Canadians felt to the fear south of the border where Americans purchased such items as Atomic Shock Cure, aluminium pyjamas and lead brassieres and girdles.¹⁴³

Civil defence planning was accelerated with the outbreak of hostilities in Korea. Reginald Roy, the biographer of George Pearkes, a Conservative member of parliament, described the limited preparations for a nuclear war in Canada. The program, he explained, "tended to excite little interest, and, had war broken out, the effectiveness of its operations would have been doubtful."¹⁴⁴ The government distributed warning sirens across the country, accelerated its planning against nuclear attack and spent 4 million dollars on civil defence in 1951.¹⁴⁵ It released a series of pamphlets, with titles like *Personal Protection Under Atomic Attack* and *Civil Defence in Schools*, designed to educate Canadians about civil defence procedures. The Department of National Health and Welfare circulated a civil defence pamphlet that urged Canadians to prepare for a nuclear war. It explained that if war broke out:

...there is a strong possibility that Canadian cities, even smaller centres, would be attacked with atomic bombs... Your own backyard may be tomorrow's front line. Today the planes of any possible enemy country can reach every major city in Canada. The hour may not strike this year, next year or ten years from now. But it could strike tomorrow – and we must be ready.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, 9.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁴ Reginald Roy, *For Most Conspicuous Bravery: A Biography of Major General George R. Pearkes*, (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1977): 296.

¹⁴⁵ Michael Barkway, "What's Civil Defence Worth?" *Saturday Night*, June 12, 1951, 8.

¹⁴⁶ Canada, Department of National Health and Welfare, *Civil Defence*, Canada's Health and Welfare, Supplement 24, (Ottawa, 1951): 1.

In addition to outlining the threat the nation faced, the department also tried to educate the public about the effects of an atomic explosion and precautions the individual could take. The blast and flash would produce heat but clothing and buildings offered protection away from the centre of the explosion. Radioactivity, the literature insisted, was much less dangerous than either the blast or heat flash despite what officials referred to as “current myths.” Canadians should prepare a shelter and plan an air-raid drill. In the event of an attack they were instructed to go to a shelter or if they had no warning to immediately drop where they were. If they were outside they should find a low, protected area and inside they should lie against a wall or under strong furniture. They should wait for at least two minutes. They were told that “Speed is essential but calmness is even more important.” Following the blast they were told to decontaminate by changing into clean clothes, destroy all unpackaged food exposed to radioactive dust and wash exposed, airtight containers before consuming.¹⁴⁷ A civil defence convoy, on loan from the American civil defence organization, traveled across Canada in 1952. “Alert Canada” demonstrated “the reality and nature of modern war threats” and instructed the public how to prepare for a nuclear attack. Another convoy, “On Guard Canada,” toured Canada in the fall of 1953 to teach Canadians “the nature and results of atomic attack and how to take the necessary measures for protection.” By the end of 1953, 125 000 Canadians saw these exhibits.¹⁴⁸ The Canadian Pacific Railway provided its vaults below Montreal’s Windsor train station for use as a shelter for up to 6000 people.¹⁴⁹ The construction of a shelter in the Vancouver backyard of Kathleen MacDonald, a housewife and single mother, attracted national media coverage. She was worried about the atomic bomb and

¹⁴⁷ NA MG 28 I17 vol 24, file 5 *Canada’s Health and Welfare*, Supplement.

¹⁴⁸ *Civil Defence Canada*, August 1953 no. 26, 2; *Civil Defence Bulletin*, December 1953, 6.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, no. 1, May 1951, 5.

decided to take the precaution. The shelter had a steel-enforced ceiling, oxygen tanks and a Geiger counter.¹⁵⁰

Despite these signs that Canadians took the threat of nuclear war seriously, a number of city officials cautioned the public about overreacting to the nuclear threat.¹⁵¹ Camille Houde, who was nicknamed “Mr. Montreal,” had served as the city’s mayor for over twenty years beginning in 1928. The federal government had interned Houde during the Second World War because he told French Canadians not to register for the draft. His stance only made him more popular with voters and he resumed his duties as mayor in 1944. Houde urged caution in civil defence plans, “I think everything should be done to avoid creating any impression we are on the verge of a third world war and that our people are becoming panicky.”¹⁵² Lloyd Jackson, the mayor of Hamilton, Ontario and the owner of a profitable bread company “[refused] to be stampeded into any bombproof shelter type of hysteria.”¹⁵³ Marijan Salopek studied the progress in civil defence preparations in western Canada during the Korean War years. She argued that plans for a nuclear war and interest in shelters grew between 1950 and 1953 but that interest in civil defence declined as the threat of war diminished: “By the end of 1952 Western Canadians and the western press had become complacent. The military stalemate in Korea had lessened their fears; the war had not escalated as many had predicted.”¹⁵⁴ By 1953

¹⁵⁰ “Atomic Cave,” *Time*, (Canadian Edition) September 11, 1950, 18.

¹⁵¹ Barkway, “What’s Civil Defence Worth?” *Saturday Night*, June 12, 1951, 8.

¹⁵² “How Ready Are We In Home Defense?” *Financial Post*, August 12, 1950, 13; *Civil Defence Bulletin*, December 1952, 13.

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁴ Marijan Salopek, “Western Canadians and Civil Defence: The Korean War Years, 1950-1953,” *Prairie Forum* 14:1 (1989): 75; 85.

Worthington admitted that civil defence plans had not developed and he concluded, "I'm not really satisfied with the progress made."¹⁵⁵

John G. Diefenbaker, the Progressive Conservative member from Saskatchewan, believed that "when the atomic bomb fell on Japan ... there was an end to an era of man's thinking on life as it had been."¹⁵⁶ In January 1950, the editorial board of *Chatelaine* named the atomic bomb the biggest thing at the start of the new half century. The women's magazine printed an article that recommended Canadians 'Banish Those Atom Bomb Blues.'¹⁵⁷ They were told to concentrate on the potential benefits of the atom rather than its destructive power. The cold war exposed Canada to new dangers. In the late forties the government reassured the public that the risk of a nuclear attack on Canada was not serious. However, it committed Canada's armed forces to the principle of collective security and deployed Canadians to protect Europe and push back the spread of communism in Asia. It also initiated plans designed to protect the population in the event of a nuclear attack on Canadian territory. Officials took steps to prepare for the possibility of war but expressed confidence that it was not likely. Communists and those sympathetic to the Soviet Union dominated the discussion of the nuclear threat in these years. Canada's peace movement blamed the United States for the threat of war and called for a ban on its most effective weapon against the superior conventional forces of the Soviet Union. Canada appeared to be exposed to new risks in the postwar period. Its leaders took steps to protect the population at the same time as they reassured them that they were not vulnerable to a nuclear attack.

¹⁵⁵ "Have We Enough 'Insurance' Against Air Raid?" *Financial Post*, October 3, 1953, 19.

¹⁵⁶ Diefenbaker, House of Commons *Debates*, September 28, 1945, 573-4.

¹⁵⁷ Adele White, "Let's Abolish Those Atom Bomb Blues," *Chatelaine*, January 1950, 7, 53.

Chapter Two:

“Consumes entire cities in one fiery swoop:”

The Hydrogen Bomb, Fallout Fears and the St. Laurent Government, 1952-1956.

The scale of the nuclear threat changed in 1952 when the United States announced it had developed a new and more powerful nuclear weapon. The hydrogen bomb relied on fusion rather than fission, and was hundreds of times more powerful than the bomb that was dropped on Hiroshima. Canadians learned from Dr. O.M. Solandt, the chairman of the Defence Research Board, that huge areas of the country could be destroyed, even larger sections made hazardous by radioactive fallout and millions could be killed in a hydrogen bomb attack.¹ Nuclear weapons tests conducted in 1954 confirmed the power of the hydrogen bomb and highlighted the risks associated with radioactive fallout. At the same time the Liberal government continued to shore up Canada's defences. Together with the United States, it began to fence in the vast undefended Arctic approach to North America. Plans began for the construction of a radar network that would alert the two nations of an impending Soviet air attack. Between 1952 and 1957 the Liberal government recognized the growing costs of a nuclear war. Elected officials detailed the consequences of a future war and expected that Canada would be directly involved in a nuclear conflict. Their blunt warnings replaced the optimistic analysis of the late forties. Elected leaders began to recognize the threat posed by a nuclear war but continued to reassure the public that they were safe. They no longer insisted that Canada was immune from attack but maintained that the unprecedented scale of devastation produced by thermonuclear weapons would, in fact, deter a full-scale war. At the same time concerns about the harmful effects of radioactive fallout grew. While the nuclear tests conducted

¹ “Cream Puffs and H-Bombs,” *Time*, (Canadian Edition) March 14, 1955, 32.

by Canada's allies may have released harmful radiation into the atmosphere, Canada's leaders argued that they also provided a valuable contribution to the military strength of the west. What preparations did the Liberal government make to confront this growing threat? Did they increase their warning about the dangers the population faced and did they step-up their planning to protect the public in the event of attack? How did Canadians receive the message about their increasingly uncertain fates? Did they recognize the hazards and soldier on? Or did they brush off the dangers as unlikely to manifest themselves here?

The scale of the nuclear threat climbed in the early fifties. In 1952 the United States announced it developed a new, more powerful weapon, the hydrogen bomb. The arms race quickened when Britain became an atomic power that same year. George Drew viewed this development in positive terms, "This will have a profound impression on the men in the Kremlin. ... [We] have to need to doubt that this new contribution to the military strength of the democracies is one which may well weigh the scales decisively on the side of peace."² The arms race continued to accelerate when, less than a year later, the Soviets revealed they, too, had developed a hydrogen bomb. Polls showed that Canadians did not become more fearful about the chances of war with advances in the Soviet nuclear arsenal.³

In March 1954 the United States carried out the first public demonstrations of the hydrogen bomb. Its test explosion in the South Pacific established the scale and scope of nuclear destruction. These tests increased anxieties about the radiation released into the

² George Drew, House of Commons *Debates*, March 6, 1952, 157-8.

³ CIPO, *Gallup Poll*, October 31, 1953. "Does the fact that the Soviet Union has both atomic and hydrogen weapons in its possession made war more or less likely?" 20 percent answered that war was less likely, 34 percent believed war was more likely, 35 percent responded that the threat of war remained about the same and 11 percent remained undecided or had no opinion.

atmosphere by nuclear explosions. These experiments challenged the common belief, established at the time of the Bikini tests in 1946, that the size and power of nuclear explosions could be controlled and contained.⁴ The one bomb detonated on March 1 equalled 600 times the power of the bomb dropped on Hiroshima. The energy it released equalled 12 million tons of TNT.⁵ Lester Pearson, who had served as Canada's Secretary of State for External Affairs since 1948, pointed out that this one blast was more destructive than all of the bombs used against Germany and Italy during the last war. Pearson informed Parliament that a mushroom cloud almost twenty miles in height had climbed into the sky, that the explosion had blown a deep hole into the bottom of the Pacific Ocean and that "men... miles away, suffered merely by contact with the effects of the explosion." The atomic bomb used against Hiroshima, responsible for 60 000 deaths, was obsolete.⁶

The thermonuclear explosion turned out to be far more potent than even the American experts had predicted. Furthermore, the radioactive fallout it produced was not contained within the designated test site. The dangerous ashes fell on a Japanese fishing boat and its unsuspecting crew for over two hours. The men immediately began to suffer; their faces and hands were burned and became swollen and black and their hair began to fall out. One of the crew died following his return home. Radioactive ash also fell on an American navy tanker that was carrying almost one hundred men.⁷ Tuna, sold in Japanese markets after the test, set off Geiger counters and confirmed the catastrophic

⁴ "Explosion Out of Control, Eisenhower Acknowledges," *Globe and Mail*, March 25, 1954, 1.

⁵ Scientists measured the strength of atomic bombs in kilotons and the strength of the hydrogen bomb in megatons. "H-Blast Equals 600 Hiroshima Bombs: March 1 Explosion at Bikini Far More Potent Than Expected," *Vancouver Sun*, March 17, 1954, 1.

⁶ Lester B. Pearson, House of Commons *Debates*, March 31, 1954, 3540.

⁷ "'Death Ashes' Burn 23 On Japanese Fishboat," *Vancouver Sun*, March 16, 1954, 1; "U.S. H-Bomb Tests Now Out of Control," *Vancouver Sun*, March 24, 1954, 1.

results of the test explosions. Scientists warned that the “atomic fish” for sale at Japanese markets could kill anyone who stood near it for any longer than one hour.⁸ The Atomic Energy Commission relocated more than two hundred and fifty islanders who “unexpectedly” received doses of radiation from the test.⁹ The American President Dwight D. Eisenhower informed the public that the tests exceeded expectations and admitted that they had gone “out of control.” American officials had miscalculated the scale of the blast with devastating consequences.¹⁰ Around the same time, American civil defence authorities released a publicity film that reinforced the power of the hydrogen bomb. Officials hoped the images of the first hydrogen explosion conducted in 1952 would educate the public about the need for protection against nuclear attack. Instead, the film underlined the strength of the hydrogen bomb as it showed an entire island disappearing into the Pacific Ocean.¹¹ These examples of the unparalleled power of the hydrogen bomb alerted the public to the new dangers they faced. The United States had planned more explosions in this series and had intended to experiment with bombs as much four times as powerful as the one used in the March 1 experiment. However, officials decided not to continue their tests and did not conduct any nuclear experiments until 1955. The power of nuclear weapons as well as the dangers involved in nuclear experiments had become clear. Peacetime could prove to be just as dangerous as periods of full-scale war.

⁸ “H-Bomb Ashes Believed To Have Fallen on Japan,” *Vancouver Sun*, March 22, 1954, 3; “Warning Given On ‘Hot’ Tuna,” *Vancouver Sun*, March 17, 1954, 1; “Deadly Atomic Fish Could Kill Bystander,” *Vancouver Sun*, March 16, 1954, 1; “264 Exposed To Atom Danger In Pacific Tests,” *Globe and Mail*, March 12, 1954, 1.

⁹ “264 Exposed,” *Globe and Mail*, March 12, 1954, 1; “U.S. H-Bomb Tests Now Out of Control,” *Vancouver Sun*, March 24, 1954, 1.

¹⁰ “Explosion Out of Control,” *Globe and Mail*, March 25, 1954, 1.

¹¹ “Movie Shows Island Vanishing in Blast,” *Globe and Mail*, March 27, 1954, 1.

Canadian leaders evaluated the consequences of the American experiments. Pearson expressed concern in the House of Commons saying, "There is no need for me to try to impress upon the house the fearful power of these weapons and the awful responsibility toward all future generations which their recent development imposes on humanity."¹² He called for international control of nuclear weapons guaranteed by a system of inspection.¹³ George Drew, the leader of the Official Opposition, described the hydrogen bomb as "something infinitely ... terrible, so terrible in fact that it staggers the imagination."¹⁴ Representatives of the CCF were the most vocal critics of nuclear weapons in Parliament. M.J. Coldwell explained, "The world is still trying ... to comprehend the tremendous power of the hydrogen bomb." He believed that world opinion was "revolted" by the tests and that the public feared the "dire results of the experiments."¹⁵ The CCF leader urged the government to send representatives to the United States immediately to call on American leaders to cease their experiments in the Pacific Ocean. He pointed to "the alarm that has been caused generally all over the world" from "the peril to the world a new war would bring."¹⁶

However, Brooke Claxton, minister of national defence, informed the public they should not be anxious that the American tests might increase radiation levels in Canada. The amount of fallout detected in Canada, he explained, was not enough to endanger their health.¹⁷ Pearson balanced his concern with reassurances that the tests were necessary. He expressed his belief that the risks would be greater if the Soviet Union was alone in conducting experiments with nuclear weapons. The Secretary of State for External

¹² *Ibid.*, March 25, 1954, 3327.

¹³ *Ibid.*, March 31, 1954, 3540.

¹⁴ George Drew, House of Commons *Debates*, March 26, 1954, 3372.

¹⁵ Coldwell, House of Commons *Debates*, March 20, 1954, 4918.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, March 24, 1954, 3342.

¹⁷ Brooke Claxton, House of Commons *Debates*, April 5, 1954, 3645.

Affairs expressed his faith that the Americans would experiment responsibly and keep radiation at low levels.¹⁸ Drew acknowledged that the American tests demonstrated “how universal the destruction would be if the ultimate madness of war came once again.”

However, he believed that the demonstration of the high cost of nuclear war acted as a deterrent to aggression:

It is a terrifying thing to admit but as we read of the ashes from the hydrogen bomb at Bikini blowing 800 or 900 miles still impregnated with the effect of that explosion, there must be in the minds of the men in the Kremlin, as of anyone else, how universal the destruction would be if the ultimate madness of war came once again.¹⁹

The scale of thermonuclear explosions appeared to serve as a deterrent to a full-scale nuclear conflict. Polls confirmed that a majority of Canadians agreed with the government that the hydrogen bomb actually made war less likely.²⁰ In the midst of the controversy over the American hydrogen bomb tests, Canada’s military prepared to meet Soviet air attacks. The air force practiced defence manoeuvres and authorities discussed the expansion of the radar network.²¹ Canadian troops even practiced the tactics of atomic warfare by training on the ground during American bomb tests in Nevada.²² The threat of massive destruction may have deterred war yet the United States and Canada continued to prepare to fight a nuclear conflict.

As the nuclear threat grew in scale, the Liberal government increased its warnings about the dangers of war in the thermonuclear age. Lester Pearson cautioned Canadians

¹⁸ “CCF Leader Urges Ottawa Ask U.S. To Cancel Further H-Bomb Tests,” *Globe and Mail*, March 26, 1954, 1; “Pearson Says Bomb Means Extinction,” *Vancouver Sun*, March 29, 1954, 3; Pearson, House of Commons *Debates*, March 31, 1954, 3540-1.

¹⁹ Drew, House of Commons *Debates*, March 26, 1954, 3372.

²⁰ CIPO, *Gallup Poll*, July 1954. “Do you think the hydrogen bomb makes the chances of war more likely, less likely or about the same?” 37 percent less likely, 18 percent more likely, 23 percent about the same and 22 percent undecided or no opinion.

²¹ “H-Bomb Developments Spur Overhaul of Defense Plans,” *Vancouver Sun*, March 31, 1954, 2.

²² *Time*, (Canadian Edition) March 14, 1955, 33.

that World War Three threatened the survival of civilization. He offered the sober pronouncement that the hydrogen bomb meant extinction.²³ The DRB had been created in 1947 to replace the work done by Colonel Walter Goforth who had managed the country's defence science program. The board directed establishments involved in defence research and provided financial assistance for university researchers. Solandt was familiar with nuclear topics. In 1948 he had drafted a report on civil defence planning for the DRB. The Liberal government adopted many of his recommendations when it reintroduced the wartime program including the voluntary nature of civil defence. Solandt offered a 'blunt warning' about the "scope and devastation" of hydrogen war for Canadians. Solandt warned that the hydrogen bomb "consumes entire cities in one fiery swoop."²⁴ He informed members of Montreal's Canadian Club that the hydrogen bomb explosions conducted by the Americans in the Pacific had destroyed and damaged everything beyond repair. He went on to forecast the consequences of such an attack on Canadian targets. Homes within a ten mile radius would be destroyed. Radiation would cover thousands of square miles and would travel hundreds of miles downwind. He estimated that about half the population would be killed unless they had protection. He concluded that the hydrogen bomb "transcends all other contemporary problems in importance." Solandt recommended that the build-up of the west's military strength and strong support for NATO could increase the country's security. He also urged Canadians to consider their safety in light of the hydrogen bomb, "As a matter of good sense, the

²³ "Pearson Says Bomb Means Extinction," *Vancouver Sun*, March 29, 1954, 3.

²⁴ "Civil Defense Gets Horror Bomb Data," *Vancouver Sun*, March 29, 1954, 3.

public should support civil defence measures.” The members of the club took his warnings seriously, according to *Time* magazine, because of his “prestige.”²⁵

Would the American nuclear explosions of 1954 help Canada’s struggling civil defence program? *Time* magazine explained, “Last week’s awesome reports of the H-bomb’s power sparked a fresh, slightly apprehensive interest in Canada’s long-neglected Civil Defense organization.”²⁶ In the aftermath of the American tests newspapers like the *Vancouver Sun* printed escape routes and maps showing the devastation residents of the city could expect in a hydrogen bomb attack.²⁷ They were told that a strong defence combined with civil defence measures would increase their safety. Paul Martin, a lawyer who, as the minister of national health and welfare in the Liberal government, was in charge of civil defence plans from 1948 to 1957, warned the public that, for the first time, their homes and families faced a serious threat of attack. He pointed to the vulnerability of Canadians in the thermonuclear age:

No longer can we enjoy the sheltered isolation that was our sure protection in the past ... in the tragic event of any future war, we may be required for the first time to share in defending our own communities, our own families and our own homes against direct enemy attack.²⁸

The Minister of National Health and Welfare urged Canadians to support the country’s civil defence preparations:

The real fact is that the existence of thermonuclear weapons and their possession by the only potential aggressor make civil defence more essential than ever before. There is no cause for any feeling of futility or despair. This is not the time for hysteria but a time to face up maturely to the changed world in which we now find ourselves.²⁹

²⁵ “Cream Puffs and H-Bombs,” *Time*, (Canadian Edition) March 14, 1955, 32-33.

²⁶ *Time*, (Canadian Edition) April 12, 1954, 41.

²⁷ “Terrifying Power of New Bomb,” *Vancouver Sun*, March 26, 1954, 1.

²⁸ *Civil Defence Bulletin*, December 1953, 1-2.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, June 1954, 1-2.

Major General F.F. Worthington, nicknamed 'Fighting Frank' by the media, described the consequences of a hydrogen bomb attack with the intention of increasing support for civil defence. He estimated that the blast would create an area of "complete annihilation" six miles in size and that serious damage would be inflicted beyond the centre of the blast. The immediate radiation would kill everyone instantly in addition to the deaths caused by blast and heat. The residual radiation, he explained, would create a lasting hazard.³⁰

Civil defence planners accelerated their preparations and revaluated the plans made obsolete by the new weapon. The escalation of the nuclear threat involved a paradox; preparations became more important but, at the same time, they appeared more and more difficult. Paul Martin informed the public that blast shelters "won't do anymore."³¹ Canadians could not expect to be protected near ground zero and deadly radioactive fallout would threaten lives for a period of at least two weeks after the initial attack. In order to meet the hydrogen threat officials altered civil defence plans. Authorities began to believe that evacuation was the only way to save the population from the combined effects of blast and fallout. Harvey W. Adams, the director of information services in Martin's department, explained, "The only way to survive is not to be there when it happens. In an H-bomb attack, therefore, a city has two alternatives- evacuate or die." He confirmed that a hydrogen bomb explosion would kill everything within a six mile radius and would kill or injure those within a range of ten miles. Radioactive fallout produced by the blast could kill or injure unprotected people up to 200 miles away.³² Major G.S. Hatton, the Deputy Civil Defence Coordinator, refuted the claims that the evacuation of an entire city in advance of an attack was impossible. If the residents of

³⁰ "Empty City Scheme Answer to H-Bomb," *Vancouver Sun*, March 27, 1954, 3.

³¹ "How We'll Leave Our Cities If an H-Bomb War Threatens," *Financial Post*, October 27, 1956, 16.

³² Harvey W. Adams, "Civil Defence and Your Life," *Saturday Night*, June 11, 1955, 7.

Canada's major cities were not evacuated, he warned, one million Canadians might die, 300 000 could be injured and only 100 000 would escape uninjured.³³

Worthington was extremely passionate about civil defence and frequently battled with the government. He demanded increases in the program's funding so frequently that the government ordered him to stop making speeches.³⁴ The Canadian public, on the other hand, remained apathetic. According to the Canadian edition of *Time* magazine 'Fighting Frank' was "not satisfied" and thought that the country was "too complacent." He concluded that "a lot of Canadians think that most enemy bombers would be heading for the United States anyway." Worthington worked hard to convince the public to take the threat of nuclear war seriously. When asked by reporters why civil defence efforts had met with limited results, he pointed a finger at the House of Commons and blamed the government.³⁵ Martin, too, expressed dissatisfaction with the support for civil defence plans, "The attention given to the protection of our civilian population falls far short of what I conceive to be our collective responsibility in the light of present world unrest."³⁶ Canadians learned from respectable and official sources that they faced a serious threat. Yet, polls showed that the majority of Canadians did not know how to protect themselves during a nuclear attack. One quarter did not have any idea how they could increase their chances of survival. Those who believed they knew how to protect themselves in a nuclear war planned to hide, take cover or find shelter.³⁷ The changing

³³ *Civil Defence Bulletin*, no. 62 (February 1957): 17-18.

³⁴ *Time*, (Canadian Edition) September 30, 1957, 11.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, June 1, 1953, 48.

³⁶ *Civil Defence Bulletin*, December 1953, 4.

³⁷ CIPO, *Gallup Poll*, November 10, 1954. "Suppose we get into a war with Russia. Let's imagine there is an air raid alert in this community, and we have been warned there's a strong chance they'll drop an atom or hydrogen bomb here. What would you do?" 26 percent did not know what to do, 18 percent would go to basement, 16 percent would take cover, 7 percent would leave town, 5 percent would wait for instructions and 4 percent would get out into the open.

nature of the nuclear threat made the response to the dangers of nuclear war more complicated. Even the government found it difficult to establish a civil defence plan that would protect the lives of those living in target areas.

Worthington informed the public of plans for a test evacuation of target cities and increases in funding.³⁸ In June 1954 Canadian civil defence officials joined with their American counterparts to test their preparations for a nuclear attack.³⁹ Vancouver, Edmonton, Winnipeg, Toronto, Windsor, Fort Erie, Montreal and Halifax were the Canadian targets.⁴⁰ Hugh MacLennan, a professor of English at McGill University and an award-winning novelist, poked fun at the mock attack called “Operation Alert.” He could not understand how any civil defence officer could be “agreeably surprised” by an “imaginary explosion” that “killed (hypothetically) sixty thousand Montrealers.” He found it “even more alarming” that the public felt comforted by the test. He concluded that Canadians perceived the bomb to be no greater a threat than the Luftwaffe in the Second World War. MacLennan expressed his concern that exercises like Operation Alert normalized the horror of nuclear war.⁴¹

Even though civil defence planners expressed dissatisfaction and critics like MacLennan questioned the program, civil defence measures did gain support as fears of radiation grew in the aftermath of the 1954 hydrogen bomb tests. The *Toronto Telegram* sponsored the construction of a model hydrogen bomb shelter at Toronto’s city hall. On the first day alone 8000 people viewed the shelter designed to promote civil defence

³⁸“How We’ll Leave Our Cities If an H-Bomb War Threatens,” *Financial Post*, October 27, 1956, 16; “Empty City Scheme Answer to H-Bomb,” *Vancouver Sun*, March 27, 1954, 3.

³⁹ NA IODE, MG 28 I17, Vol 26 Clippings, File 40, Press Clippings, 1920-72, “Saint John Civil Defence Organizations May ‘Help’ Halifax in June Scheme.” Vancouver, Edmonton, Winnipeg, Toronto, Windsor, Fort Erie, Montreal and Halifax were the Canadian targets.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, “Saint John Civil Defence Organizations May ‘Help’ Halifax in June Scheme.”

⁴¹ Hugh MacLennan, “Comic Book Mentality vs The Bomb,” *Saturday Night*, July 24, 1954, 9.

plans. Within one week, nearly 20 000 residents of the city visited the structure which was equipped with two bunk beds, stocks of food and water, a battery-powered radio and games and was camouflaged with three feet of earth. Each visitor received a leaflet complete with diagrams describing the shelter that would house a family for one week.⁴² School officials in several provinces believed that the survival of students could be increased if civil defence precautions were adopted in schools. School children learned “duck and cover” techniques similar to those taught to the army. If they were outside when they saw the dazzling light of a nuclear attack they were told to find cover, lay flat and hide their heads and necks with their arms and clothing.⁴³ By the start of 1954 schools in British Columbia instituted air raid drills and had surveyed areas for shelter. In Manitoba schools, civil defence became part of the curriculum while Alberta’s teachers received training in civil defence measures.⁴⁴ Schools in St. Catherine’s, Ontario introduced ‘Exercise Turtle’ to practice procedures in the event of an attack. School officials explained, “Care must always be taken to avoid alarming and confusing pupils and parents. ... It should be emphasized that this is essentially a safety education programme. It is not based on fear of war or attack, but is designed to educate pupils to be capable of responding sensibly in the event of an emergency.”⁴⁵ The school board claimed that with careful interpretation and regular drills, “a feeling of security has developed rather than a feeling of concern.”⁴⁶ In Ottawa one thousand civil servants evacuated government buildings in a “dry-run” of an atomic attack.⁴⁷ A number of

⁴² *Civil Defence Bulletin*, no. 49, September 1955, 8.

⁴³ Canada, *Civil Defence in Schools*, (Ottawa: Queen’s Printer, 1952): 7-8.

⁴⁴ *Civil Defence Bulletin*, June 1955, 17, August 1955, 19, January 1954, 12, April-May 1954, 11, August 1954, 8-9.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, no. 31, January 1954, 10.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, no. 48, August 1955, 22.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, August 1954, 7.

groups including the Women's Association of the United Church of Canada, the I.O.D.E. and the Catholic Women's League supported civil defence efforts. They expressed their commitment to educate the public about the program and to receive training in civil defence techniques. The Salvation Army also decided to join civil defence plans and dedicated its resources to helping the bereaved in times of crisis and providing its halls for use as temporary feeding halls or sleeping centres in the event of a nuclear attack.⁴⁸

Despite these attempts to make preparations for nuclear war part of everyday life, most Canadians did little to prepare for nuclear war. Lucien Borne, the mayor of Quebec City, rejected civil defence because of the fear it created. He explained, "I think everything should be done to avoid creating any impression we are on the verge of a third world war and that our people are becoming panicky." Officials in Montreal actually decided to disband its civil defence program in 1955. The city council believed that it was a waste of money and questioned whether it was possible to survive the "devastating effects that the Hydrogen and Atomic bombs would have upon the city in the event of enemy attack."⁴⁹ Montreal women's groups and the Quebec Command of the Canadian Legion protested the decision.⁵⁰ Montreal's population remained without a local civil defence program until 1958.⁵¹ Hugh Keenleyside, a diplomat and former ambassador who served as the Director-General of the United Nations Technical Administration, criticized civil defence plans. He expressed his belief that it was not possible to survive a nuclear war, "Civil defence will be completely meaningless in an all-out third world war of hydrogen bombs when everyone will be dead in three or four days or dying more

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, no. 33, March 1954, 3-5.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, March-April, 1955, 13.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, July, 1956 14.

⁵¹ *Federal Civil Defence Bulletin*, no. 73, July-Aug 1958, 15; "Civil Defence Plan Reinstated By City," *Montreal Star*, May 6, 1958.

slowly from the effects of fallout.” Major-General Worthington challenged Keenleyside’s claim and called it “irresponsible.”⁵² Civil defence authorities, too, appeared reckless. In order to add realism to nuclear exercises they made a ten acre site “mildly radioactive” with a sprinkle of lead-wrapped pieces of radioactive metal so that volunteers could practice rescue techniques on simulated victims.⁵³ The debate about whether survival in a nuclear war was possible continued but most Canadians were not moved to take the precautions recommended by supporters of civil defence.

Military planners faced difficult choices. If they used their nuclear arsenal it was likely that the west would be destroyed along with the enemy. However, if they relied on conventional weapons they would likely be forced to surrender since the conventional forces of the Soviet Union were superior to those of NATO.⁵⁴ In 1954, the Americans decided to modify their military strategy and raised the stakes of a nuclear conflict even higher. They announced a new nuclear strategy based on the theory of massive retaliation. Mutual Assured Destruction, or (MAD), guaranteed that if the Soviet Union carried out the first nuclear strike, the United States would respond with a full-scale nuclear war.⁵⁵ Leaders in the United States hoped this strategy would deter war. MAD allowed for cuts in conventional arms and manpower in exchange for an all-or-nothing strategy. It was a much cheaper option than a build-up of conventional weapons.⁵⁶

Eisenhower was concerned that an arms race with the Soviet Union would lead to economic disaster for the United States. At the same time the Soviet threat continued to

⁵² *Civil Defence Bulletin*, no. 60, December 1956, 4.

⁵³ *Time*, Canadian Edition, June 1, 1953, 48.

⁵⁴ Campbell Craig, “The Illogic of Henry Kissenger’s Nuclear Strategy,” *Armed Forces and Society* 29:4 (Summer 2003): 548.

⁵⁵ Thomas Keating and Larry Pratt, *Canada, NATO and the Bomb: The Western Alliance in Crisis*, (Edmonton: Hurtig, 1988): 66.

⁵⁶ Craig, “The Illogic of Henry Kissenger’s Nuclear Strategy,” 548.

grow. The new defence policy, influenced by John Foster Dulles, the Secretary of State, saved money by placing greater priority on nuclear arms in place of more expensive conventional forces.⁵⁷ Lester Pearson offered a warning about the consequences of the new strategy, “We are now reaching, if we have not already reached, a deadlock of mutual deterrence through the certainty of mutual destruction.” He believed that MAD was effective but, could prove to be costly if it failed. The Secretary of States for External Affairs explained, “National security and international peace are becoming merely the probability and the hope that we will get through any year without being blown to bits.” He concluded that there could be “no permanent comfort out of security resting on a balance of terror.”⁵⁸ “The world’s best safeguard against all-out war,” Pearson admitted, “may be the threat of equal and opposite nuclear retaliation.”⁵⁹ Brooke Claxton expressed his view that the possession of both the atomic and hydrogen bombs by the United States was “a powerful deterrent to aggression.” He pointed out that the fear of “this rain of destruction” would lead the other side to “think a good many times” before risking attack.⁶⁰ When Britain announced it planned to develop a hydrogen bomb in 1955, John Diefenbaker expressed his belief that the expansion of the nuclear club would contribute to the deterrent and increase the security of the west.⁶¹

Concern about radiation produced by nuclear tests grew in the aftermath of the March 1954 tests. Pearson announced that Canada supported either a delay or a termination of nuclear tests on the condition that both sides agreed to a system of

⁵⁷ Joseph Jockel, *No Boundaries Upstairs: Canada, the United States, and the origins of North American air defence, 1945-1958*, (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1987): 71, 75-7.

⁵⁸ Pearson, House of Commons *Debates*, August 1, 1956, 6788.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, March 26, 1954, 3372.

⁶⁰ Claxton, House of Commons *Debates*, May 20, 1954, 4904.

⁶¹ John Diefenbaker, House of Commons *Debates*, February 17, 1955, 1236.

inspection and control.⁶² Coldwell asserted that nuclear tests by both sides in the cold war “caus[ed] grave concern among all thinking people.” He appealed to the government to do all it could at the United Nations to bring “these dangerous experiments” to an end.⁶³ George Pearkes, the Conservative representative for Nanaimo, British Columbia, was first elected in 1945. Pearkes supported efforts to keep nations informed about the dangers of thermonuclear explosions. Yet, he urged that caution should be shown in any investigation into the dangers posed by nuclear weapons in order to avoid hysteria.⁶⁴

Concern about the consequences of hydrogen bomb tests and radiation grew outside of political circles. Polls suggested that a slight majority of Canadians supported an end to American nuclear tests. The respondents who opposed the tests pointed to their danger. The group in favour of nuclear tests, on the other hand, viewed them as a necessary preparation for war. They believed that scientific advances in nuclear weapons actually prevented war.⁶⁵ Canadian churches spoke out against hydrogen weapons and called for an end to nuclear testing. In 1954 the United Church of Canada argued that the hydrogen bomb posed a threat to civilization and favoured the prohibition of its use by international agreement. The following year the Anglican Church of Canada called for a ban on the manufacture of nuclear weapons guaranteed by inspection. The church believed disarmament negotiations should continue no matter how futile they seemed.⁶⁶ In 1956, the United Church of Canada condemned large-scale nuclear explosions and

⁶² Pearson, House of Commons *Debates*, January 18, 1956, 249.

⁶³ Coldwell, House of Commons *Debates*, March 24, 1955, 2361.

⁶⁴ Pearkes, House of Commons *Debates*, July 28, 1956, 6615-6.

⁶⁵ CIPO, *Gallup Poll*, July 1955. “Should the U.S. stop its nuclear tests?” 41 percent answered yes, 38 percent answered no and 21 percent remained undecided. The reasons given by those who supported a ban on tests included: 43 percent the radiation produced was bad for civilization and the atmosphere, 10 percent stated they were unnecessary, 8 percent said there was not enough control, 9 percent said they caused international tension.

⁶⁶ United Church of Canada, *16th General Council*, September 1954, 148; Anglican Church of Canada, *19th Session of the General Synod*, 1955, 222.

urged the Canadian government to use its influence to have the tests discontinued. Canada's largest Protestant denomination warned that nuclear weapons could either destroy life on earth or contribute to longer, healthier and fuller lives for all if used for peaceful purposes only.⁶⁷ The churches did not support unilateral disarmament. Rather, they insisted that a test ban be controlled by a system of inspection. They feared that if the Soviets were not forced to comply they would continue their arms program in secret. Despite the fact that disarmament talks began at the United Nations at the end of the Second World War progress had not been made toward an agreement. In fact the process contributed to suspicion on both sides.⁶⁸

Fears about Soviet bomber raids on North American targets compelled the United States and Canada to cooperate in continental defence. In the late 1940s plans began for the erection of a radar system stretching across Canada. While the Americans expanded their Pinetree Line, Canada added new stations to this line on its soil. Further north, along the 54th parallel, Canada constructed the unmanned McGill Fence, later known as the Mid-Canada Line. This radar net designed by the DRB in a Montreal laboratory would detect Soviet bombers and provide the speed and direction, but not the altitude, of planes.⁶⁹ Plane watchers, more than 35 000 of whom were scattered across Canada's northern regions, supplemented the information collected by the radar network. Ordinary people, including trappers, the Inuit, Hudson Bay Company factors and missionaries north of the 55th parallel and farmers, housewives, lighthouse keepers and business executives to its south, watched the sky for signs of enemy bombers and were ready to

⁶⁷ United Church of Canada, *17th General Council*, September 1956, 52.

⁶⁸ Owsram, "Canadian Domesticity in the Postwar Era," 206.

⁶⁹ Jockel, *No Boundaries Upstairs*, 66.

give notice of an attack.⁷⁰ The plans for continental defence had not begun without criticism. A.R.M. Lower, whose popular *Colony to Nation*, written in 1946, presented a nationalist view of the building of Canada, believed that these radar lines would not protect Canada. He argued they would expose the country to greater risks; Canada would be the Belgium of World War Three.⁷¹ By the mid fifties officials decided that a new addition to the series of radar lines was necessary. In 1955 the two nations signed an agreement to erect a radar chain in the Arctic between the 70th and 75th parallels, the Distant Early Warning Line (DEW-Line). It was placed as far north as possible in order to move the battlefield away from Canadian and American population centres.⁷² The construction of the DEW-line suggested the importance of detecting, identifying and tracking enemy planes for the security of North America. The warning system stretched 3000 miles across the far north and provided “around the clock protection against Soviet aircraft.”⁷³ Canadians learned that every day radar systems detected “bogey,” or unidentified planes, most likely Soviet bombers.⁷⁴ The DEW-line signalled the role of Canada’s north in continental defence and reducing the risk of nuclear attack. The two nations began to fence in the vast, unpopulated northern expanses. Both countries hoped to eliminate the undefended approach to North America and to alert their militaries and population of an attack. They also hoped to intercept and destroy Soviet bombers far enough north to save American and Canadian population centres.

⁷⁰ The civilian birdwatchers watched the skies until 1960 when new bombers flew too high and too fast for them to be tracked once they got through the northern radar fence. “End of the Vigil,” *Time*, (Canadian Edition), May 16, 1960, 20.

⁷¹ A.R.M. Lower. “Canada – Next Belgium?” *Maclean’s*, 15 December 1947: 9.

⁷² Jockel, *No Boundaries Upstairs*, 66.

⁷³ *Time*, (Canadian Edition) February 21, 1955, 19.

⁷⁴ “The Naked North,” *Time*, (Canadian Edition) May 23, 1960, 12.

The fear of a heavy American military presence on Canadian territory, especially in the unpopulated north, vied with concerns about the Soviet air threat. The scale of the destruction and the cost of defence meant that Canada could not stand alone against the Soviet Union. It would have to rely on a significant American contribution to ensure its security. Canada moved from the world's fourth military power in 1945 to depend on the United States for its defence.⁷⁵ This reliance involved a paradox. At the same time that Canada found it needed the United States for its defence, the close military ties between the two countries elevated Canada's exposure to attack. The sizeable American presence in Canada's north and the fact that Canadians required the permission of American military personnel to access Canadian territory on the DEW-Line appeared to threaten Canadian sovereignty. Canada's security in the nuclear age intersected with the issue of Canada's relationship with the United States.

At the same time as the cost of a nuclear war climbed with the hydrogen bomb, fears of radiation grew and the Americans adopted an all-or-nothing nuclear strategy, other events encouraged hopes of a thaw in the cold war. The death of Stalin in 1953 and the change in Soviet leadership seemed to offer a chance for improved relations between east and west. By 1956, Nikita Khrushchev, the new Soviet premier, repudiated the tactics of Stalin and exposed the extent of violence and retribution perpetrated under Stalin. A spirit of détente marked the mid fifties. The major powers met to discuss peace and disarmament at the Geneva Conference. President Dwight D. Eisenhower proposed that the Americans and the Soviets exchange blueprints of military establishments and proposed unrestricted aerial reconnaissance over each other's territory. The Soviet Union

⁷⁵ Robert Bothwell, Ian Drummond and John English, *Canada since 1945: power, politics and provincialism*. Rev ed. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1989): 44; Ralph Allen, "Will Dewline Cost Canada its northland?" *Maclean's*, May 26, 1956, 16-17.

ended its ten year occupation of eastern Austria. St. Laurent's Liberal government attempted to blend strength with accommodation in its policy toward the Soviet Union.⁷⁶ Lester Pearson accepted an invitation to visit the Soviet Union and, in 1955, became the first NATO foreign minister to make this trip since the death of Stalin.⁷⁷ Jamie Glazov, who studied Canadian policy towards the Soviet Union, concluded that, despite the growing contact between the two countries, the experience justified Canada's suspicion and distrust of the Soviets. The KGB constantly watched the members of the Canadian delegation and monitored their private conversations. Attempts were made to lure male members of Canada's group into compromising situations with female Soviet operatives. The Soviet hosts, including Khrushchev, tried to ply the Canadians with large amounts of Russian vodka. They even served cognac for breakfast, much to the frustration of Maryon Pearson, who expressed her desire for a more simple breakfast of coffee, orange juice and toast.⁷⁸ During a meal at his home a belligerent Khrushchev threatened his guest, Pearson, about Canada's fate in a third world war. Canada would not be safe, he warned, because "We too have push buttons."⁷⁹ Clearly cold war relations had not thawed completely and tensions and the risk of conflict remained.

The cold war continued to escalate with crises in Europe and the Middle East. In 1956 nationalist communist forces took control of the government in Hungary. The Soviet Union cracked down on the revolt and reasserted its influence using the Soviet Army.⁸⁰ In 1956 when the United States decided not to help fund a new dam on the Nile River, Gamal Abdul Nasser, the Egyptian leader, nationalized the Suez Canal. France,

⁷⁶ Canada entered into an agreement to trade wheat with the Russians. Glazov, *Canadian Policy toward Khrushchev's Soviet Union*, 34, 29.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 39.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 40-1; 44.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 44-5.

⁸⁰ Whitaker and Hewitt, *Canada and the Cold War*, 65.

Israel and Britain retaliated with military force against Egypt and Nasser received support from the Soviet Union. The United States feared that this open conflict would give the Soviet Union an excuse to increase its presence in the region and would distract from Soviet abuses in Hungary. Pearson used his diplomatic and negotiating experience to work for a solution to the growing crisis. His plans for a United Nations peacekeeping force prevented war in the volatile region. In the process he reinforced the Canadian approach to international tensions; the reliance on peacekeeping and negotiation. Pearson may have been awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for his efforts in 1957 but his solution drew some criticism. St. Laurent, his fellow Liberal, as well as Howard Green and John Diefenbaker, members of the official Opposition, believed Canada had turned its back on its allies to work for American interests.⁸¹

The issue of nuclear tests and radiation drew renewed attention by 1957. At the United Nations in early 1957, Canada, together with Japan and Norway, proposed a system to provide advance notice of all hydrogen bomb tests. Pearson explained that, while the plan fell short of disarmament, the government felt it was better to do whatever was possible rather than to do nothing at all in this area. The three nations hoped to limit nuclear tests and believed that the requirement to register nuclear explosions could prevent the contamination of the atmosphere.⁸² The United States tested nuclear weapons in the open while the Soviet Union carried out its experiments in secret. In the spring of 1957 the United States conducted nuclear tests for the first time since 1955. The AEC and the Defence Department experimented with smaller, tactical nuclear arms in Nevada

⁸¹ Bothwell, Drummond and English, *Canada Since 1945*, 127-8, 129.

⁸² "Give Advance Notice of H-Bomb Tests, Canada Plan," *Globe and Mail*, January 22, 1957, 10.

but assured the public they had resumed testing only “to find facts.”⁸³ The public learned from the American Energy Commission that the Soviets had begun to test again early in 1957.⁸⁴

In May 15, 1957 Great Britain carried out its first series of hydrogen bomb tests at the Christmas Islands in the South Pacific. Harold Macmillan, the British Prime Minister, defended the tests and rejected a ban on nuclear weapons. He believed nuclear arms provided security in the cold war, “By itself, banning the bomb would not prevent war. It would merely make it virtually certain that if it came we should lose it.”⁸⁵ The Liberal government supported its ally. Pearson expressed his faith that Britain would keep the radiation levels low and test responsibly. He described Macmillan’s reassurances, that the amount of fallout released was small, as “satisfactory.” Lester Pearson restated his belief in the nuclear deterrent at the time of Britain’s hydrogen bomb tests. As long as the United States possessed the hydrogen bomb, he insisted, the free world would be safe from attack. He explained, “I think it is true to say the immediate sense of danger has diminished somewhat.... A hydrogen war means universal destruction.” Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev understood the power of the hydrogen bomb; Pearson believed he would have more sense than to start World War Three.⁸⁶

Protests greeted the tests and, within one month, the British announced they would not continue with rest of the tests in the series. British women’s groups condemned the

⁸³ “Russia Resumes Nuclear Tests, AEC Reports,” *Globe and Mail*, January 21, 1957; “Spring Nuclear Tests to Find Facts For US,” *Globe and Mail*, January 25, 1957, 3.

⁸⁴ Prime Minister Louis St. Laurent, House of Commons *Debates*, February 17, 1957, 1319.

⁸⁵ “H-Bomb Makes U.K. Equal of U.S., Soviet,” *Montreal Star*, May 16, 1957, 1; “H-Test Held Aid to UK,” *Montreal Star*, May 16, 1957, 1.

⁸⁶ “H-Bomb Bar to War, Says Pearson,” *Montreal Star*, May 16, 1957, 17.

explosions as a threat to the health of their children.⁸⁷ Labour MPs joined with labour, peace and church groups to form the Hydrogen Bomb National Campaign. One million people signed the group's petition for disarmament.⁸⁸ Linus Pauling, a Nobel Prize winning chemist, collected the signatures of two thousand other American scientists in a petition against nuclear tests. They claimed that genetic mutations and cancer cases had risen significantly because of the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and all nuclear tests since 1945.⁸⁹ Pope Pius XII spoke out on the threats of the cold war and nuclear weapons in 1957. He called for an end to the tests because of the tremendous suffering the explosions caused. Later in the year he asked Catholics to take a strong stand against communism.⁹⁰ In the midst of the controversy surrounding the British tests, the United States announced it planned to permanently resettle the residents of the Pacific islands of Bikini and Eniwetok as a result of the radiation produced by American nuclear tests in 1954.⁹¹ In the United States the National Committee for a Sane Nuclear Policy or SANE, founded in 1957, campaigned against nuclear tests. Its members hoped to raise awareness about the threat posed by radiation and announced, in a full-page advertisement in the *New York Times*, "We Are Facing A Danger Unlike Any Danger That Has Ever Existed."⁹²

⁸⁷ Gary Moffatt, *History of the Canadian Peace Movement until 1969*, (St. Catherines, ON: Grapevine Press, 1969): 86.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 12-13.

⁸⁹ "2000 U.S. Scientists Urge H-Test Ban," *Montreal Star*, June 3, 1957, 1; "Japanese Stage New Protests," *Montreal Star*, June 3, 1957, 1; "British Disturbed over H-Bomb Tests," *Montreal Star*, June 3, 1957, 13.

⁹⁰ "New Papal Plea to Halt A-Tests Rebuffs Cherwell," *Globe and Mail*, May 24, 1957, 2; "Tireless Fight Against Reds Asked by Pope," *Globe and Mail*, October 7, 1957, 9.

⁹¹ "U.S. Resettles Islanders," *Montreal Star*, May 29, 1957.

⁹² Melvin, Katz, *Ban the Bomb: A History of SANE, the Committee for a Sane Nuclear Policy, 1957-1985*. (Westport, Conn: Greenwood Press, 1986): xi

Prime Minister St. Laurent informed the House of Commons that his government would not ask Britain to suspend its nuclear program. He explained, "We in Canada are to a large extent dependent upon the nuclear arsenals of the United Kingdom and the United States to provide a deterrent to aggression. It is in our interest that the deterrent be as effective as it can be and this is obviously the essential purpose of these tests." He added that the government was, "very much alive to the possible hazards of radiation generated by nuclear explosions and this matter [was] under constant surveillance." Even Coldwell outlined the position of his party on nuclear tests, "We in the CCF and all thinking people feel where there is so much doubt, no chance should be taken. Accordingly we have made appeal after appeal to the Canadian government to press the great powers to stop the tests; at least until a UN committee can determine the true degree of danger." Coldwell reported that scientists did not agree about the hazards of radiation. Some experts believed the radiation levels were already hazardous while others believed the threat was distant. Coldwell proposed that the government should support an international conference of scientists to discuss the dangers of thermonuclear war.⁹³ Even though he opposed nuclear tests, the leader of the CCF did not censure Britain for its action since other nations conducted their own nuclear experiments.⁹⁴

Colin Cameron, a CCF representative from British Columbia, was perhaps the most outspoken on nuclear issues. He rejected the argument that nuclear tests had a military purpose. He challenged the claims that the tests were fact-finding experiments and accused the Americans and Soviets of "using these explosions as part of the cold

⁹³ Coldwell, House of Commons *Debates*, November 12, 1957, 989; "Smaller Nations Must Seek End Of Nuclear Race," *Globe and Mail*, May 18, 1957, 10; "Coldwell Would Ban Bomb," *Montreal Star*, May 18, 1957, 4.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

war.” He argued that the Canadian government had a responsibility “to speak openly and bluntly about this dangerous criminal folly.” Cameron supported a unilateral end to nuclear testing. If Canada convinced its allies to stop testing, he insisted, the Soviets would “be left in a very embarrassing and unfortunate position with regard to those peoples in the world, who, like ourselves are viewing these tests with dismay and anxiety; the people of the uncommitted areas of the world.”⁹⁵ In June, two United Church of Canada groups, the Toronto Conference and the Women’s Missionary Society, passed resolutions against nuclear tests. The Quebec-Ontario Convention of the Baptist Church of Canada supported further study on the effects of radiation and urged the Canadian government to seek an agreement to ban nuclear weapons with other nations.⁹⁶ The peace movement, active in Canada between 1948 and the end of the Korean War, was less outspoken in this period.

Eisenhower announced his support for a ban on hydrogen bomb tests on the condition that the ban included inspection.⁹⁷ The American President, however, created controversy when he suggested that the scientists who spoke out against nuclear tests were “friends” of the Soviet Union and wanted to create fears about nuclear weapons. He pointed out that American and British tests drew stronger condemnation than those conducted by the Soviet Union.⁹⁸ American polls showed a sharp rise in opposition to nuclear tests. A majority of Americans supported an end to nuclear tests if both sides

⁹⁵ Colin Cameron, House of Commons *Debates*, April 12, 1957, 3496-7.

⁹⁶ “United Church Opposes Tests,” *Montreal Star*, June 4, 1957; “United WMS Would Ban Nuclear Tests,” *Globe and Mail*, June 5, 1957, 13; “Baptists Urge Nations Renounce A-Weapons,” *Globe and Mail*, June 12, 1957, 4.

⁹⁷ “Eisenhower Favors Total A-Test Ban,” *Montreal Star*, June 5, 1957, 1.

⁹⁸ “Ike Softens Charge on H-Test Furore,” *Montreal Star*, June 5, 1957, 1.

agreed to stop.⁹⁹ In May the Soviets supported a ban on nuclear tests but would not unilaterally disarm. The Americans responded with an announcement that they supported a ban on nuclear tests in the Arctic.¹⁰⁰

In the mid to late fifties Canadian politicians, scientific authorities and civil defence officials detailed the escalating scale and the horrifying consequences of a nuclear war. How did the St. Laurent government cope with the nuclear threat? Did Canadian society adjust to meet the dual threats of communism and nuclear attack? Canada took on a new role in the postwar period. It contributed to research in atomic energy, participated in new defence arrangements and enjoyed a seat at the United Nations. Under the Liberal government it adopted a role of middle power and strove to be an “honest broker” in international circles. It faced the difficult challenge of dealing with the Soviet Union while confronting the nuclear threat. Situated between the superpowers and threatened by attack the government responded to the real and grave danger. It prepared to defend the population with civil defence measures, continental defence systems and a military contribution to collective security. It warned Canadians that civilization might not survive a nuclear war. Canadians learned that their lives were threatened and that their homes and communities could be the battlefield of a third world war. However, the Liberal government reassured Canadians that a strong defence and the nuclear deterrent prevented war. Even though nuclear tests released large quantities of hazardous radiation into the atmosphere Canadian politicians assuaged the concerns of

⁹⁹ In May 1957, 63 percent of Americans surveyed wanted the stop to tests if Russia agreed to stop testing too. The results showed a rise in opposition to tests. The results of a 1954 survey on tests showed that just 20 percent supported an end to the explosions. In the fall of 1956 only 24 percent of Americans supported Adlai Stevenson, the Democratic Party candidate for president, in his proposal to call off all nuclear tests. “Should U.S. Call Halt on More H-Bomb Tests?” *Montreal Star*, May 29, 1957, 11.

¹⁰⁰ Barkway, “Civil Defence: Are We Doing Enough?” *Saturday Night*, June 5, 1951, 9; *Time*, (Canadian Edition) June 1, 1953, 48; “Terrifying Power of New Bomb,” *Vancouver Sun*, March 26, 1954, 1.

Canada's Protestant dominations. They explained that the tests strengthened the defence against the Soviet Union. At the same time as the public learned of the unprecedented power of the hydrogen bomb, Lester Pearson warned that the arms race would continue to escalate as both sides began the "frantic search" for a long-range missile. In 1956 the *Monetary Times* predicted that missiles would be so fast they could travel from Montreal to Vancouver in seconds.¹⁰¹ Canadians faced an escalating nuclear threat as nuclear technology continued to advance in a rapid manner.

¹⁰¹ "Guided Missiles Are Big Thing Now," *Monetary Times*, May 1956.

Chapter Three:

“Canada Goes Nuclear?”

John Diefenbaker, the Bomarc and the Nuclear Disarmament Movement,
1957-1960.

In 1957 John Diefenbaker became Canada's thirteenth prime minister in a surprise victory over the Liberal party led by Louis St. Laurent. Polls showed the Liberals had a commanding lead right up to the vote and *Maclean's* magazine even prepared a headline announcing a Liberal victory. For the first time in twenty two years Canada had a Conservative government. Diefenbaker was the first prime minister of non-French and non-English descent.¹ The lawyer from Saskatchewan appealed to voters with his populist oratory, his anti-communist message and a national vision that included plans for northern development and a Canadian Bill of Rights. Canadians were ready for a change in leadership.² The Conservative government, elected with a minority, confronted the complex task of providing defence in the nuclear age. The cold war escalated and the threat of a nuclear war grew in the Diefenbaker years. Between 1957 and 1963, the Prime Minister and other cabinet members provided more graphic accounts of what a nuclear attack would mean for Canadians. Diefenbaker strove to improve Canada's defence. He supported civil defence measures and informed the population of steps they should take in order to meet the threat. Cabinet ministers, military authorities and scientists shared the Prime Minister's evaluation of the nuclear threat and described the consequences of a nuclear attack for Canadians. From 1957 to 1959 Canada prepared for an attack on North

¹ Gallup Poll, *Montreal Star*, June 8, 1957, 7; Peter C. Newman, *Renegade in Power: The Diefenbaker Years*, (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1963): 57.

² *Ibid.*, 177, 186; John G. Diefenbaker, *One Canada: The Memoirs of the Right Honourable John G. Diefenbaker*. Vol. 2, *The Years of Achievement, 1957-1962*, (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1976): 11, 25, 31-2; J.L. Granatstein, "Hail to the Chief: The Incomparable Campaigner Who Squandered a Historic Majority," *Policy Options*, (June-July 2003): 58-9.

America. What factors were responsible for Diefenbaker's efforts to strengthen Canada's defence? Did his warnings about its fate and his policies move the public to act?

A number of developments in Canadian defence planning quickly followed Diefenbaker's election. In August 1957 the Soviets tested an intercontinental missile and in October they successfully launched Sputnik, a satellite, into space. These technological feats introduced the missile age and caused alarm in North America. John English, in his biography of Lester Pearson, described Sputnik's launch as "clear evidence that Soviet intercontinental ballistic missiles could rain their warheads upon North America."³ While the west blamed espionage for previous Soviet nuclear achievements, fears of Soviet scientific and technological superiority took hold after Sputnik. Canadians expressed concern about an educational lag.⁴ Statistics showed that in math and science education both Canada and the United States trailed the Soviet Union. Concern grew that the nations would not be adequately prepared to fight against the Soviets.⁵ Doris Anderson, the editor of *Chatelaine* magazines, wrote, "Ever since Sputnik ... thrust us into the Space Age, we have been desperately concerned about our scientific strength compared with Russia." She proposed that Canada should follow the example of the Soviet Union and educate more women in maths and sciences.⁶

From the start members of the Conservative government highlighted the nuclear threat to Canada. In 1957, Major-General George Pearkes, Canada's new minister of national defence, presented a "gloomy" picture of Canada's fate in a future war. He had

³ John English, *The Life of Lester Pearson*, vol. 2, *The Worldly Years, 1949-1972* (Toronto: Lester & Orpen Dennys, 1992): 225.

⁴ John Saywell, ed. *Canadian Annual Review*, (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1960): 247.

⁵ Christina McCall, "How 'Soft' Are Our Schools?" *Chatelaine*, September 1959, 34-35; Raymond Varela, "Technical Education in U.S.S.R.: what's behind the Russian boast?" *Canadian Business* March 1958, 45.

⁶ Doris Anderson, "We Need More Women Scientists," *Chatelaine*, April 1959, 16.

worked as a farmer and a Mountie before he enlisted in the army in 1914. Awarded the Victoria Cross at the battle of Passchendaele, he went on to command the 1st Canadian Division in the Second World War. A respected and well-liked politician, Pearkes was known to empty Parliament with his slow, mumbled and cliché-filled speeches.⁷ The Minister of National Defence alerted the public to the fact that Canada would be a battlefield in the next war and Canadians could expect attacks on their homes. He underlined the importance of civil defence and encouraged Canadians to prepare to survive a nuclear war.⁸

The Conservative government dedicated more resources to the protection of the population in the nuclear age. To a large extent Diefenbaker simply implemented plans inherited from the previous government. In 1957 construction of the DEW-line wrapped up and the enormous American investment on Canadian soil was complete. *Time* magazine described its contribution to national security, “For the first time, Canada and the U.S. can feel reasonably secure against a Pearl Harbour attack from the North- the shortest and until now least guarded approach from Russia.”⁹ The government strengthened continental defence and signed the North American Air Defence (NORAD) agreement in 1957. The new alliance united the American and Canadian military in a joint continental air defence system. Many feared that Canada’s close military ties with its North American neighbour exposed it to greater risks. In response to the formation of NORAD, the Soviet Union warned Canada of the “special danger” it faced in a military

⁷ Reginald Roy, *For Most Conspicuous Bravery: A Biography of Major General George R. Pearkes*, (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1977): 298; “Old Soldier,” *Time*, (Canadian Edition) January 18, 1960, 8.

⁸ Pearkes to Military Engineers Association of Canada Conference, October 1957, in G.W.L. Nicholson, “The Canadian Militia’s Introduction to Civil Defence Training,” in *Policy by Other Means: Essays in Honour of C.P. Stacey*, ed. Michael Cross and Robert Bothwell (Toronto: Clark & Irwin, 1972): 234.

⁹ *Time*, (Canadian Edition) August 12, 1957, 9.

conflict. Diefenbaker provided a strong response in a message to Khrushchev. He asserted Canada's right to protect itself and stated that continental defence was seen as necessary.¹⁰ Canadians also learned that NORAD might increase the chance that a nuclear accident could take place over Canadian territory. American planes, armed with nuclear warheads, had crashed into residential areas in the United States during training flights. Canadians worried that flights over Canadian territory would pose similar risks to Canadian cities like Montreal, Toronto or Winnipeg.¹¹ Preparations for war continued to make peacetime seem to be as dangerous as times of actual war.

By the late fifties American military strategists began to propose a strategy based on limited nuclear war in place of MAD. Henry Kissinger popularized the idea of smaller, tactical nuclear weapons in his 1957 bestselling book, *Nuclear Weapons and Foreign Policy*. Kissinger, a political scientist at Harvard University, served as an advisor in each White House Administration from John Kennedy to Gerald Ford. As the National Security Advisor for Richard Nixon, he shared the Nobel Peace Prize for negotiating the end of the Vietnam War. He rejected the strategy of MAD because any war between the Soviets and Americans would result in total nuclear devastation. Campbell Craig examined the nuclear strategy of the United States and concluded that the public was dissatisfied with Eisenhower's "all-or-nothing" policy. Planners faced the choice between two equally undesirable results, defeat or full-scale nuclear war.¹² Kissinger believed the use of tactical nuclear weapons "would keep the world from being

¹⁰ Jamie Glazov, *Canadian Policy toward Khrushchev's Soviet Union*. (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002): 83-4.

¹¹ "A-Bomb Error Over Canada: What Danger?" *Financial Post*, March 22, 1958, 3.

¹² Craig Campbell, "The Illogic of Henry Kissinger's Nuclear Strategy," *Armed Forces and Society* 29:4 (Summer 2003): 552, 564.

turned into radioactive rubble.”¹³ Kissinger ignored the fact that even a limited nuclear war would kill millions in Europe. Craig explained that Kissinger’s theories became popular because he avoided making hard choices; he never explained how a limited war would be prevented from escalating.¹⁴ Strategies about how to wage a future war proved difficult and involved unpleasant choices. By 1957 NATO adopted a policy based on tactical nuclear weapons. Diefenbaker committed Canadian forces stationed in Europe to a role in a nuclear conflict on the European battlefield.¹⁵

At the same time as American leaders evaluated their nuclear strategy and Diefenbaker strengthened Canada’s defence contribution, cold war tensions continued to grow and contributed to fears about radiation and the effects of nuclear war. Nevil Shute’s 1957 novel, *On the Beach*, presented a frightening portrait of the consequences of nuclear war. At the start of the story the reader learns that a full-scale nuclear war had taken place in the northern hemisphere and killed everyone. Residents of the southern hemisphere were spared from the deadly radiation for a year and a half. The story examines their actions and attitudes as the radioactive cloud nears them. Faced with the knowledge that they will become sick and die, they take poison pills supplied by the government rather than face death by radiation. In 1959 Stanley Kramer, the director of *High Noon*, *The Wild One* and *Guess Who’s Coming to Dinner*, directed a film based on the popular book. It starred Gregory Peck, Ava Gardner, Anthony Perkins and Fred Astaire. Both the film and the book became part of the debate about survival in a nuclear

¹³ *Ibid.*, 554-5.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ John Gellner, *Canada in NATO*, (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1970): 44.

war.¹⁶ During the Diefenbaker years Canadians would also consider what a nuclear war would mean for their own lives.

Cold war tensions escalated in the Diefenbaker period. The United States and the Soviet Union clashed openly and both sides threatened a strong response in defence of their interests. By 1958 Khrushchev declared his intention to push the western garrison out of Berlin and offered the western powers an ultimatum to withdraw from the city. Diefenbaker pledged Canada would provide a military contribution to defend West Berlin if a NATO action against the Soviets became necessary.¹⁷ Khrushchev accused the Americans, British and French of making West Berlin a centre of subversive activities directed against the Communist bloc. Canada's department of external affairs argued that the "bustle, bright lights and handsome modern architecture" of West Berlin exposed the "emptiness and dowdiness" of East Berlin. West Berlin also offered an escape route for 100 000 East Germans each year.¹⁸ In early 1959 the Cuban Revolution replaced the American-supported Batista regime with a radical government led by Fidel Castro. Castro's regime seized the property and assets of American businesses and established close ties with Khrushchev.¹⁹ Berlin and Cuba would become the focal points of the cold war during Diefenbaker's years in office.

Concern about nuclear tests also continued and the leaders of the three major parties expressed their beliefs that nuclear experiments posed a real threat to the health of Canadians and threatened international peace. As the new leader of the Liberal party, which was still recovering from its surprising defeat the year before, Lester Pearson

¹⁶ Elizabeth Walker Mechling and Jay Mechling, The Campaign for Civil Defense and the Struggle to Naturalize the Bomb, *Western Journal of Speech Communication* 55 (spring 1991): 119.

¹⁷ Glazov, *Canadian Policy toward Khrushchev's Soviet Union*, 87.

¹⁸ Canada, *External Affairs*, VII: 1-2 (January-February 1959): 2.

¹⁹ Reg Whitaker and Steve Hewitt, *Canada and the Cold War*, (Toronto: Lorimer & Co. Ltd, 2003): 145.

outlined his policy on nuclear tests early in 1958. He promised that if elected prime minister he would push for an immediate ban on nuclear tests under the supervision of the United Nations. He argued that an agreement guaranteed by a system of inspection was no longer necessary since new instruments could detect when nuclear weapons had been detonated anywhere.²⁰ The CCF adopted a similar stand at its 1958 national convention. The party condemned the nuclear arms race and expressed fears that it contributed to “the great risk of a world conflagration that would lead to the extinction of life on this planet.” It called for an immediate ban on nuclear weapons tests by all countries, an end to the spread of nuclear weapons and a disarmament agreement with inspection supervised by the UN.²¹ Diefenbaker, re-elected in March 1958 with the biggest majority government in Canadian history, outlined his government’s support for the suspension of nuclear tests, “My hope is that the nations of the free world will announce in the immediate future their desire and willingness to discontinue nuclear tests, except for the application of known explosive techniques for peaceful purposes, provided that there is suitable international inspection.”²² The leaders of the three major parties appeared to be united in their opposition to nuclear tests and their support for disarmament.

As attitudes toward nuclear weapons changed some individuals began to speak out on nuclear issues. Rabbi Abraham Feinberg condemned nuclear tests by both nations in his capacity as the spiritual leader of the Holy Blossom Temple in Toronto. He blamed these explosions for “poisoning the air with life-destroying radioactive material which retains the power to maim and kill for 25 years.” He argued that Mother’s Day should

²⁰ Pearson, House of Commons *Debates*, August 14, 1958, 3502; *Time*, (Canadian Edition) March 31, 1958.

²¹ *Time*, (Canadian Edition) March 31, 1958, ? Coldwell, House of Commons *Debates*, April 26, 1954, 4109-10; “1958 CCF National Convention Resolution,” *Comment* 2:2 (1958): 14.

²² Diefenbaker, House of Commons *Debates*, August 13, 1958, 3453.

become a protest day against nuclear tests. Feinberg reinforced the maternal interest in nuclear issues.²³

Sidney Smith, the secretary of state for external affairs, however, warned Canadians to be realistic about the Soviet approach to disarmament. Smith, a lawyer and former president of the University of Toronto, had been elected in 1957. In 1958, he rejected a Soviet proposal for a ban on nuclear tests:

The promise not to use nuclear weapons is good only until one nation decides to break it. There must be, for our security, a measure of inspection that will ensure that the undertakings in that regard are being carried out. Disarmament cannot be achieved by the stroke of a pen or the mere passing of a resolution.²⁴

The nuclear powers soon challenged Smith's views. Britain and the United States announced their plans to suspend nuclear testing for one year beginning in the fall of 1958. They planned to renew the ban on a year by year basis on the condition that inspections were effective and as long as progress toward agreement on disarmament continued. The Soviet Union joined the agreement and promised to end its nuclear testing program.²⁵ Pearson expressed "great satisfaction" at the news and described it as "one step toward the effort to bring weapons of mass destruction under control and eventually abolish them."²⁶ The ban on testing appeared to resolve the main nuclear issue debated by Canadian politicians; the risks posed by radiation from nuclear explosions.

Concerned citizens set up local groups to study radiation issues in centres like Montreal and Edmonton. In the winter months of 1958 plans began for a national organization dedicated to education about the hazards of radiation from both peaceful and military applications. Mary Van Stolk, a housewife and the wife of a psychiatrist who

²³ "Rabbi Urges Use of Mother's Day To End A-Threat," *Montreal Star*, May 10, 1958, 7.

²⁴ Sidney Smith, House of Commons *Debates*, November 26, 1957, 1514.

²⁵ Diefenbaker, House of Commons *Debates*, August 22, 1958, 3944.

²⁶ Pearson, House of Commons *Debates*, August 22, 1958, 3945.

taught at the University of Alberta, was active in the Edmonton radiation hazards group. She gathered support for a national committee, the Canadian Committee for the Control of Radiation Hazards (CCCRH).²⁷ The group would remain non-partisan and aim “to inform rather than to alarm” Canadians about the dangers of radiation. It would work with elected officials and not “shake a fist at” the government. Van Stolk underlined the importance of the group’s reputation. To reach Canadians it could not be viewed as a pacifist, political or religious organization. Above all, it should remain free of communist associations. Van Stolk pointed to “[t]he need for an organization in which people can participate with dignity, to discuss the pros and cons regarding radiation without fear that the organization is communistic at top, bottom or middle, and with full confidence that the organization could never move into that direction.”²⁸ Patricia McMahon described the CCCRH as “a small, elite group of supporters numbering 45.” She pointed out that Van Stolk even suggested that the group be open to new members “by invitation only” in an attempt to reduce the chances of communist infiltration.²⁹ The national committee gained support from university faculty members, diplomats and leaders in Canada’s unions and churches.

Members of the group’s Montreal branch shared Van Stolk’s concerns about its reputation. They explained that the CCCRH represented no political ideology and received support from “prominent Montreal men.” Its members included Dr. H.H. Walsh, a professor in divinity at McGill University, Dr. Pierre Dansereau, the dean of the Faculty of Science at the University of Montreal, Dr. J.S. Thomson, a former moderator

²⁷ “Bomb-Banners To Meet MPs on Atomic Arms,” *Globe and Mail*, September 24, 1962, 4.

²⁸ MURA CCND Box 25 Correspondence and Publications for other peace groups, File 19 Maclean’s Correspondence, “Letter from Mary Van Stolk to Ralph Allen, editor of *Maclean’s*, July 16, 1959.”

²⁹ Patricia McMahon, “The Politics of Canada’s Nuclear Policy, 1957-1963” (Ph.d. diss., University of Toronto, 1999), 143, 144.

of the United Church of Canada, Frank Scott, a constitutional authority, McGill University law professor and active supporter of the CCF, the Reverend Jacques Cousineau, editor of the Jesuit serial, *Relations*, Jean Louis Gagnon, editor of *La Presse*, André Laurendeau, editor of *Le Devoir*, George Dion, dean of agriculture of McGill University, and C.G. Gifford, a social work professor at McGill University.³⁰

A group of twenty women set up the Women's Committee for Radiation Hazards in Vancouver. Its members worked to educate themselves about nuclear issues. They read books like *On the Beach* and met in each other's living room to discuss what they learned. The women then shared this information with church groups, the Junior League, Women's Institutes and Home and School Associations. Camille Mather, a city councillor and wife of Barrie Mather, a Vancouver columnist and supporter of the CCF and NDP who won a seat in parliament in 1962, organized the group. She stressed its moderate and maternal approach, "We are not a group of women trying to row about something. But we are dedicated to the idea of helping all mothers to realize the dangers and implications of the whole business of atomic warfare."³¹ These respectable Canadians organized with the goal of increasing awareness about radiation and did not intend their activities to become a political lobby on cold war or nuclear weapons issues. They would find this position difficult to maintain.

Other Canadians chose to protest nuclear tests with public protests rather than education alone. A group called the Canadian Associates for a Sane Nuclear Policy opposed nuclear tests. Members set up pickets outside Montreal's American consulate and sent telegrams to Soviet leaders. FOR and United Church of Canada ministers

³⁰ "Radiation Control Montrealers' Aim," *Toronto Daily Star*, June 1, 1959, 11.

³¹ Frank Lowe, "20 Mothers Declare War on Fall-out: These Vancouver women believe that ordinary people can do something about the nuclear threat," *Weekend Magazine*, 10:28 (1960): 2-3.

organized a rally against nuclear tests in Toronto on Mother's Day. Protestors carried signs reading "Christ or the H-Bomb."³² Pacifists in Vancouver also protested nuclear war. The Vancouver branch of FOR planned a march against nuclear tests that drew support from fifty concerned citizens and organized vigils at cenotaphs across the province to remember the victims of Hiroshima on August 6.³³ In its campaign against nuclear war, FOR also protested civil defence plans. The pacifist group condemned these preparations as a fraud designed to gain support for the military and attacked the "irrational futility" of civil defence exercises. Civil defence officials hoped to ban the distribution of FOR's literature on the University of Toronto campus. Federal authorities informed them, however, that they could not stop the pacifists from expressing their views on nuclear war.³⁴

Canadian Protestant denominations continued to push for the control of nuclear weapons. The Anglican Church of Canada passed a resolution against nuclear tests and suggested that the United Nations establish a panel of scientists to study the problem of radioactive fallout.³⁵ The representatives of the United Church found it difficult to reach consensus on nuclear issues. The church supported disarmament and an international agreement to end nuclear tests but delegates at its 1958 General Council defeated a pacifist resolution by a large majority.³⁶ The Right Reverend James S. Thomson created a storm when *Maclean's* magazine published his warning about the nation's fate in a

³² "Atom Tests Protests Set Tomorrow," *Montreal Star*, May 3, 1958, 9, "Rabbi Urges Use of Mother's Day to End A Threat," *Montreal Star*, May 10, 1958, 7, "Rally to Protest Nuclear Tests Joined by Foes, Unsought Allies," *Globe and Mail*, May 12, 1958, 5.

³³ Nancy Knickerbocker, *No plaster saint, the life of Mildred Osterhout Fahrni, 1900-92*, (Vancouver: Talon Books, 2001): 213.

³⁴ "No Pamphlet Bar," *Globe and Mail*, May 13, 1958, 5.

³⁵ NA Abraham Feinberg Fonds, MG 31 F9 Vol 4 TCD Correspondence with NCCRH Groups- Memos, 1959-61, Annual Report of NCCRH "1958 Council for Social Service Anglican Church of Canada."

³⁶ John Saywell, ed, *Canadian Annual Review*, (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1961): 311; United Church of Canada, *The Observer*, October 15, 1958, 4.

nuclear war. He alleged, "Canada is destined to become the battleground." Thomson suggested that Canada should remain neutral in the Third World War and rejected its reliance on the American nuclear strategy as "the most delusive guarantee of our national security." The minister defended his reputation and described himself as a citizen devoted to the preservation and welfare of [his] country. He was neither unrealistic nor irresponsible; disarmers were neither crackpots nor fellow travellers."³⁷ The Reverend A.C. Forrest, the editor of the United Church *Observer*, countered that, in order to preserve peace, Canada should "keep strong within the framework of the United Nations and among friends we have cause to trust."³⁸ The *Monetary Times* evaluated the former moderator's views and concluded:

While Canadians will respect and understand Dr. Thomson's thinking in this matter, at the same time they will realize how hopeless is this dream. ... The likelihood of achieving any measure of neutrality seems rather remote, even if we could consider it with a clear conscience. ... Canada is doomed, geographically and morally, to find herself in the midst of a global war if it comes. ... Canada is in the line of fire.... Even if she could maintain her neutrality at her borders, the air above this country would be thick with missiles and/or aircraft carrying tools of war and invading armies.³⁹

By 1958, concern about nuclear issues grew and peace activism slowly expanded its base of support. It was no longer the monopoly of communist sympathizers and critics of American foreign policy. Yet, these concerns continued to be restricted largely to pacifist groups and ministers in Protestant churches. The frank discussion of the nuclear threat to Canada extended beyond the government level. Individual Canadians evaluated Canada's role in cold war, its fate in the next war and the consequences of a nuclear defence.

³⁷ James S. Thomson, "Canada should ban A-arms even if no one else will," *Maclean's* June 21, 1958, 8, 42-44.

³⁸ The Reverend A.C. Forrest, "Uneasy Neutralism," *The Observer*, July 1958.

³⁹ "Canada and World War 3," *The Monetary Times*, 126:5 (May 1958): 8-9.

Opinion polls surveyed Canadian views on the nuclear threat. They showed that the public was evenly divided about the dangers they faced. When asked whether they thought that Russia could wipe out Canadian cities in a matter of hours, 39 percent believed they could while 39 percent remained confident they could not. The number rose among French speaking residents of Quebec. Half believed Russia could destroy Canadian cities. Just one quarter of French Canadians felt secure.⁴⁰ In August 1958 the results of another poll suggested that Canadians had a low level of fear about nuclear war. Three quarters of those sampled would rather risk a nuclear war with the Soviet Union than surrender. Only 1 out of 10 would rather be red than dead.⁴¹ Another poll indicated that most Canadians did not worry about nuclear war. More than half responded that they were not anxious at all.⁴² The results of these surveys may explain why anti-nuclear activities remained limited to a minority.

The Diefenbaker government considered the effectiveness of Canada's defence against a Soviet attack. Diefenbaker continued to shore up Canada's defences and, by 1959, decided to make a number of changes to Canada's defence hardware. He replaced obsolete systems with new military hardware in order to defend both Canadian and European territory. As well as replacing outdated equipment, Diefenbaker also made tough decisions about the future of Canada's independent defence programs. The Liberal government had provided funds to A.V. Roe (AVRO), a British company based in

⁴⁰ CIPO, *Gallup Poll*, March 1958. "Do you think Russia could wipe out Canadian cities in a matter of hours?" 39 percent responded yes, 39 percent answered no and 12 percent were undecided.

⁴¹ CIPO, *Gallup Poll*, August 1958., "A writer said recently that nuclear destruction would be so terrible that the only solution is immediate peace with Russia on any terms, even surrender. Do you agree?" 75 percent disagreed, 10 percent agreed and 15 percent did not know. J.I. Gow, "Opinions of French Canadians in Quebec on the Problem of War and Peace, 1945-1960" (Ph.D. diss., Laval University, 1969), 861.

⁴² CIPO, *Gallup Poll*, August 20, 1958. "How worried are you about the chance of a world war breaking out in which atomic bombs and hydrogen bombs would be used?" 12 percent were very worried, 29 percent were fairly worried, 55 percent were not worried and 4 percent had no opinion.

Malton, Ontario, to develop and build a supersonic fighter plane. The Arrow would be designed specifically for Canadian conditions. However, as the costs of the AVRO Arrow project continued to climb, Diefenbaker made the controversial decision to cancel the Arrow. In February 1959, 14 000 workers at the suburban Toronto plant lost their jobs. In the future Canada would rely on foreign-built aircraft.⁴³ In place of the Arrow, Diefenbaker announced he would add the Bomarc, an untested, American-built surface-to-air missile, to the Canadian arsenal. Two fixed installations, designed to intercept Soviet long-range bombers, would be constructed at North Bay, Ontario and Mont Laurier, Quebec. The bases were located within fallout range of Canada's two largest cities, Toronto and Montreal. However, they were placed further north in order to intercept Soviet bombers away from population centres. Diefenbaker recalled he based his decision on a DRB figures that concluded that with the Bomarc almost fifty percent more weapons would engage Soviet bombers. It would provide a better defence for Canadian targets and the "kill potential" of the Bomarc would be ten times that of the Arrow when their costs were compared.⁴⁴ When the untried missile failed in all seven of its tests, the Liberal party called it "a dead pigeon" and demanded construction of the Canadian bases be called off. Diefenbaker responded that Canada would keep the Bomarc.⁴⁵ Since the United States would retain control of any nuclear warheads required for these Canadian systems, negotiations would be required. It would also take at least two years to build the Bomarc sites. In the meantime, an arrangement for the transfer of the nuclear warheads into Canadian hands could wait.

⁴³ Robert Bothwell, Ian Drummond and John English, *Canada since 1945: power, politics and provincialism*. Rev ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1989): 228-30.

⁴⁴ Diefenbaker, *One Canada*, vol. 3, *The Tumultuous Years*, 30, 44.

⁴⁵ The Liberal Opposition called for a motion of non-confidence in the government but the Tory majority survived the vote. *Time*, (Canadian Edition) April 4, 1960, 11; June 13, 1960, 16.

The government also arranged to provide the RCAF with two new interceptors, the CF-104 Starfighter and the F-101 Voodoo. In March 1960 it purchased the Honest John surface-to-surface rocket for its NATO brigade in Germany. The 5000 Canadians serving with NATO would be involved in a tactical nuclear ground war.⁴⁶ All of the new weapons systems obtained by the government were designed to carry nuclear warheads. Melvin Conant, an American analyst of defence issues, concluded that, “developments in military technology have brought to an end the Canadian search for a meaningful role in the defence of North America.”⁴⁷ Would the location of nuclear-armed missiles on its soil expose Canada to greater risks? *Time* magazine described public attitudes toward Diefenbaker’s defence decisions, “In two years, Canada will be a nuclear-armed power... Nevertheless, the topic has so far curiously escaped intense national debate.”⁴⁸ This observation suggested that the government’s decisions to adopt a nuclear defence did not mean that Canadians were more concerned about their safety.

The government and Canada’s military took steps to ensure the safety of Canadians, both overseas and at home, in the event of a nuclear war. The Canadian army provided nuclear training to its personnel. From the mid fifties it participated in nuclear war exercises at nuclear test sites in the United States and with NATO forces in Germany. Canada’s armed forces learned the tactics of nuclear war in Germany. They dug trenches for shelter and studied the effects of nuclear explosions including blast, heat and immediate radiation.⁴⁹ Army officials aimed to keep Canadian soldiers alive and minimize casualties in a nuclear war. They received education in nuclear, biological and

⁴⁶ Gellner explained they adopted this strategy to respond to the Soviet ICBM. John Gellner, *Canada in NATO*, (Toronto: Ryerson Books, 1970): 44; Bothwell, Drummond and English, *Canada since 1945*, 231-2.

⁴⁷ Melvin Conant, “Canada and Continental Defence: An American View,” *International Journal* 15:3 (summer 1959-1960): 219.

⁴⁸ *Time*, (Canadian Edition) November 23, 1959, 17.

⁴⁹ “Canadian Brigade in A-War Setting,” *Montreal Star*, June 17, 1959, 12.

chemical warfare and survival operations. A manual distributed in 1959 taught Canadian troops they could stay alive in a nuclear conflict. They had to follow the “nuclear survival rule,” a simple, two-part safety measure. The soldiers were instructed to first, close their eyes when they saw any dazzling flash and drop to the ground and second, take cover and count to ten before opening their eyes or moving.⁵⁰ The soldiers received information on the science of nuclear weapons, the treatment of nuclear casualties, decontamination and radiation detection.⁵¹

Diefenbaker described the threat posed by nuclear weapons and outlined his government’s support for disarmament:

We cannot, as rational human beings, accept as inevitable the thought of a world laid waste by nuclear warfare, but that possibility cannot be denied. Contemplate it we must; accept it we cannot. The shadow of nuclear war makes it mandatory that we strive for a solution of the difficult problems which beset freedom-loving nations.⁵²

The priority placed on disarmament efforts grew when Howard Green was named the secretary of state for external affairs following the death of Sidney Smith in 1959.

Green, the former house leader and minister of public works and of defence production, was not a likely candidate for the position. In his bid for leadership of the party in 1942 he fainted during his speech to the delegates. As secretary of state for external affairs, Diefenbaker’s loyal supporter was Canada’s main spokesman at international councils like the United Nations.⁵³ Norman Robertson served as the

⁵⁰ Canadian Army. Manual of Training. *Individual Training Nuclear, Biological and Chemical Warfare*, Prepared under the direction of the Chief of the General Staff by the Directorate of Military Training, (Ottawa: Army Headquarters, Queen’s Printers, 1959): i. 13.

⁵¹ Sean Maloney, *War Without Battles: Canada’s NATO Brigade in Germany, 1951-1993*, (Kanata, ON: 4 CMBG History Book Association, 1996): 89.

⁵² John Diefenbaker, June 7, 1959, Lansing, Michigan, in *The Wit and Wisdom of John Diefenbaker*, ed. John A. Munro (Edmonton: Hurtig, 1982.): 118.

⁵³ Peter C. Newman, *Renegade in Power: The Diefenbaker Years*, (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart Ltd., 1963): 253-4.

under-secretary of state for external affairs. Unlike Green, he had had a long diplomatic career. However, the two men shared a commitment to disarmament. After his appointment Green made the campaign for disarmament his number one concern. The Secretary of State for External Affairs pledged that, under his direction, Canada would do more than any other nation in the field of disarmament.⁵⁴ In his first debate on external affairs in the House of Commons Green pronounced, "Canada has only friends and no enemies... Above all, it is a nation with an idealistic, unselfish approach." Green's approach contrasted with Diefenbaker's portrayal of the Soviet Union as a real threat.⁵⁵ Green focused on the risks posed by nuclear tests and referred to these experiments as "global suicide."⁵⁶ At the United Nations Canada sponsored a resolution to create an international body to collect and analyze fallout samples.⁵⁷

Canada had its own radiation protection division within the Department of National Health and Welfare. It produced charts and statistics to show the extent and nature of radioactive fallout in Canada. It researched the ways in which trends in radiation may have affected the health of Canadians. Federal officials collected air and milk samples and added more milk testing stations in order to ensure that the nation's supply was safe. They measured radiation sources from lapel pins worn by eight thousand Canadian doctors, dentists, and x-ray technicians in an attempt to make x-rays safer.⁵⁸

⁵⁴ *Time*, (Canadian Edition) February 22, 1960, 11; "Six Steps to Peace Outlined by Green In Optimistic Mood," *Globe and Mail*, January 10, 1961, 5.

⁵⁵ Glazov, *Canadian Policy toward Khrushchev's Soviet Union*, 90.

⁵⁶ "Green Says Canada Opposed to French on Plan for Atom Explosion in Sahara," *Globe and Mail*, November 11, 1959, 1.

⁵⁷ "PM Says A-Arms For Defense Only," *Globe and Mail*, December 15, 1959, 1, 2.

⁵⁸ *Time*, (Canadian Edition) March 16, 1959, 16.

Anxiety about radiation grew at the end of 1959 when France revealed plans it would explode a nuclear weapon in the Sahara. At the United Nations Green voted to censure Canada's French ally for its action.⁵⁹ He explained, "The Canadian people are unanimous in their wish to see an end to nuclear testing."⁶⁰ The Canadian Labour Council (CLC) opposed the tests and voiced its fears that the French action "would be a mortal blow to the prestige and standing of the Western nations" because they, and not the Soviets, would be the first to break the ban.⁶¹ The *Globe and Mail* challenged France's claims that the tests would not threaten progress towards disarmament. A petition endorsed by faculty members from the University of Alberta reached Green in Paris. Over three hundred professors and administrators, including many faculty heads and Dr. Walter Jones, the university's president, urged Canada's Secretary of State for External Affairs to oppose the Sahara tests.⁶²

The French tests in the Sahara went ahead in the spring of 1960. The government closely monitored the amount of radiation in Canadian air and the nation's supply of food and milk. Before the tests the government had reassured the public that the radiation levels fell well below the danger point.⁶³ In the spring of 1960, however, officials admitted there had been a sharp increase. J. Waldo Monteith, the minister of national health and welfare, announced, "I don't want anyone in any part of the country panicky."⁶⁴ Scientific opinion was divided over whether radiation produced by nuclear tests posed a hazard to the health and safety of Canadians. Dr. O.M. Solandt, who was

⁵⁹ "A-Bomb Completed France Won't Cancel Test Plan for Sahara," *Globe and Mail*, November 5, 1959, 1.

⁶⁰ "Green Says Canada Opposed to French on Plan for Atom Explosion in Sahara," *Globe and Mail*, November 11, 1959, 1.

⁶¹ "Statement on Nuclear Tests," *Canadian Labour*, April 1960, 73.

⁶² "Petition Sent," *Globe and Mail*, December 15, 1959, 2.

⁶³ "Fallout Watch," *Time*, (Canadian Edition) March 16, 1959, 16.

⁶⁴ "Canada Links Fallout Rise to Sahara," *Globe and Mail*, April 6, 1960, 1.

now the former chairman of the DRB and had become a professor at the University of Saskatchewan, downplayed radiation fears. Radiation exposure, he suggested, shortened lives about as much as smoking one cigarette every other month. John Keyston, the vice-chairman of the DRB, announced that nuclear tests were responsible for a “very slight increase in nuclear radiation” and this increase was “very slightly harmful.”⁶⁵ On the other hand, Dr. George Dion, whose support for the CCCRH may have influenced his position, alerted Canadians that each bomb test threatened the lives of 15 000 children.⁶⁶ Expert opinion was divided over the consequences of nuclear tests and the hazards of radioactive fallout.

At the same time as it committed Canada to a nuclear defence and support for disarmament, the government accelerated its plans to protect those on the home front. Diefenbaker inherited a mess with civil defence. Civil defence plans, based on at least a two hour warning before a jet attack, needed to be adapted again to meet advances in nuclear technology. A missile attack on Canadian targets would kill everyone within a three mile radius. Officials believe it might still be possible to evacuate target areas during periods of tension when war seemed likely. However, once nuclear weapons were launched evacuation was no longer a feasible solution. Traffic congestion would slow down evacuation routes and leave those in the midst of evacuating exposed to massive doses of radioactive fallout. Major-General Worthington resigned as the national coordinator of civil defence in 1957. When asked what Canadians could do to protect themselves from a nuclear attack, he retorted, “Get the hell off the street.” He had decided to leave “the frustrating and thankless” task of civil defence in the missile age to

⁶⁵ “H-Bomb Helped Peace in 1950s,” *Globe and Mail*, January 19, 1960, 15.

⁶⁶ “Each Bomb Said Peril to 15,000 Children,” *Globe and Mail*, March 2, 1960, 5.

someone new. He explained his departure to reporters, "I feel I've done my job... nothing has ever reached the point I wanted it to reach. I guess I wanted too much."⁶⁷

Diefenbaker realized that major changes were required in the civil defence program and commissioned a study of civil defence procedures. Responsibility was divided between the Department of National Defence, the Department of National Health and Welfare and the Emergency Measures Organization (EMO), which was set up in 1957 to deal with the problem of ensuring the continuity of government operations in the event of an attack. Monteith no longer wanted to be involved in planning for a nuclear war. Pearkes, the oldest man in the Cabinet, did not want full responsibility for this task.⁶⁸ Lieutenant-General Howard Graham, the retired Chief of the General Staff, turned down the offer to replace Worthington. Graham agreed, instead, to conduct a study of the program and make recommendations for its improvement. Following his survey, Graham concluded that a nuclear attack could "devastate Canada." The nation's preparations were inadequate. He found that provincial premiers and cabinet ministers were poorly informed about civil defence and chose to delegate responsibility to the national coordinator instead.⁶⁹ Graham proposed an increased role for the military in protecting the population. While he recognized that the first battle could be confined to Europe, he added, "The other battle will be in this country restoring order out of the dreadful chaos and state of anarchy that may exist."⁷⁰

The government implemented most of Graham's recommendations. Diefenbaker explained that the steps his government was taking should not cause anxiety: "What

⁶⁷ Time, (Canadian Edition) September 30, 1957, 11-12.

⁶⁸ Roy, *For Most Conspicuous Bravery*, 298.

⁶⁹ Howard Graham, *Citizen and Soldier: The Memoirs of Lieutenant General Howard Graham*, (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1987): 244-5.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 239.

we're doing does not indicate great fears of war... but should war take place the government will have been assured in advance."⁷¹ The government assigned the military with the primary responsibility for rescuing the public and providing protection from radioactive fallout. The militia received a new assignment and would use its military discipline to oversee rescue operations at home, rather than in armed combat overseas. The militia would be trained in the effects of nuclear explosions, radiation detection and decontamination for national survival operations on Canadian soil.⁷² The government outlined a new policy based on Graham's conclusion that mass evacuation was not feasible in the missile age. In its place it introduced a policy of voluntary evacuation. Civil defence officials recognized many would want to leave "in times of anticipated peril." They believed they would have time to escape if municipalities arranged traffic plans. The new policy, however, placed priority on shelters. Pearkes explained that it would be the responsibility of each Canadian householder to arrange for his own protection. All that was needed, he clarified, was a protected space in which to hide for 48 hours.⁷³ As a sign of the higher priority placed on civil defence, responsibility was transferred to the Prime Minister's Office and the program received more funding. Officials admitted that "many will be killed in an ICBM or H-bomb attack," however, they remained hopeful that "many more will live" especially in "near-miss" cases when the population could be moved to safe areas before further attacks.⁷⁴

The new arrangements did not escape criticism. The press jokingly referred to Pearkes' "go dig your own hole" policy. The *Monetary Times* argued that most

⁷¹ Peter C. Newman, "Should A-War Blast Ottawa Who'll Legislate," *Maclean's*, January 31, 1959, 1.

⁷² Canadian Army. *Manual of Training. Survival Operations (1961)*. rev May 1962, Prepared Under the Direction of the Chief of the General Staff, Ottawa: Army Headquarters, Queen's Printer, 1961.

⁷³ "Seems Civil Defence Going Down Drain," *Monetary Times*, November 1959, 18-19.

⁷⁴ "CD Plans Alarm System Against Missile Attacks," *Financial Post*, September 14, 1959, 19.

Canadians could not afford a shelter and many more did not even own a home in which to build one. The trade and insurance journal also questioned how a husband, wife and several children could expect to stay put for two days while the “fallout disappears.” It suggested that the investment in civil defence had been wasted.⁷⁵ Many of those in the militia resented their reassignment from active military duty to a custodial job mopping up after the war. Major-General W.H.S. Macklin, the former Adjutant-General of the Canadian Army and a military intellectual, expressed his displeasure with the prospect of “salvaging the wreckage of Toronto.” He dismissed the militia’s assignment to national survival operations, “You can’t serve two masters, and if you are going to divert your efforts to civil defence, you might as well turn in your tank.”⁷⁶

James Eayrs, an expert on defence issues, rejected the idea of evacuation, “No motorist familiar with traffic conditions in Montreal or Toronto could respond without ridicule to the suggestion that three hours will suffice for their evacuation. During the greatly reduced warning of the approach of enemy missiles... there will not even be time for a good meal.”⁷⁷ Eayrs argued that Canada’s acquisition of nuclear weapons made it “more urgent than ever that Canadian citizens be instructed in the hazards of fall-out and provided with protection against them.”⁷⁸ He concluded that, in the end, the fatalism of the public defeated civil defence plans. Most Canadians felt “that even if it were needed, no effort, however costly or ambitious, would be able to protect a population against the

⁷⁵ “Seems Civil Defence Going Down the Drain,” *Monetary Times*, November 1959, 18-19.

⁷⁶ “Toward Survival,” *Time*, (Canadian Edition) April 6, 1959, 14; “Plan for CD Courses Spurs Army Objections,” *Montreal Star*, September 20, 1961, 20; G.W.L. Nicholson “The Canadian Militia’s Introduction to Civil Defence Training,” in *Policy by Other Means: Essays in Honour of C.P. Stacey*, ed. Michael Cross and Robert Bothwell (Toronto: Clark & Irwin, 1972): 232.

⁷⁷ *Civil Defence Bulletin*, 2:6, November–December 1959, 2; James Eayrs, “The Soviet Rocket and the Balance of Power,” in *Northern Approaches: Canada and the Search for Peace*, (Toronto: MacMillan, 1961): 20.

⁷⁸ Eayrs, “Canada, Nato, And the Nth Power Problem,” *Canadian Forum* 39 (April 1960): 7.

devastation of thermonuclear attack.”⁷⁹ The complex task of providing protection against nuclear war confounded government planners and attracted limited interest from the population.

The government continued its publicity campaign designed to expand support for civil defence measures. Civil defence speeches attempted to convince the public of the dangers they faced:

‘World War III,’ the war we are all trying hard to keep from happening, might reach “Main Street,” and “Elm Street,” right in your town, your neighbourhood, your front and back yard. Such attacks have not been practicable in past wars. Canada has always enjoyed immunity from major attacks by foreign foes on its own shores. Today, such attacks are possible and if we are drawn into war, they are probable.⁸⁰

The Diefenbaker government even declared Canada’s first National Civil Defence Day to publicize the program and convince the public of the importance of protection in a nuclear war.⁸¹ Monteith explained the purpose of the new day devoted to preparedness, “It will primarily be a get-acquainted day for citizens who know little of local Civil Defence plans.” Federal officials distributed two million pieces of literature to Canada’s major cities for the event. Businesses assisted with displays and mock air raids in several cities demonstrated these preparations.⁸² Yet, none of these efforts appeared to convince the population to take action.

By 1959 a number of groups dedicated to nuclear disarmament provided concerned Canadians with an outlet for their anxieties about nuclear warfare. Such efforts began earlier in both of Canada’s cold war allies, the United States and Britain. Bertrand Russell, a philosopher and mathematician who lost his professorship at

⁷⁹ Eayrs, “Survival and Civility,” in *Northern Approaches*, 46, 50.

⁸⁰ Department of National Health and Welfare, “Introductory Speech, Women and Civil Defence, no. 4,” *Civil Defence Speaker’s Kit*, (Ottawa: Information Services Division, 1957): 2.

⁸¹ *Canada National Civil Defence Day Friday September 19th 1958: Promotional Guide*, (Canada: Civil Defence, 1958)

⁸² “Civil Defence Alarm Systems,” *Financial Post*, September 14, 1959, 19.

Cambridge for opposing Britain's role in the First World War, founded the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND). It organized an Easter demonstration in London's Trafalgar Square in 1958. The protest drew over one hundred thousand people. A portion of this group then marched hundreds of miles from London to Aldermaston, the site of Britain's nuclear weapons research. The CND pointed to the growing number of nuclear tests each year. From twenty five in 1956 and fifty in 1957 the number climbed to one hundred tests by 1958.⁸³ The CND originated the use of the now-famous peace sign as a protest against nuclear war. It chose the international semaphore signs for N and D, to stand for nuclear disarmament, enclosed in a circle. The group's emblem became a powerful and enduring symbol of peace. In the United States, the Committee for a Sane Nuclear Policy, (SANE), had 130 branches and represented 25 000 Americans.⁸⁴ The issues of radiation and disarmament prompted similar action in Canada. By the late fifties and early sixties, concerns about the nuclear arms race, radiation and Canada's ties to the American military establishment grew.

University students began protests against the nuclear arms race in late 1959. In mid-December a delegation from the University of Toronto met with Prime Minister Diefenbaker. It delivered a petition signed by close to 3000 students and staff, including Dr. Claude T. Bissell, its president. It demanded greater efforts for disarmament and an end to both nuclear tests and the spread of nuclear weapons. The appeal concluded that disarmament was the "only hope of survival in a nuclear age."⁸⁵ The meeting between

⁸³ John Minnion and Philip Bolsover, ed. *The CND Story: the first 25 years of CND in the words of the people involved*. (London: Allison & Busby, 1983): 15-16.

⁸⁴ Melvin Katz, *Ban the Bomb: A History of SANE, the Committee for a Sane Nuclear Policy, 1957-1985*, (Westport, Conn: Greenwood Press, 1986): 29.

⁸⁵ "PM Says A-Arms for Defense Only," *Globe and Mail*, December 15, 1959, 1. 630 faculty, out of 1200 professors, and 2545 students signed the petition. Maurice Tugwell, *Peace with Freedom*, (Toronto: Key Porter Books, 1988): 48.

Canada's prime minister and these disarmers received national media coverage and front page headlines. The participation of university faculty, including its top administrators, led credibility to the efforts. Diefenbaker told reporters "there is considerable merit in [their] viewpoint." He added, "Canada had been as aggressive as possible in disarmament negotiations." The university group told reporters that it was "impressed" by the Prime Minister's concern about these issues. The *Montreal Star* described the tone of the University of Toronto petition as "moderate." The polite meeting indicated good relations between the protestors and government officials.⁸⁶ David Gauthier, a lecturer in philosophy, told reporters that, while the spread of nuclear weapons was not desirable, his delegation did not rule out the need for warheads on Canadian soil.⁸⁷ Earlier that year Gauthier organized another petition at the university. Just 70 faculty members signed his appeal against the Bomarc. The divergent results of Gauthier's two petitions demonstrated that a general concern for disarmament attracted more support than specific demands related to domestic politics.⁸⁸

At the end of 1959 Montreal students organized the Combined Universities Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CUCND) to coordinate student peace activities on Canadian university campuses. Students representing Sir George Williams University, McGill University and the University of Montreal called for an end to the spread of nuclear arms and an independent, flexible role for Canada in the cold war. One thousand concerned university students and professors in Montreal signed a petition against the government's nuclear policies. The first protest march against the government's plan to

⁸⁶ "PM Says A-Arms For Defense Only," *Globe and Mail*, December 15, 1959, 1, 2; "A-bases In Canada Backed," *Montreal Star*, December 15, 1959, 1.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸⁸ McMahon, "Canada's Nuclear Policy," 150.

use nuclear weapons in the defence of Canada brought just over one thousand students from Ottawa, Montreal and Toronto to march on the empty streets of the capital on Christmas Day.⁸⁹ Major-General Macklin criticized the disarmament efforts emerging on Canadian campuses and dismissed them as “pathetic” and “unrealistic.”⁹⁰ He believed the protestors ignored the realities of defence in the nuclear age: “For none of these people seem willing to face the unpalatable fact that if we are to abolish the nuclear weapon we have got to substitute manpower for nuclear power in our defence strategy.”⁹¹ A few months after the university delegation met with the Prime Minister, Rabbi Feinberg concluded that its efforts failed to spark wider action. Interest in nuclear issues, he maintained, “died because of the unconcern of the student body.”⁹²

Nevertheless, student disarmers continued their efforts and focused their protests against nuclear weapons on Canadian soil. One hundred CUCND members from Toronto, Ottawa and Montreal travelled to North Bay, Ontario, one of the future sites of Canada’s nuclear arsenal, to warn the residents they were digging their own graves. The protestors planned a three-day demonstration against nuclear arms for Canada at the Bomarc site. Representatives of the group informed reporters they based their organization on the British student movement and insisted that the CUCND was not Communist-inspired. The orderly demonstration involved a protest outside the entrances to the base, a parade through the city and a street corner rally. Disarmers carried placards

⁸⁹ “PM Says A-Arms For Defense Only,” *Globe and Mail*, December 15, 1959, 1; Gary Moffatt, *History of the Canadian Peace Movement until 1969*, (St. Catharines, ON: Grapevine Press, 1969): 147; NA Feinberg Fonds, MG 31 F9 Vol 3, TCD, “TCD Combined University Campaign, 1960, “CUCND- Summary of Past Events.”; Simonne Monet Chartrand, *Les Québécoises et le mouvement pacifiste, 1939-1967*, (Montreal: Éditions Écosociété, 1993): 42-3; “150 Students Protest Nuclear Weapons,” *Toronto Daily Star*, December 23, 1960, 17.

⁹⁰ “Anti-nuclear Role Scored[sic], *Montreal Star*, January 7, 1960, 1.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*

⁹² “Rabbi Asks Students Act for Disarmament,” *Globe and Mail*, March 17, 1960, 9.

that read, "Let's have fallout on Ottawa," and "Ban the Bomarc."⁹³ These protestors rejected nuclear arms on Canadian soil as a threat to Canadian lives.

Canada's communists warned the public that Canadian territory and its population would be the "first victims" of a world nuclear war. Tim Buck called for "a great national effort" against nuclear bases on Canadian soil at the party's convention held in the fall of 1959. He proclaimed that Canada lay "in the path of nuclear destruction." A nuclear war would result in millions of deaths and would leave the country a radioactive wasteland.⁹⁴ He expressed his belief that Canadians "want to live without fear for their future or the future of their children – without fear of losing their loved ones and their homes in the consuming flames of nuclear war."⁹⁵ The Ontario Committee of the Communist Party also protested at the Bomarc base in North Bay. It published a pamphlet against Canada's nuclear bases and handed out 25 000 copies to publicize the event. The leaflet proclaimed, "No More Bomarc Death Bases! No Canadian Hiroshimas! Canada is only one second away from atomic death, with the Pentagon's finger on the button."⁹⁶ By the mid 1950s the membership of the communist party dropped and did not recover. In the elections of 1957 and 1958 the party ran candidates in only a handful of ridings, received just thousands of votes and did not win any seats in Parliament.⁹⁷ Canadian Communists expressed views similar to the nuclear disarmament movement. However, they continued

⁹³ "Students Demonstrate Against A-Weapons," *Globe and Mail*, May 11, 1960, 2; "Students to Picket Sage Sight," *Toronto Daily Star*, May 5, 1960, 40.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 33-4.

⁹⁵ "The Struggle for Total Disarmament, Peace and Independence," Main Resolution of 16th Convention, 32-34, Keynote Address to 16th National Convention, Communist Party of Canada, October 9-12, 1959, in *Questions for Today: two world systems, peaceful coexistence, national liberation, workers vs. monopoly, transition to socialism, documents and commentary on the Communist Party of Canada, 1952-1964*, Communist Party of Canada, (Toronto: Progress Books, 1964): 27-29.

⁹⁶ MURA, CCND Box 9 Affiliates – CUCND, YCND, File 2 CUCND- Correspondence, pamphlet, "Communist Party of Ontario, 1960, "No Bomarc Death Bases!"

⁹⁷ Stephen Endicott, *James G. Endicott: Rebel Out of China*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980): 326-7; Ivan Avakumovic, *The Communist Party in Canada: A History*, (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1975): 218.

to focus on the threat posed by the Americans and their nuclear arsenal while they overlooked the risks posed by Soviet nuclear weapons. The Canadian Peace Congress continued to hold rallies against war. Endicott told a crowd of 2000 people that the Soviet Union worked for peace. American foreign policy, he alleged, was a threat to peace. He believed it was remarkable there had not been a war considering American attitudes toward the Soviets and Chinese.⁹⁸

During an appearance on the CBC television programme, *Close Up*, Pierre Berton asked Lester Pearson, "Would you rather be red than dead?" He responded, "If I had to make the choice I would rather live than die, and do what I could to throw Mr. Khrushchev and his type out of power."⁹⁹ Prime Minister Diefenbaker adopted a strong stance against Communism and made the most of his adversary's comment. He questioned Pearson's loyalty and reassured Canadians that *he* would rather die than live in a Communist state. "We believe in peace without appeasement," he declared, "We don't want to die in a nuclear war, but we have no common ground with those who would offer as an alternative that we could live under Khrushchev with the hope of throwing him out of office."¹⁰⁰ The competing threats of the cold war resulted in a popular slogan "Better Red or Dead?" The incident reveals the complexity involved in meeting the dual threats of communism and nuclear war.

Some Canadians suggested an alternative, independent role for Canada in the cold war. They supported withdrawal from both NORAD and NATO. They recommended that Canada abandon its nuclear defence. J.M. Minifie, the CBC's Washington

⁹⁸ "Rabbi Asks Students Act for Disarmament," *Globe and Mail*, March 17, 1960, 9.

⁹⁹ *Time*, (Canadian Edition) November 7, 1960, 15.

¹⁰⁰ John G. Diefenbaker, October 22, 1960, in John A. Munro, ed. *The Wit and Wisdom of John Diefenbaker*. (Edmonton: Hurtig, 1982.): 24.

correspondent, became a critic of Canada's cold war alliances with the United States. He popularized neutralist thought in his best-selling book, *Peacemaker or Powder-Monkey: Canada's Role in a Revolutionary World*. He was born in England, had been raised in Saskatchewan and then attended Oxford University as a Rhodes Scholar. He had lived in the United States before he served in World War Two and, in 1946, became an American citizen. His book, published in March 1960, went into its third printing by September and its fifth printing within a year.¹⁰¹ It sold 15 000 copies over the next four years.¹⁰²

Minifie argued that, as a result of its alliances with the United States, Canada faced a greater risk of nuclear annihilation. He demanded that Canada take an independent stand in the world or it risked becoming a satellite to the United States. Minifie alleged, "There is no military advantage for Canada in serving as a convenient glacis for the dumping of nuclear bombs out of fall-out range of American soil." He accused the Americans of looking out for their own security while putting Canadians at risk:

It does not matter that a stick of nuclear bombs, released from a bomber under attack in the Canadian northland, could wipe out the population of Saskatchewan and make its farmland unusable for years. The Americans' point is: better Saskatchewan than North Dakota; better Winnipeg than Chicago. Powder-monkeys are expendable.¹⁰³

"Canada," he insisted, "has a right to refuse nuclear commitments to resist such a sacrifice of lives."¹⁰⁴ Minifie described the consequences of nuclear war and rejected the idea that anyone would survive such a conflict:

Existence as well as peace is threatened by massive nuclear war. War would mean extermination, and both sides know it. They will avoid it if they can. They could

¹⁰¹ Maynard-Ghent, Jocelyn, "Canadian-American Relations and the Nuclear Weapons Controversy, 1958-1963" (Ph.D. diss., University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 1976), 77-8.

¹⁰² "Minifie," *Maclean's*, August 8, 1964, 47.

¹⁰³ J.M. Minifie, *Peacemaker or Powder-Monkey: Canada's Role in a Revolutionary World*, (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1960): 126, 20, 11, 124.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 32.

stumble into it as the powers stumbled into World War I. But there is no more futile exercise than preparing for a conflict which could not be survived.¹⁰⁵

Minifie highlighted the dangers to which Canada was exposed and suggested that nuclear weapons and the close ties between Canada and the United States were responsible.

Robert Spencer, the defence and foreign affairs editor of the *Canadian Annual Review*, noted that Minifie's book "stirred public discussion."¹⁰⁶ The fact that neutralism "attracted considerable attention as a rival programme" was "hardly surprising for a people troubled over the prospect of a war of nuclear extermination."¹⁰⁷ Suggestions that Canada become a "buffer state" received some support from the press, pulpit and professors.¹⁰⁸ Nationalist sentiment increased in this period. Many Canadians rejected the position of Canada as an American satellite and believed it could become a moral leader in the world. In 1959 Harry Pope, a former major in the regular army and executive assistant to the CCF leader, suggested that Canada should provide access to the DEW-line to the Russians as well as the Americans. He claimed that any war would be suicidal and the only defence against nuclear war was prevention. Pope suggested that Canada should reduce its defence ties to the United States and act as a neutral buffer between the superpowers.¹⁰⁹

Canadian communists continued to use the nuclear threat as a political tactic to gain support and joined in the calls for a neutral Canada. Buck alerted Canadians that the location of nuclear weapons north of the border would make Canada expendable. All nuclear blasts would take place over its territory and they would result in millions of

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid*, 11.

¹⁰⁶ Saywell, ed, *Canadian Annual Review*, (1960): 101.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid*.

¹⁰⁸ *Time*, (Canadian Edition) June 8, 1959, 10.

¹⁰⁹ Harry Pope, "Let the Russians Use the Dew Line Too," *Maclean's*, December 5, 1959, 60.

deaths and would produce a radioactive wasteland.¹¹⁰ He insisted that neutrality was the only way to ensure Canada's safety. The Ontario Communist Party also supported a policy of neutrality as "the only alternative to national suicide."¹¹¹

The disarmament movement did not agree on the proposal of neutrality for Canada. The Reverend William Jenkins, a Unitarian minister in Toronto and a leader of the Toronto Committee of Disarmament, argued that ideological, historical and economic factors shaped Canada's deep commitment to the western viewpoint. Canada could never be neutral in world affairs, he asserted.¹¹² Rabbi Feinberg agreed that Canada would stand with the United States in a crisis but urged the government to take steps to avoid such emergencies.¹¹³ Hugh Keenleyside, the chairman of the CCCRH, maintained that the group was not neutralist.¹¹⁴ Disarmers committed to neutralism founded the Committee of 100 and embraced civil disobedience tactics. Its activities included sit-down protests outside locations like the Prime Minister's Ottawa residence.¹¹⁵

Polls showed the public did not think neutrality was possible.¹¹⁶ Surveys suggested that support for neutralism was higher in Quebec where 30 percent questioned Canada's international commitments. Newspapers in the province, however, did not question the nation's role. René Lévesque, who was a popular host of news programs on

¹¹⁰ Communist Party of Canada, "The Struggle for Total Disarmament, Peace and Independence," 29.

¹¹¹ MURA CCND Box 9 Affiliates – CUCND, YCND, File 2, CUCND Correspondence, pamphlet, "Tim Buck, *Neutrality Now!*" Published by the Communist Party of Canada, July 1960, 10."

¹¹² "No Neutral Role for Canada," *Globe and Mail*, July 4, 1960, 5.

¹¹³ "Feinberg Urges Canadians Lead in World Peace," *Globe and Mail*, December 26, 1960, 5.

¹¹⁴ "Scientists Lack Responsibility: Keenleyside," *Globe and Mail*, March 21, 1961, 1.

¹¹⁵ "Ban-the-Bomb Group Sit Six Hours in Vain," *Globe and Mail*, November 26, 1962, 11.

¹¹⁶ CIPO, *Gallup Poll*, July 1960. The poll asked, "Some people think that because of Canada's geographic position and problems of defence in the event of a nuclear war we should be a neutral nation like Switzerland. Do you agree?" Just 22 percent said yes, 58 percent rejected this idea and 16 percent did not know. 4 percent responded with a qualified response and 31 percent in Quebec did not know. At the same time, 32 percent of the public supported Canada's military policies and those who were critical wanted a build-up not a reduction. J.I. Gow, "Opinions of French Canadians in Quebec on the Problem of War and Peace, 1945-1960" (Ph.D. diss., Laval University, 1969), 925.

Radio Canada in Quebec, was one of the few journalists in the province to take a stand against NATO and NORAD. Lévesque had worked as a war correspondent in both the Second World War and the Korean War. Elected in 1960, he served in the cabinet of the provincial Liberal government. However, he left the party and, as the leader of the Parti Québécois, formed the first separatist provincial government in 1976. Lévesque was a vocal supporter of Canadian neutrality in the early sixties. He expressed a moderate view, however, and suggested that Canada remain in its alliances until they were up for renewal and at that time it could reduce its participation to a minimum. He believed that the cost of being the world's largest middle power was high and that the position meant nothing. Canada added nothing to NATO and did not gain security from NORAD. Instead it wasted billions of dollars a year of defence spending, he argued.¹¹⁷

Spencer concluded that neutralism did not appeal to most Canadians. He believed that Canadians welcomed Minifie's "stimulating" analysis but rejected his "extreme position."¹¹⁸ *Time* magazine explained, "The new neutralists have not made much of an impression on public or government opinion." A cartoon published in *Saturday Night* magazine poked fun at the idea that Canada could escape nuclear destruction as a buffer state. It showed Diefenbaker with Douglas Harkness, in the government fallout shelter, watching as Soviet and American nuclear missiles collided overhead. The caption read, "So we're a buffer state are we?" This cartoon highlighted the fact that geography made neutralism impossible for Canada.¹¹⁹

The threat of nuclear war grew in the spring of 1960. Canadians became more aware of the danger they faced when the Soviet Union shot down an American U-2 spy

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 1024, 1135.

¹¹⁸ Saywell, ed, *Canadian Annual Review*, (1960): 101.

¹¹⁹ *Saturday Night*, June 10, 1961, 31.

plane over its territory. This incident brought the nuclear powers into conflict once again. The Americans tried to find out more about the Soviet Union's military build-up. They were suspicious that the Soviets would not live up to the test ban agreement and, since they did not permit inspectors on their territory, the United States relied on U2 planes to collect military information. President Eisenhower, at first, denied that the plane was involved in espionage against the Soviets. His explanation that the plane collected weather data collapsed when the Soviets announced they capture the plane's pilot, Francis Gary Powers. The Soviets tried Powers for espionage and presented evidence which included photographs he took of Soviet military installations. Howard Green described it as "a very serious incident" and alleged that the United States risked nuclear war with its spy flights.¹²⁰ Khrushchev's announcement that the Soviets would destroy any rocket bases assisting the American spy missions, and the subsequent American promise to defend its allies, appeared to support his claim. Green warned, "If incidents of this kind are to keep occurring, one of these days such as incident might trigger a nuclear war." The Secretary of State for External Affairs qualified his position, "Mind you, we believe in disarmament under control."¹²¹

The Soviets criticized Canada for letting the American U2 planes use its air space. They voiced their suspicions that the American planes actually conducted military missions from Canadian bases. Green refuted allegations that Canada knew about American espionage or assisted in these covert operations. He did disclose the fact that U2 planes flew over Canada for "peaceful purposes" such as the collection of weather and radiation data. During the U2 crisis Canadians learned that Russian planes probed

¹²⁰ "U.S. Risked Nuclear War, Green Says," *Globe and Mail*, May 10, 1960, 1.

¹²¹ Howard Green, House of Commons *Debates*, May 9, 1960; "U.S. Risked Nuclear War, Green Says," *Globe and Mail*, May 10, 1960, 1; "Shattered Dream," *Time*, (Canadian Edition) May 30, 1960, 15.

Canada's DEW-Line. Five percent of the objects picked up by the radar system could not be identified. NORAD authorities explained that these "bogies" were equipped with electronic countermeasures capable of evading the radar net.¹²² The disclosure that both sides were involved in secret military preparations suggested that the risks of the cold war were greater than they appeared on the surface.

The U2 incident set back disarmament negotiations and damaged relations between the Americans and the Soviets. Khrushchev walked out on the Paris Summit, later that month, in protest against the American action.¹²³ The collapse of the peace talks destroyed the rising hopes that peace could be negotiated and cold war differences resolved without nuclear warfare. Diefenbaker blamed Khrushchev for leaving the talks "for totally unjustifiable reasons." He warned the Soviet leader that he would not succeed in his attempts to divide the west.¹²⁴ The incident strengthened the resolve of the government to provide a strong defence against communism and to stand firm with its ally. The *Canadian Annual Review* concluded, "The Summit failure thus led the government towards emphasizing collective security and an emphatic rejection of the isolation and neutralism."¹²⁵ In the aftermath of the crisis Diefenbaker refused to answer questions about the Bomarc or Canada's involvement with nuclear weapons in the House of Commons. He would only say that no decision had been made.¹²⁶

It appeared as if events in the spring of 1960 might benefit Canada's civil defence program. Requests for information about shelters climbed in the midst of the war jitters following the failure of the Summit. Federal civil defence officials received 3000

¹²² *Time*, (Canadian Edition) May 30, 1960, 15; "Naked North," May 23, 1960, 11; May 3, 1960, 12.

¹²³ Glazov, *Canadian Policy toward Khrushchev's Soviet Union*, 93-4.

¹²⁴ *Time*, (Canadian Edition) May 30 1960, 15.

¹²⁵ Saywell, ed, *Canadian Annual Review*, (1961): 101.

¹²⁶ "Dief Won't Talk About Nuclear Warheads," *Toronto Daily Star*, June 9, 1960, 30.

requests for their new shelter pamphlet in four days. Authorities in Toronto reported that, instead of the average of twelve calls per week, the number grew to 200 inquiries. They described the callers as “sensible people worried about their families” rather than “cranks.” Efforts to publicize fallout shelters received a boost during the crisis. Nathan Philips, the mayor of Toronto, announced he would build his own basement shelter.¹²⁷ A mobile display of a basement shelter toured the country. Thousands of residents of Toronto viewed a full-size mobile display of a basement fallout shelter.¹²⁸ Mrs. Thomson, the advice columnist for the *Globe and Mail*, received requests for guidance about fallout shelters. She suggested that a concerned reader could take steps to protect her family in a nuclear attack and should consult a government pamphlet on shelters.¹²⁹

Most officials outside of Toronto, however, reported that interest in civil defence did not change. Federal civil defence authorities received no telephone calls in the week of the crisis. An official in Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario concluded there were no signs of “public alarm.” He pointed to the short-lived interest in civil defence plans, “When things quiet down, requests dwindle to almost nothing. ... When Khrushchev kisses a few babies and is all smiles for the public, things ease off.”¹³⁰ Even in Toronto administrators faced obstacles in their attempts to accelerate planning. As world tensions escalated, they announced plans to test the city’s warning system. Just six city blocks were covered with sirens. However, the news of the test “scared people half to death” and the city called off the drill.¹³¹

¹²⁷ “Plans A-Haven, Cellar Security for Mayor,” *Globe and Mail*, July 19, 1960, 5.

¹²⁸ *Civil Defence Canada*, 2:10 November 1960, cover page, caption.

¹²⁹ “Need Expert Advice On Family Shelters,” *Globe and Mail*, August 17, 1960, 13.

¹³⁰ “CD Officials Report Wave of War Jitters After Summit Failure,” *Globe and Mail*, May 23, 1960, 17.

¹³¹ “Waffle on the Griddle For Ordering Raid Drill,” *Globe and Mail*, July 8, 1960, 5.

Maclean's magazine surveyed the preparations taken by members of the federal government and Canada's mayors for a nuclear attack. The results of this poll verified the poor results of the civil defence campaign. Few of these officials intended to build shelters. Pearkes lived in an apartment without a shelter. Pearson had "no plans at present to build one." Hazen Argue, a representative from Saskatchewan and the leader of the federal CCF party, laughed at the idea of being able to afford a home both above and below ground.¹³² A Gallup poll showed that few Canadians were prepared for a nuclear attack. Ninety five percent had done nothing to ready themselves for a thermonuclear explosion. Of the five percent who had taken some action their preparations included storing food, preparing a shelter, reading a pamphlet, attending a civil defence lecture or taking a home nursing course. While authorities believed that half of the fatalities in a nuclear war could be prevented with the proper protection, four out of ten surveyed did not know what to do to protect themselves or their families. Many responded, optimistically, that they would stay put and hope for the best.¹³³ A slight majority said they would not build a shelter for five hundred dollars. The interest was greatest in Ontario and Quebec and lowest in Western Canada. A clear majority of those questioned

¹³² "Will any of the fallout-shelter boosters build one?" *Maclean's*, July 30, 1960, 1.

¹³³ CIPO, *Gallup Poll*, June 22, 1960. "Suppose you had the warning that enemy bombers and missiles with nuclear warheads were heading toward points in Canada- what would you do to protect yourself and your family?" 42 percent had no idea what to do or would do nothing and 39 percent would seek shelter in a basement, underground or in a hole, with a small percentage of that group responding that they would prepare the basement with water, food and first aid supplies and seal it off. 12 percent would evacuate, 3 percent said they would pray and another 3 percent would call a civil defence official. 14 percent either did not know or had not thought about the issue. June 25 1960. "Have you done anything to prepare for this kind of war emergency?" 95 percent had done nothing to prepare and 5 percent had taken some action. June 29, 1960. "Suppose that a home shelter could be built for under \$500 would you be interested in paying to have one built for you and your family or not?" In the national survey, 43 percent said yes they would be interested, 47 said no they would not be interested and 10 percent did not know. In the Maritimes 44 percent said yes, 44 percent said no and 12 percent did not know. In Quebec 48 percent said yes, 42 percent said no and 10 percent did not know. In Ontario 44 percent said yes, 43 percent said no and 13 percent did not know. In Western Canada 36 percent said yes, 56 percent said no and 8 percent did not know; "Would you favour or oppose a law which would require each community to build public bomb shelters?" 74 percent responded yes, 20 percent responded no and 6 percent had no opinion.

supported the construction of public shelters as long as the government took responsibility and paid for their construction. Pearkes concluded, "The results were not encouraging." The polls suggested the "vagueness and fatalism" Canadians felt toward survival in a nuclear war.¹³⁴

Fears about nuclear war grew in the midst of these international events and motivated more concerned citizens to speak out about their fears. The crises mobilized many to take action in order to prevent war and the nuclear disarmament movement expanded in the spring of 1960. Lotta Dempsey, a contributor to the *Toronto Star*, took on the subject of nuclear war in her women's column. She recounted her feelings in the midst of the U2 and Summit crises: "I felt like shutting my eyes and my heart to the whole terrifying mess.... But the grave headlines wouldn't let me. I had to face the fact that the world was in a cataclysmic danger of dissolving, with all the millions of people thereon." She suggested that the efforts of Canadian women might improve the deteriorating international situation and prevent nuclear war, "It seems to me that if we had summit conferences of women dedicated to the welfare of children all over the world, we might reach an understanding."¹³⁵ Her columns resonated with her readers and hundreds of women from across the country wrote letters to Dempsey. They recounted their feelings of helplessness and their fears for their children and the future.¹³⁶

New groups also emerged to speak out on nuclear issues in the aftermath of the cold war crises in the spring of 1960. At the end of May "a group of eminent citizens" announced plans to form the Toronto Committee for Disarmament (TCD). The new group opposed the acquisition of nuclear arms for Canada's armed forces and asserted,

¹³⁴ Roy, *For Most Conspicuous Bravery*, 302.

¹³⁵ Lotta Dempsey, "Private Line," *Toronto Daily Star*, May 21, 1960, 62.

¹³⁶ McMahon, "Politics of Canada's Nuclear Policy," 156.

“The only alternative to peace is not war – it is death.” Rabbi Feinberg participated in these efforts and concluded that Canadians took the threat of nuclear war more seriously, “People are in deep anxiety and drenched with fear.”¹³⁷ The TCD organized a disarmament rally at Toronto’s Massey Hall to protest the spread of nuclear weapons to non-nuclear nations. The event attracted 2000 people. Hundreds of university students carried placards with slogans that stressed the nuclear risks faced by Canadians: “No Veterans after WWII,” “Every Test Kills,” and “End the Bomb Test for Good.”¹³⁸ Philip Noel-Baker, a British Labour politician, Quaker and the 1959 Nobel Peace Prize winner, addressed the rally and pointed to Canada’s stake in disarmament. He warned, “No country is more menaced by the arms race. None has greater interest in it being stopped.”¹³⁹ Canada would be the next Poland in a nuclear war. When asked to comment on Canada’s nuclear armed Bomarc, Noel-Baker declined explaining it would be “political dynamite” to take a position on this issue. He would only say that he regretted the spread of nuclear arms.¹⁴⁰ Other speakers included Reverend Thomson, Rabbi Feinberg, David Gauthier, Jean Newman, a city politician, and Helen Tucker, a lecturer in speech therapy at the University of Toronto.¹⁴¹ Josephine Davis, a housewife and the wife of CBC television personality Fred Davis, announced her plans to form a women’s disarmament group. She had worked as a script writer for the BBC before she immigrated to Canada. She was employed at the CBC and the National Film Board until she was married in 1956. Jo Davis had supported causes including refugee relief before she turned to peace work. She told the gathering that the worst part of living under the

¹³⁷ “Line Up ‘Nobodies’ To Stop H-Bombs,” *Toronto Daily Star*, May 29, 1960, 7.

¹³⁸ “Varsity Students Back Disarm Rally,” *Toronto Daily Star*, June 11, 1960, 9.

¹³⁹ “Noel-Baker Says Canada Could Be Poland of Third War,” *Globe and Mail*, June 11, 1960, 4.

¹⁴⁰ “Disarm or Die, Peace Prize Winner Warns World,” *Toronto Daily Star*, June 10, 1960, 29.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*

nuclear threat was the feeling of helplessness. The new organization would provide Canadian women with a positive outlet for their anxieties about the future of their children.¹⁴² Rabbi Feinberg, who told the crowd that there was no alternative to disarmament except for death, revealed that in the week leading up to the rally he received several warnings from prominent individuals about the committee's left-wing connections.¹⁴³ He defended the group's reputation and proclaimed, "This is the first rally held in Toronto that is not Red-tinged."¹⁴⁴

Soon after the rally, Jo Davis, Dorothy Henderson and Lotta Dempsey travelled to Ottawa to ask politicians for advice about their plans to form a women's peace group.¹⁴⁵ They hoped to make contact with communist women in order to reduce cold war enmity and encourage peace. They were confident that women could succeed in reaching peace where male leaders had failed. Davis explained, "We would like to feel they are in favour of us before going any further. So many groups such as ours are criticized and smeared ... and we don't want this to happen to us. We will try to gain official approval to prevent it." She stressed the "strictly" non-political nature of the group.¹⁴⁶ Davis also expressed her belief that it was necessary to work for peace with a "calm and reasoned approach." She added, "Otherwise we will have provided the sceptics with the evidence they want to dismiss us as a 'bunch of hysterical women.'"¹⁴⁷ After a ninety minute meeting with the women, Pearson announced, "I have never seen anything like it."¹⁴⁸ Paul Martineau, the parliamentary secretary, told reporters that the women were "not

¹⁴² "Women in Tears At A-Bomb Horror," *Toronto Daily Star*, June 11, 1960, 9.

¹⁴³ "Feinberg Would See K. To End Arms Buildup," *Toronto Daily Star*, June 11, 1960, 9.

¹⁴⁴ "Varsity Students Back Disarm Rally," *Toronto Daily Star*, June 11, 1960, 9.

¹⁴⁵ NA VOW, MG 28 I218 Vol 7, file 15, "VOW Declaration."

¹⁴⁶ "Group to See Diefenbaker on Disarmament," *Toronto Daily Star*, June 11, 1960, 33.

¹⁴⁷ Voice of Women, *Newsletter*, 1960.

¹⁴⁸ Lotta Dempsey, "The Leaders Listened!" *Toronto Daily Star*, Jun 16, 1960, 64.

Reds, but naïve.”¹⁴⁹ In a wire sent to Diefenbaker in advance of the delegation, the Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire “expressed reservations” about the VOW and announced that the peace group did not have its support.¹⁵⁰ Henderson, too, voiced her concerns about both Davis’ aggressive leadership style and the fact that the group was moving too fast.¹⁵¹

Soon after this trip to Ottawa 100 women, “mostly young mothers,” attended the VOW’s founding meeting in Toronto. They opposed “the “unthinkable and insane” prospect of nuclear war.” The group’s declaration reflected its focus on women’s concern for peace as mothers. It claimed it was an outrage “to be forced to raise our children under the gross tensions of the cold war.” Davis announced the group received six hundred letters of support from women across the country “concerned about the survival of their children.”¹⁵² The group explained why it was open to women only including “the fact that women are, on the whole, less bound than men by political and economic ties and they are able to express directly the hopes of all mothers for the survival and happiness of their children.”¹⁵³ From its start the VOW opposed nuclear arms for Canada. Davis, named the group’s vice-president and chairman of its campaign committee, announced its first opportunity for action; a letter-writing campaign in support

¹⁴⁹ “Green Backs ‘Voice of Women’ - Plan Seeks Female Peace Movement,” *Montreal Gazette*, June 16, 1960, 1.

¹⁵⁰ NA VOW MG I218 Vol 1 Correspondence Members of Parliament, Clipping, “Letter to the Editor of the *Calgary Herald*, from E.S., June 12, 1961.”

¹⁵¹ Ball, “History of the Voice of Women,” 126-7.

¹⁵² “Women of Canada Say ‘No Atom War,’” *Toronto Daily Star*, July 29, 1960, 15.

¹⁵³ NA VOW MG 28 I218 Vol 7 File 24 “Ten Questions about Voice of Women.”

of a nuclear-free Canada. VOW members were instructed to express support for any and all parties that would keep Canada free from nuclear weapons.¹⁵⁴

The group also succeeded in gaining support from prominent Canadian women like Toby Robins, a popular actress and regular panellist on the *Front Page Challenge*, June Callwood, a writer, Janet Berton, Mrs. André Laurendeau, Jean Argue, the wife of Hazen Argue, and Senators Nancy Hodges, Elsie Inman, Olivia Irvine, Marianna Jodoin and Josephine Quart.¹⁵⁵ Maryon Pearson, the wife of Lester Pearson, was a woman who remained uncomfortable in the public eye. She became best known perhaps for her sarcastic and often-cited quotation, "Behind every successful man is a surprised woman." Despite her university education and desire for a career, she became a wife, mother and homemaker.¹⁵⁶ Maryon Pearson experienced loneliness during her husband's frequent absences and disliked the public attention directed toward her life.¹⁵⁷ Maryon Pearson, eager to find a purpose in her public role as the wife of the Leader of the Opposition, joined the Voice of Women with her daughter Patsy. Mrs. Pearson voiced her fears that, without women, men would plunge the world into nuclear war.¹⁵⁸ She expressed her concerns in a letter to the leaders of the VOW. Mrs. Pearson, who had travelled behind the Iron Curtain with her husband in 1955, supported their efforts to work with Communist women for peace:

¹⁵⁴ NA VOW MG 28 I218 VOW Vol 1 File Correspondence - Members of Parliament, "Letters to Members from Josephine Davis, Vice-President and Chairman of Campaign Committee, and Muriel Jacobson, International Affairs Chairman, July 30, 1960."

¹⁵⁵ Irvine and Quart were supporters of the Progressive Conservative Party. Inman, Jodoin and Hodges supported the Liberal Party. Ball, "The History of the Voice of Women," 145.

¹⁵⁶ John English, *The Life of Lester Pearson*, vol. 1, *Shadow of Heaven: 1897-1948*, (Toronto: Lester & Orpen Dennys, 1989): 115-116. John English described her wish to use her mind rather than just cook following marriage. She briefly attended business courses to learn typing but quit. At home she tried needlepoint but hated it.

¹⁵⁷ Lester B. Pearson, *Mike: The Memoirs of the Right Honourable Lester B. Pearson*, vol. 3, ed. John A. Munro and Alex I. Inglis (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1975): 22.

¹⁵⁸ Voice of Women, *Newsletter*, 1960, n.p.

If we, women of the West, could succeed in reaching the women on the other side of the 'curtain' ... – with no political overtures, but only as mothers of young children whose lives or well-being are at stake under this terrible threat of atomic fall-out, not to mention bombs, I think we could start a chain reaction toward peace instead of war. Anyhow, it is certainly worth trying. I am sure many mothers (and grandmothers) in Canada feel helpless and horror-struck under the terrible threat that hangs over us, and would be anxious and enthusiastic to do what they could to stop it.¹⁵⁹

Olive Diefenbaker, the wife of the prime minister, anticipated a potential conflict between her husband's public role and her participation in anti-nuclear activities. Unlike Maryon Pearson she refused a request to support the VOW. No one could disagree with its aim, she explained, but it "would be a liability" if she sponsored a group involved in "controversial" actions.¹⁶⁰ She would be in a difficult position indeed if her husband's political position ever conflicted with the VOW's stand on an issue. Olive Diefenbaker foresaw one of the major difficulties of the VOW and other groups like it. It would not be easy to maintain the non-political and non-partisan basis of such organizations as they spoke out on nuclear issues including the politicized issue of nuclear arms for Canada.

While the VOW based its interest in nuclear issues on the concerns of its members as women, male fears were also to blame for the trials of the VOW. Helen Tucker later recalled, "...[W]omen were being a little too bold for their status and so this was threatening to their husband's politics."¹⁶¹ To reduce the threat the group adopted a "proper" approach to nuclear protests. They wore hats and gloves as they marched through the streets of Toronto "because the Voice of Women was very disturbing to our men folk." Some members reported that they fought with their husbands and faced complaints such as "What do you think you're doing?" and "You know it's wrecking our

¹⁵⁹ Maryon Pearson, "Letter of Acceptance as Honorary Sponsor," *Voice of Women, Newsletter*, 1960.

¹⁶⁰ Christine Ball, "The History of the Voice of Women/La Voix des Femmes: The Early Years, 1960-1963" (Ph.D. diss., University of Toronto, 1992), 146.

¹⁶¹ Ball, "History of the Voice of Women," 209-10.

lives.” Husbands lamented about a number of shortcomings at home; many complained that they and their children had to wait for their supper because of their wives’ busy schedules.¹⁶² Other members of the group pointed to the support and understanding they received from their spouses. These supportive men did not complain about cold dinners, increased child-rearing responsibilities or absent wives.¹⁶³ Muriel Duggan, the VOW office manager, even enlisted the help of her husband and five daughters and, together, they assembled the group’s newsletter on Friday nights.¹⁶⁴

The CCCRH encountered divisions over its stand on the nuclear weapons issue. Its members agreed to oppose nuclear tests and to support efforts toward disarmament. However, they could not agree on whether the group should take a position on the more contentious domestic political issue of nuclear arms acquisition. Hugh Keenleyside outlined the purpose of the CCCRH at its first national meeting in June 1960. He told the delegates, “The Committee has been set up to draw public attention to the dangers of radiation arising from both peaceful and military use of nuclear energy.”¹⁶⁵ He was, like Lester Pearson, a history professor who left the academic world for a career as a diplomat in the department of external affairs. He had worked for the United Nations and served as a deputy minister in Louis St. Louis’s government. By a margin of fourteen to twelve, delegates at the CCCRH meeting voted against taking a stand on nuclear arms acquisition by Canada. A disappointed Mary Van Stolk explained the group’s decision:

If we do tackle this Bomarc thing, we will of course step down from our present position of security and “I told you so” level of nuclear testing, back to the

¹⁶² *Ibid.*, 126; “600 rode ’62 Peace Train,” *Montreal Gazette*, March 5, 1989, D-6.

¹⁶³ Ball, “History of the Voice of Women,” 210.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 221.

¹⁶⁵ “Most Humans Insane, Radiation Conference Told by Keenleyside,” *Globe and Mail*, June 14, 1960, 15.

crackpot, and 'do you want the Russians to come over and rape all the women?' area, which means it will be working on the long fight upward again.¹⁶⁶

She believed that choosing to work against the government's policy on nuclear arms would challenge both the group's respectability and its non-partisan base.

Polls suggested that Canadians did not believe that they, as individuals, could help prevent another war. The majority of those sampled could not think of anything everyday people could do to prevent World War Three. Those who expressed optimism about their influence on peace and war suggested that they could make a difference using prayer, returning to Christianity, living by the Golden Rule, helping needy nations, using the vote, promoting better understanding and friendly relations or becoming better informed on world issues. A small percentage believed the answer was to ban the bomb. Some who responded appeared to have shared the VOW's interest in creating relationships with other people in the world and establishing understanding in place of animosity. However, joining a peace group, signing a petition or participating in a protest march did not appear in the responses.¹⁶⁷

Prime Minister Diefenbaker summarized his government's attempt to combine a strong defence, an effective civil defence system and support for disarmament:

Our fervent hope and most vital endeavour is peace for all mankind assured by general disarmament and a mutual confidence that all nations will resolve their differences without resort to force. However, until then, one of our most vital means of ensuring peace is by being prepared to defend ourselves and including preparations to meet situations at home which war would bring for all of us.¹⁶⁸

¹⁶⁶ MURA CCND Box 8 Edmonton Branch Files, File 8 Edmonton CND Correspondence with Montreal CND, "Letter from Mary Van Stolk to Frank Scott, August 2, 1960." Scott, a professor at McGill and social democratic intellectual, voted against accepting Point 4, the CCCRH resolution against nuclear arms for Canada. Buck, "Neutrality Now!"

¹⁶⁷ CIPO, *Gallup Poll*, July 1960. "Can you think of something people like yourselves could do to help prevent another war?" 55 percent of those sampled answered no and 45 percent responded yes.

¹⁶⁸ John Diefenbaker, "Christmas Greeting," *Civil Defence Bulletin*, 2:6, November-December 1959, 1.

Before 1959, Canadians learned that Canada's geographic location and its close defence ties with the United States increased the chances the nation would be involved in a third world war. Soviet attacks on the United States would pass directly overhead. The radioactive fallout from any explosion south of the border could harm Canadians. By the late fifties the government announced decisions in its defence policy that directly involved Canada with nuclear weapons. Canada, its people and its soldiers would become direct targets in a third world war. Government planning in the areas of defence and civil defence continued. The nation's leaders worked to support progress toward disarmament in international circles. The nuclear disarmament movement continued to grow with the formation of the Toronto Committee of Disarmament (TCD) and the Voice of Women (VOW). Student protestors and communists spoke out against the Bomarc. Neutralists called on the government to withdraw from NORAD and NATO in order to pursue a neutral and safer role in the cold war. Public opinion surveys, however, showed that Canadians remained optimistic about their security. Most believed the hydrogen bomb would be banished by 1980. A significant majority did not believe there would be a nuclear war between the Soviets and Americans in the next twenty years.¹⁶⁹ Regardless of the growing risk of war in 1960, the priority placed on nuclear issues by the Diefenbaker government and an expanding nuclear disarmament, Canadians, on the whole, did not appear to be mobilized by the nuclear threat.

¹⁶⁹ CIPO, *Gallup Poll*, January 30, 1960. "In twenty years will all countries have ceased to manufacture hydrogen bombs or anything like them?" 44 percent said yes, 42 percent said no and 14 percent did not know. "In twenty years will atomic warfare have occurred between Russia and the United States?" 13 percent believed there would have been a nuclear war, 69 percent felt there would not have been one and 18 percent did not know.

Chapter Four:

“Nuclear Weapons if Necessary, Not Necessarily Nuclear Weapons:” The Debate over Canada’s Nuclear Defence and the Berlin Crisis, 1960-61.

The discussion of nuclear issues seemed to grow from the time the government announced it would arm Canadian forces with nuclear warheads. Nuclear disarmament efforts expanded and drew support from Canadian students and professors, unionists, religious leaders, journalists and women. Opposition to nuclear arms grew as the Liberal party, unions, Canadian newspapers and disarmament groups campaigned against the government’s policy. Civil defence received greater priority from Prime Minister Diefenbaker. His government continued its efforts to provide a strong defence at the same time as it encouraged progress toward disarmament. It persisted in its attempts to move the public to adopt civil defence measures. Diefenbaker believed that anti-nuclear sentiment was strong and, in late 1960, revised his nuclear arms policies to reflect public opinion. The CUCND expressed optimism about its campaign against nuclear arms. It believed that it was successfully “breaching the ‘wall of silence’” on what it described as “the greatest issue of our time.”¹ Yet, the nuclear disarmament movement struggled to unite around a common program and suffered accusations about its motives and inspiration. The Berlin Crisis in the late summer of 1961 brought the world close to nuclear war. Canadian politicians and disarmament supporters considered Canada’s defence policy, its security and the best way to protect its population from a nuclear attack amidst the climbing cold war tensions.

In August 1960 Diefenbaker outlined his views on public protection. He explained that he did not accept two commons views about survival in a nuclear conflict.

¹ MURA, CUCND-SUPA, Box 7 File 11, Early CUCND Policy Statements, etc., “Provisional Policy Statement,” August, 1960.

He rejected the belief “that nuclear war is so awesome in character that it will never occur.” He also did not agree that if war did break out “all, or nearly all, of our people will inevitably perish.” Diefenbaker described both of these attitudes as “negative and dangerous” for “they counselled Canadians to do nothing in the face of possible danger.” He reassured the public: “If there is a nuclear attack on Canada a great deal can be done by the government and by individuals to enable this country to survive the awful terror of nuclear war.” The Prime Minister announced that his government planned to triple its expenditures on civil defence in the next year. Federal spending would climb from 10 million to 36 million dollars.² Diefenbaker insisted that every Canadian family should build its own fallout shelter.³ He announced that he had built one in the basement of the Prime Minister’s official residence at 24 Sussex Drive in Ottawa at a cost of 450 dollars to provide “some protection during a nuclear attack.”⁴ While the government continued to emphasize the need for fallout shelters it left it up to the individual to decide to build one or to evacuate instead.⁵ An underground bunker, nicknamed the ‘Diefenbunker,’ was erected in Carp, Ontario, twenty miles west of Ottawa, at a cost of 20 million dollars. It would provide space so that 500 key officials from the government, the press and civil defence planning, but no women, would survive. These hand-picked officials would work to ensure the continuity of government in the chaos after a nuclear war.⁶

This was not the only government plan designed to defend Canada in the event of a nuclear attack. Major-General George Pearkes, the minister of national defence in the Conservative government, described the effects of a nuclear attack on Canadian targets

² John Diefenbaker, *House of Commons Debates*, August 10, 1960, 7942.

³ John Diefenbaker, *House of Commons Debates*, August 10, 1960, 7942.

⁴ John G. Diefenbaker, *One Canada: memoirs of the Right Honourable John G. Diefenbaker*, vol. 2, *Years of Achievement, 1957-1962* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1977): 296.

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ *Time*, (Canadian Edition) October 6, 1961, 12.

and outlined the steps his department had taken to prepare for war. Twice every day it mapped radiation paths for every likely target in the country. He explained that the effects of a nuclear explosion could not be anticipated. They would vary and change depending on wind patterns and weather. To underline the scale of the threat, he detailed the possible effects of a bomb dropped on the nation's new anti-missile installation in northern Ontario. The hypothetical blast would kill all people living within a two mile radius and would destroy all buildings within a ten mile radius, including the entire city of North Bay. Within five hours, fallout would blanket an area that reached within fifteen miles of Montreal. He followed this graphic account with the reassurance that it was unlikely the Soviets would waste a bomb on such a target.⁷ The government believed that a simple fallout shelter would provide protection from huge cloud of dangerous fallout. Pearkes' demonstration showed that even those Canadians who lived outside of target areas would not be safe and should take steps to survive a nuclear attack.

As the Conservative government worked to protect Canada in the event of a nuclear war, the other two major parties debated their policies on nuclear weapons. At a Liberal conference in Kingston, Ontario in the summer of 1960, James Eayrs, who was not a member of the Liberal Party, reminded delegates that the Soviet danger was real. He recommended that Canada should increase its commitment to NATO and NORAD so that it was contributing to the containment of the Soviet Union. He explained to the delegates, "Power was still an opportunity, not a threat."⁸ The *Globe and Mail* reported,

⁷ "Effect of Bomb on Bomarc Site Described to House by Pearkes," *Globe and Mail*, June 25, 1960, 3; *Time*, (Canadian Edition) January 18, 1960, 8.

⁸ Robert Bothwell, Ian Drummond and John English, *Canada since 1945: power, politics and provincialism*, Rev ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1989): 240.

“The discussion on nuclear weapons was rousing and at times heated.”⁹ In the end delegates were not moved by Eayrs. They viewed nuclear arms as a threat and called for a non-nuclear defence. Pearson defended the new platform and denied that it was a step toward “neutralism or anything like that.”¹⁰

Canada’s social democratic political party also encountered divisions over its stand on defence and nuclear issues. The CCF opposed nuclear weapons for Canadian forces and demanded that Canada withdraw from both NATO and NORAD. Kenneth McNaught, a history professor at the University of Toronto and a CCF supporter, was a vocal spokesman for non-alignment. He “saw real military danger in Canada’s membership in NATO.”¹¹ Yet, McNaught distinguished between the neutrality of the 1930s and cold war neutralism. He called on Canada to withdraw from military alliances but continue to exert a positive influence in international affairs. The CLC, a labour organization with close ties to the CCF, also rejected nuclear arms for Canada. Claude Jodoin, its president, explained, “We do not need atomic warheads in Canada and we cannot effectively maintain them.” The CLC and the CCF, however, split on the issue of neutralism for Canada. Jodoin believed that isolation was not possible for Canada; as an “internationally minded” nation it should remain in NATO and the United Nations.¹² The CLC fought almost as hard to oppose neutralism as it did against the government’s policy on nuclear arms. Jodoin hesitated in backing the CCND’s national petition against nuclear weapons for Canada. He demanded that a statement be added to the appeal rejecting neutralism “in order to avoid if possible any

⁹ “Liberal Group Wants Canada to Renounce All Nuclear Weapons,” *Globe and Mail*, January 10, 1961, 13.

¹⁰ *Time*, (Canadian Edition) August 15, 1960, 15.

¹¹ “Canada Advised to Drop Aggressive Arms,” *Globe and Mail*, April 29, 1960, 4.

¹² “Third Constitutional Conference, April 25, 1960, Montreal,” *Canadian Labour*, May 1960, 9.

tendency to identify this campaign for nuclear disarmament with unilateral disarmament or neutralism.” Jodoin explained that he did not think the CCND was the “proper vehicle” for the fight against nuclear arms.¹³

Political parties engaged in a heated debate over Canada’s defence policy and its role in the world. Nevertheless, many politicians continued to appear indifferent to the nuclear threat. *Time* magazine argued that sparsely attended defence debates in Parliament “revealed the depth of uncertainty about the effect of nuclear arms, an uncertainty shared by its sensitive Prime Minister.”¹⁴ Robert Spencer, writing in the *Canadian Annual Review*, pointed out that “members were more interested in consulting railway timetables than in debating the problems on defence in the H-bomb era.”¹⁵ He concluded, “The bewilderment over defence policies extends from sea to sea.”¹⁶

Bothwell, Drummond and English point to the large and vocal anti-nuclear lobby in Canada by 1960.¹⁷ A group of university professors, labour and clergy representatives and journalists in Montreal demanded that the Diefenbaker government refuse nuclear arms for Canada. It alleged that the greatest threat to Canada was not an attack by Russia but an accidental nuclear war. The men who endorsed the open letter included many previously involved in disarmament efforts such as the Reverend James Thomson and André Laurendeau. A number of union leaders also supported the appeal including Claude Jodoin, Roger Mathieu, the president of the Canadian Catholic Confederation of

¹³ MURA, CCND, Box 10 File 11 Letter from Claude Jodoin, President of CLC, to all Federations, Labour Councils and Affiliated Organizations, June 21, 1961; Box 10 Correspondence with other Canadian Organizations, File 11, Canadian Labour Unions, Miscellaneous. Letter from Claude Jodoin to Mary Van Stolk, January 25, 1961.

¹⁴ “Nuclear Dilemma,” *Time*, (Canadian Edition) July 25, 1960, 7.

¹⁵ Saywell, ed. *Canadian Annual Review*, (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1960): 120.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 118.

¹⁷ Bothwell, Drummond and English, *Canada Since 1945*, 231.

Labour, Roger Provost, the president of the Quebec Federation of Labour (QFL).¹⁸ *Maclean's* magazine announced its opposition to the Bomarc and suggested that the project be cancelled: "For the first time since World War II a real political issue is developing in Canada – no mere name-calling contest or vote of non-confidence, but a genuine and profound difference of view on a question of great importance."¹⁹ While the Anglican Church of Canada opposed nuclear tests, its bishops and priests did not take a stand on the nuclear weapons issue. They explained that they did not want to take a position on what was a technical, rather than a moral, issue. They concluded that it was an issue outside of their field of knowledge and on that did not offer a role for the individual.²⁰ The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church urged the government to work for disarmament and a permanent end to nuclear testing but did not take a stand on nuclear arms for Canada in 1961.²¹ The Home and School Association also found it difficult to agree on whether it should adopt a position on nuclear issues. Members expressed concerns that they did not have the knowledge to take a stand and also feared being labelled as sympathetic to communism.²²

Diefenbaker may have been convinced of the strength of the nuclear disarmament movement but it continued to face difficulties. It struggled to remain united and to gain support. In an appearance on her husband's quiz program, *Front Page Challenge*, Jo Davis reported that the group was "going strong."²³ By mid November the group had 500

¹⁸ "An Open Letter to John G. Diefenbaker," *Montreal Star*, October 1, 1960, 6.

¹⁹ "Let's not let politics distort the issue of nuclear weapons," *Maclean's* September 10, 1960, 4; "Why We're Against Canada Bearing Nuclear Arms," *Maclean's*, November 19, 1960, 4.

²⁰ "Anglicans Avoid Atom Arms Issue," *Toronto Daily Star*, October 5, 1961, 31.

²¹ "Churches and nuclear arms," *The Observer*, February 1, 1963, 7.

²² "Parent-Teacher Body Vetoes Nuclear Ban," *Globe and Mail*, June 8, 1961, 8; "World Peace Debated By Home and School," *Globe and Mail*, June 7, 1961, 13.

²³ Lotta Dempsey, "Private Line," *Toronto Daily Star*, November 4, 1960, 54.

paid members and 4000 on its mailing list.²⁴ It had also spread outside Toronto. The small Nova Scotia branch of the VOW began to meet late in the year. However, its numbers were not large; it began with 23 and six months later had grown to just 50 members.²⁵ *Maclean's* reported that a number of members of the national organization dropped out because its plan was "too vague and idealistic." Divisions over purpose and approach were already clear:

Just what the Voice of Women plans to do eventually depends on whom you talk to. Everyone seems to agree about holding a women's summit conference. But Helen Tucker, VoW's president, is in favor of having that conference set forth concrete proposals such as a freeze on nuclear weapons and a ban on all nuclear tests, while the vice-president Jo Davis, says, 'I don't consider the technical side of disarmament to be women's function. I would like to see the essential qualities of women – patience, tolerance and perseverance – brought to bear in international councils.'²⁶

Davis stressed traditional maternal feminism. She believed women were well-suited to peace work because of their natural qualities as mothers and nurturers. Tucker, unlike Jo Davis who described herself as a 'non-joiner,' was active in many causes. She was the president of her local UN committee, a delegate to UNESCO, a committee dedicated to education, science and culture within the United Nations, a supporter of the YWCA and the chairman of her Unitarian Church board. A supporter of the Toronto Committee for Disarmament, Tucker's approach to nuclear issues differed from that of Davis. She believed that the VOW should inform itself on military and political issues and take specific positions on disarmament issues.

The anniversary of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima became another divisive issue within disarmament circles. For some, Hiroshima became a symbol of nuclear

²⁴ "Start Halifax 'Voice' Chapter," *Toronto Daily Star*, November 26, 1960, 63.

²⁵ Marion Kerans, *Muriel Duckworth: A Very Active Pacifist: a biography*, (Halifax, N.S.: Fernwood, 1996): 90-1.

²⁶ "What two Canadian groups are doing to wage peace," *Maclean's*, November 19, 1960, 1.

devastation. They believed that the recognition of the anniversary of the use of the atomic bomb paid respect to the victims of the attack and was also an effective way to raise concern about nuclear war. Disarmers in Montreal did not agree on whether memorials for Hiroshima were an appropriate activity. In response to CUCND plans for such an event, the CCCRH announced that it considered Hiroshima to be a “side issue.” It stated that it preferred to focus primarily on radiation hazards while smaller groups could be organized for “the reasonably safe discharge of tension about side issues.” The CCCRH concluded that peace activities remained “an area into which many people hate to venture because of fear of being tagged a leftist or of being thought unpatriotic.”²⁷

The nuclear disarmament movement was also divided over the government’s civil defence program. A Toronto Disarmament Committee pamphlet provided a graphic account of a nuclear attack, “If a Hydrogen bomb exploded over Toronto, it is unlikely that many would survive in the whole city.” If a 5-megaton bomb exploded over Toronto all human life within three miles would be wiped out. Anyone who managed to find shelter in a basement within ten miles of the blast would be buried, suffocated or burned. The blast would destroy buildings as far away as Hamilton.²⁸ The pamphlet also debunked the idea of evacuation. It pointed to the congestion caused by summer traffic leaving Toronto on Friday nights. Even if there was time to evacuate the radioactive cloud produced by the explosion would spread over small towns outside Toronto “bringing silent death” to all. The group rejected the government’s civil defence plans as futile. On Hiroshima Day, a few CUCND members painted “Ban the H-Bomb” on a shelter erected at Toronto’s city hall and picketed outside the model. One protestor

²⁷ “Campaign for Fallout Control Has Hazards of Its Own,” *Globe and Mail*, August 6, 1960, 7.

²⁸ NA Rabbi Abrahahm Feinberg MG 31 F9 Vol 4, TCD Publicity 1960, TCD Pamphlet, “There is No Shelter from...” n.d.

charged with malicious damage continued to condemn shelters, “What they’re building is coffins, not shelters.”²⁹

Norman Alcock, the leader of the CPRI, challenged the idea that shelters would offer any protection in the blast area. He also questioned what survivors were expected to do when they came out of the shelter. Alcock concluded that it was wrong to build up people’s hopes that they could survive a nuclear war.³⁰ Jo Davis created controversy when she polled VOW members for their views on fallout shelters. She concluded, “There is a great deal of emotionalism surrounding this whole question.”³¹ Kay Macpherson, a member of the group and its leader from 1963, and Meg Sears, a historian, explained the divisions within the group, “... one side argued that it would be possible to be in favour of a fall-out shelter in the back yard while being opposed to any and all nuclear arms. The other side contended that it would be a ludicrous inconsistency.”³² A group of scientists in Montreal supported the disarmament movement’s contention that shelters would not provide protection. Dr. R.E. Bell, the director of McGill University’s Radiation Laboratory called the government’s shelter program “a vulgar and immoral joke.” Professor René Lévesque, a nuclear physicist and Joseph Sternberg, a radiologist, who both worked for the University of Montreal’s Radiation Protection Committee, expressed their views that fallout shelters were useless. They explained, “Those who try to prepare for survival are living in a fool’s paradise.”³³ The nuclear disarmament movement faced the complex task of combining moderation and respectability with

²⁹ “Ban H-Bomb Painted on New Government Shelter,” *Toronto Star*, July 2, 1960, 1.

³⁰ “Trust Reds Like Other Nations,” *Toronto Daily Star*, December 9, 1960, 27.

³¹ Voice of Women, *Newsletter*, 1960.

³² Kay Macpherson and Meg Sears, “Voice of Women: A History,” in *Women in the Canadian Mosaic*, ed. Gwen Matheson (Toronto: Peter Martin Associates, 1976): 74-75.

³³ C.G. Gifford, “Uncivil Defence- Or the Revolt of the Experts,” *Christian Outlook*, December 1961, 5.

action in their efforts to ensure survival. The wide range of issues made it difficult for activists to reach agreement.

In the summer of 1960 Canada contributed a military force to another cold war conflict, this time in Africa. After it received independence from Belgium, unrest and violence erupted in the Congo. Instability grew in the African nation as colonialism ended and it was drawn into the cold war. Khrushchev intervened in the civil war and the United Nations organized a peacekeeping force. Canada participated in the effort and provided an airlift of food and five hundred military and administrative personnel.³⁴ In a speech delivered at the United Nations in 1960 Diefenbaker attacked the Soviet Union for its subjugation of Eastern Europeans. His confrontational approach contrasted with the Liberal government's policy of strength combined with accommodation. Diefenbaker refused to invite Khrushchev to Canada for a visit at the time of his historic trip to the United States to meet with Eisenhower.³⁵ In his attempt to balance a strong defence with support for disarmament Diefenbaker delayed making a decision about warheads for Canadian armed forces. By November 1960 he revised his position; he promised that his government would not take nuclear arms while progress toward disarmament continued. The Prime Minister explained the reasons for this change:

The question is asked: are you going to provide nuclear weapons for Canadians? ... We have taken the stand that any decision will be delayed while progress towards disarmament continues. To do otherwise would be inconsistent. When and if such weapons are required, then we shall have to take the responsibility. The future of Canadians requires that we make that decision which, in the light of the best information we have, represents the maximum security for our country.³⁶

³⁴ Jamie Glazov, *Canadian Policy toward Khrushchev's Soviet Union*, (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002): 97.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 101.

³⁶ John G. Diefenbaker, "First Among Equals," Address by the Rt. Hon. John G. Diefenbaker, Prime Minister of Canada, to the *Canadian Club of Ottawa*, November 24, 1960, [Ottawa: Office of the Prime Minister] 1960.

Diefenbaker explained his support for disarmament, “We have to continue to press for disarmament without which there cannot be survival, for sooner or later if the armament race continues, either by calculation or miscalculation war must almost inevitably follow.”³⁷ John Keyston, the vice-chairman of the Defence Research Board, challenged the Conservative government’s faith that progress towards disarmament was taking place: “The 1960s had brought a spirit of disarmament and a great upsurge of hopes although there had not yet been any event, proposition, formula or plan that represented a breakthrough toward disarmament.”³⁸ While Diefenbaker postured against the Soviet Union and supported the containment of communism far from home, he continued to delay decisions that influenced the security of Canadians.

The CUCND organized its second annual Christmas protest march with a motorcade to Ottawa in 1960. About 450 young people from Toronto, Montreal, Quebec City and Ottawa, down from the numbers who had marched the previous year, braved the cold weather, empty streets and disapproval of their parents to protest.³⁹ Feinberg continued to express disappointment that Canadian universities were not places of revolt. Canada’s students cared more about rock and roll music, sports and parties than survival in a nuclear war. He lamented that Elvis was the priority for most young people and asked 150 teenage members of the Canadian Students for Nuclear Disarmament to forget about the gyrating rock and roll star. He regretted that campuses were not places of revolt but “scenes of rehearsal for suburbanite middle age.” Feinberg pushed Canada’s students to become more radical and less apathetic about their safety. He stressed the importance

³⁷ *Ibid.*; John G. Diefenbaker, *One Canada: Memoirs of the Right Honourable John G. Diefenbaker*, vol. 3, *The Tumultuous Years, 1962-1967* (Toronto: MacMillan of Canada, 1977): 71.

³⁸ “H-Bomb Helped Peace in 1950s, Role Still Same,” *Globe and Mail*, January 19, 1960, 15.

³⁹ “150 Students Protest Nuclear Weapons,” *Toronto Daily Star*, December 23, 1960, 17.

of the individual in the campaign for peace, "To college students, it is appalling to accept the premise that the individual is basically helpless and disassociated from basic events and decisions." Feinberg believed individual Canadians must demand disarmament instead of deferring to decision-makers: "Of course we shall be told to mind our own business. But peace is our business... War has become too important to leave to generals and politicians."⁴⁰ Feinberg criticized the apathy of Canada's youth and pleaded with them to join the campaign against nuclear weapons on Canadian soil instead. He told them, "Your first job is to arouse your own age-group. The first obstacle is indifference.... Let youth stand up, speak up."⁴¹ Diefenbaker may have changed his nuclear policy and noted the rise in anti-nuclear sentiment, but the nuclear disarmament movement continued to struggle.

Diefenbaker had enjoyed a good relationship with American President Dwight Eisenhower. The two men came from the same generation and called each other by their first names. Eisenhower went out of his way to make the touchy Canadian leader feel comfortable and respected.⁴² In November 1960 Americans chose John F. Kennedy, a young, wealthy and charming Senator from Massachusetts, as their new President. He was the first Roman Catholic to be elected to that office. Unlike his predecessor he did not try to flatter Diefenbaker and even mispronounced his name as "Deefenbawker."⁴³ Diefenbaker described his feelings about the American President, "I considered that he was perfectly capable of taking the world to the brink of thermonuclear destruction to

⁴⁰ "Teen-Agers Boo, Hiss, As Rabbi Feinberg Called Liar, Pro-Red," *Globe and Mail*, October 24, 1960, 1; "Feinberg Urges Canadians Lead in World Peace," *Globe and Mail*, December 26, 1960, 5.

⁴¹ "Feinberg Urges Canadians Lead in World Peace," *Globe and Mail*, December 26, 1960, 5.

⁴² Diefenbaker, *One Canada*, vol. 3, *The Tumultuous Years*, 59-60.

⁴³ J.L. Granatstein, "Hail to the Chief: The Incomparable Campaigner Who Squandered a Historic Majority," *Policy Options*, (June-July 2003): 61.

prove himself the man for our times, a courageous champion of Western democracy.”⁴⁴ Both men developed a strong distaste for the other and Canadian-American relations deteriorated as a result. Diefenbaker’s dislike verged on paranoia. He believed that the American President went out of his way to snub him and left Canada out of decision-making on purpose. He also resented Kennedy’s warm relationship with Lester Pearson and later accused Pearson of being a mouthpiece supported by the American government.⁴⁵ The American administration, on the other hand, considered Diefenbaker and Green to be naïve in terms of the real threat posed by the Soviet Union.⁴⁶ The American nuclear strategy also changed under Kennedy. During the 1960 presidential campaign, he told Americans they faced the alternatives of “holocaust or humiliation.” Kissinger, as an advisor to Kennedy, supported a “flexible response” in place of Eisenhower’s massive retaliation. The United States would rely on both conventional and nuclear weapons.⁴⁷ The United States government worked to protect the population against communism and nuclear war. It faced a complex and daunting task and confronted tough choices. The change in the American administration altered Canada’s relation with the United States and also shaped its nuclear weapons policy.

While Diefenbaker announced that he would delay making any decision on providing Canadian forces with nuclear warheads, former military officials, scientific experts and cabinet ministers spoke out for nuclear arms. Charles Foulkes, who had retired as Canada’s Chief of the General Staff in 1960, concluded it was inevitable that Canada would be involved in a third world war. Foulkes expressed his support for the

⁴⁴ Diefenbaker, *One Canada*, vol. 3, *The Tumultuous Years*, 79-80.

⁴⁵ Bothwell, Drummond and English, *Canada Since 1945*, 193.

⁴⁶ Glazov, *Canadian Policy toward Krushchev’s Soviet Union*, 121.

⁴⁷ Campbell Craig, “The Illogic of Henry Kissenger’s Nuclear Strategy,” *Armed Forces and Society* 29:4 (Summer 2003): 564.

arming of Canadian forces with nuclear arms and argued geography made neutralism impossible. Canada would not find “immunity from destruction” but would lose influence with its allies. He explained, “In a nuclear war Canada could not hope to escape grave damage and loss of life. Radiation, blast and fallout have no respect for national boundaries. ... Canada is physically joined to the United States just like Siamese twins. If one ... gets hurt the other suffers too.”⁴⁸ R.J. Sutherland, a defence strategist employed at the Defence Research Board, reflected on “the problems of security and survival” for Canada in the nuclear age. He concluded that Canadians were “caught up in the fortunes of a dynamic and dangerous world.” He agreed that Canada and the United States constituted one target system at risk of Soviet attack by land, air, or submarine.⁴⁹ He concluded that, no matter what steps it took, the main responsibility for peace or war did not rest with Canada. It had no choice but to remain an ally of the United States.⁵⁰

Douglas Harkness, who was named the minister of national defence in 1960, pointed out that Canada would be on the “nuclear firing-line” in World War Three.⁵¹ He outlined Canada’s fate in the next major conflict:

Above all, it is nonsense to think that Canada could remain neutral and untouched by a future war. Geographically she is located between the Soviet Union and the United States. ... We Canadians by geography, by culture, by tradition and by our sense of freedom are firmly committed to a contribution to the defence of the democratic world.

He explained, “There is nothing illusory about the importance of the military threat to our security. It is very real.”⁵² The Minister of National Defence criticized neutralists saying,

⁴⁸ Charles Foulkes, “Canadian Defence Policy in a Nuclear Age,” *Behind the Headlines*, in *Canadian Foreign Policy since 1945: middle power or satellite?* ed. J.L. Granatstein, (Toronto: Copp Clark Pub Co., 1973): 106.

⁴⁹ R.J. Sutherland, “Canada’s Long Term Strategic Situation,” *International Journal* 17:3 (summer 1961-1): 199, 208.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 222-3.

⁵¹ “Harkness Terms Neutralist Canada View Unrealistic,” *Montreal Star*, February 11, 1961, 3.

“Do these individuals seriously maintain that if the U.S. were attacked, Canada would not be involved and Canadian territory and the Canadian people would not suffer the slightest scratch?”⁵³ Harkness accused opponents of nuclear arms of ignoring the threat Communism posed to the free world: “It seems to me that there is very little point of hiding our heads in the sand and expecting someone else to do our job for us.”⁵⁴ He explained the need for nuclear weapons, “From Mr. Khrushchev’s statements, and from many other events which we all know only too well, controlled disarmament seems, for the time being, to be some distance away...”⁵⁵ Harkness concluded that the high cost of a nuclear war did not mean that Canadians should give up: “If out of a population of 18 million, we lost 4, 000, 000, it is appalling. No one would suggest that the rest are not worth saving. There would be sufficient people left to reconstitute the life of the country.”⁵⁶ Hopes for a disarmament agreement could no longer be used as an excuse for government delays; the government’s policy was no longer valid.⁵⁷ These statements pointed to divisions within the Diefenbaker government.

It was Harkness’ off-the-cuff instructions to reserve officers in Ottawa that created more controversy than his divergence from Diefenbaker’s November 1960 policy. The Minister of National Defence directed reserve forces to work against the peace movement: “Being much closer to the population than men of the regular forces, reservists should counter pacifist and neutralist ideas whenever they hear them.” *Time* magazine suggested that the incident “raised its own small mushroom cloud over

⁵² “Harkness Appeals For Public Support Of Defence Plans,” *Globe and Mail*, September 4, 1961, 4.

⁵³ “Harkness Puts Ostrich Tag On Neutralists,” *Globe and Mail*, February 11, 1961, 1.

⁵⁴ “Harkness Terms Neutralist Canada View Unrealistic,” *Montreal Star*, February 11, 1961, 3.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶ “Sounding the Tocsin,” *Time*, (Canadian Edition) November 24, 1961, 13.

⁵⁷ “Harkness Puts Ostrich Tag On Neutralists,” *Globe and Mail*, February 11, 1961, 1; “Harkness Hints New Defense Policy,” *Globe and Mail*, February 21, 1961, 13.

Ottawa.” Officials in the department of external affairs criticized the Minister for his lack of discretion. They feared that his comments would threaten Green’s efforts toward disarmament. The CCF denounced Harkness’ remarks and demanded that he resign. However, the Minister of National Defence did not back down and restated his opinions in the House of Commons. He described ban-the-bomb marches and advertisements as propaganda designed “to undermine the will of the Canadian people to resist aggression and to weaken Canadian defense [sic] efforts.”⁵⁸

Anti-nuclear activists refuted Harkness’ allegations. Keenleyside accused him of following “the good old McCarthy tradition ... by lumping all his opposition together.”⁵⁹ The CLC agreed and stated, “Opponents of Canada’s present defense policies have been characterized by Defence Minister Harkness as being either mentally incompetent or something more sinister.”⁶⁰ Major-General Macklin had shifted from criticizing university disarmament activities to speaking out against nuclear weapons for Canada himself. He explained that nuclear weapons would not increase the security of Canadians or add to the defence of the nation. Macklin called Harkness “misguided” and condemned him for ‘red-baiting.’⁶¹ The Halifax branch of the VOW wrote a letter of protest to Harkness saying, “We are disturbed that groups such as ours are given labels which connote irresponsibility regarding the fate of mankind and the ignorance of the issues involved.”⁶² The group defended its reputation and its role in this debate.

⁵⁸ “Arming and Disarming,” *Time*, (Canadian Edition) February 10, 1961, 11; “Fight Ban Bomb Groups Harkness Tells Reserves,” *Toronto Daily Star*, January 31, 1961, 2.

⁵⁹ “Scientists Lack Responsibility: Keenleyside,” *Globe and Mail*, March 21, 1961, 1.

⁶⁰ “Defence and Neutralism,” *Canadian Labour*, April 1961, 4.

⁶¹ NA CCND, MG 28 I389 Vol 1 “Meeting Unitarian Church – Toronto, ‘Address to Committee for the Control of Radiation Hazards by Major-General W.H.S. Macklin, C.B.E., O.D. B.A.S.C.,’ 1.”

⁶² Voice of Women, *Newsletter*, no. 12, May 15, 1961, 71.

While Harkness was criticized for his exaggerating the motives of anti-nuclear forces, Keenleyside drew criticism for his inflated account of the nuclear threat. He estimated that the Soviets had 70 000 hydrogen bombs and, in the event of a war, Canada could expect to be hit by 1000 missiles. He alleged that the Soviet Union could destroy the entire province of Ontario. Keenleyside criticized Keyston for his claim that one five-megaton bomb would kill 1.2 million Canadians and asked "Why talk of one strike? Why just a five-megaton missile? Is this a realistic picture of an all-out nuclear war? I suggest that it is grossly inadequate to give the impression this is all we have to fear."⁶³

Keenleyside's blunt forecasts about the high cost of a nuclear war drew criticism from Harkness, Keyston and the press. The Minister of National Defence proclaimed, "Canadians who try to scare people into adopting a pacifist or neutralist attitude by talking of 1,000 missiles landing in Canada are helping Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev in his terror tactics."⁶⁴ Keyston described the CCCRH as "a political pressure group dedicated to close-minded advocacy of a particular viewpoint." He believed Keenleyside criticized Canada's scientists because they did not share "the particular political objectives he is pursuing."⁶⁵ The leader of the CCCRH was "out of his depth on these nuclear and defense issues" and should "show greater evidence of a responsible attitude."⁶⁶ By the end of the year, Keyston announced his support for nuclear arms for Canada's NATO forces. He explained, "It is purely wishful thinking to represent that Canada can pull her weight militarily in NATO while subscribing only conventionally equipped forces." He added that there was no room for moral reservations

⁶³ "Scientists Refuse to Join Nuclear Ban Group's Panel," *Globe and Mail*, March 31, 1961, 1.

⁶⁴ "Harkness Defends Services' Quality," *Globe and Mail*, September 14, 1961, 11.

⁶⁵ "Scientists Refuse to Join Nuclear Ban Group's Panel," *Globe and Mail*, March 31, 1961, 1; "Keyston Gives Reason for Disagreeing with Keenleyside," *Globe and Mail*, March 31, 1961, 9.

⁶⁶ "Steps to Hysteria," *Time*, (Canadian Edition) April 14, 1961, 17.

on Canada's part because it had supplied uranium for nuclear weapons.⁶⁷ *Time* magazine concluded, "Canada's ban-the-bomb debate, based on the genuine concern of a substantial minority of the people... has taken several steps down the stairs to hysteria."⁶⁸ Keenleyside refuted this type of allegations and insisted that the governments of most Western nations, including Canada's, as well as large numbers of Canadian citizens shared these his group's views on nuclear weapons.⁶⁹

Despite the controversy surrounding the campaign against nuclear arms, it gained support. Leaders of the CCCRH expressed optimism about their inroads with Canadian public opinion. The group had refused to oppose nuclear arms for Canada in 1960 because it believed public opinion was inconclusive. By 1961 Keenleyside believed, "An increasing number of Canadians are now clearly opposed to any spread of nuclear arms." The group agreed to oppose the spread of nuclear arms to Canada and changed its name to the Canadian Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament to reflect its new focus. The CCND put all of its efforts into organizing a nation-wide petition against nuclear arms for Canada. Dr. Norman Alcock increased publicity for the Canadian Peace Research Institute in 1961. Alcock, who received a doctoral degree in physics at McGill University, gave up his job in atomic research at Chalk River to dedicate his efforts to peace research.⁷⁰ He urged Canadians that peace offered an alternative to the nuclear deterrent. His initiative received support from the VOW and its members worked to raise funds for the CPRI.⁷¹

⁶⁷ J.E. Keyston, "Nuclear Weapons and NATO Unity," *Exchange*, 1:2 (December 1961): 32; "Keyston Advocates A-Arms for Canada," *Globe and Mail*, December 13, 1961, 9.

⁶⁸ *Time*, (Canadian Edition) April 14, 1961, 17.

⁶⁹ "Scientists Lack Responsibility: Keenleyside," *Globe and Mail*, March 21, 1961, 1.

⁷⁰ CPRI, *Christian Outlook*, June-July 1962, 2.

⁷¹ Lyon, *Canada in World Affairs, 1961-63*, 88-89; "VOW Raises Funds to Help Nurse," *Globe and Mail*, June 17, 1961, 11.

The campaign against nuclear arms received support from newspapers like the *Globe and Mail*, the *Toronto Star* and *Le Devoir*.⁷² Atomic researchers employed at Chalk River rejected nuclear arms for Canada. In a petition sent to Howard Green the group argued, "The total abolition of nuclear weapons is the only answer." Jean Marchand, the leader of Quebec's Confederation of National Trade Unions (CNTU) who had helped to organize the Asbestos strike in 1948 and would later serve in the Trudeau government, called on the people to oppose nuclear weapons for Canada. General E.L.M. Burns, Canada's disarmament advisor at the United Nations who had served as the commander of a UN force assigned to the Middle East, warned that disarmament, not anti-missile missiles [the Bomarc], was the only way to ensure national survival. The Canadian Brotherhood of Railway, Transport and General Workers (CBRT), a union with a membership of 40 000 affiliated with the CLC, endorsed the CCCRH's petition.⁷³ The Toronto Labour Council also requested that its members circulate the appeal.⁷⁴ A group of entertainers, actors and authors including June Callwood, Pierre Berton and Doris Anderson, editor of *Chatelaine*, magazine announced its support for the petition against nuclear arms for Canada with an advertisement published in Canadian newspapers.⁷⁵

The provincial legislature of Saskatchewan, led by Gladys Strum of the CCF, supported a resolution that called on the federal government to ban nuclear weapons from Canadian soil and to request an end to all American nuclear tests. Strum warned of the

⁷² "Ban the A-Bomarc," *Globe and Mail*, May 4, 1961, 6; "Toronto Daily Star Says No Nuclear Arms," *Toronto Daily Star*, September 20, 1961; "Petition Asks for Nuclear Arms Reduction," *Globe and Mail*, June 8, 1961, 9; "Le Canada doit refuser," *Le Devoir*, September 23, 1961, 4.

⁷³ "CBRT Endorses Petition Against Nuclear Weapons," *Canadian Labour* June 1961, 44.

⁷⁴ MURA CCND Box 10, File 11, "Letter To All Affiliated Locals from P. Churchill, Secretary, Toronto Labour Council, August 18, 1961."

⁷⁵ "Jean Marchand: le peuple doit manifester carrément son opposition à l'entreposage des armes nucléaires au pays," *Le Devoir*, December 27, 1961; "Only Way to Survival Is To Disarm: Burns," *Globe and Mail*, April 7, 1961, 5; "Actors, Writers and Personalities of Stage, Radio and TV Take Stand Against Nuclear Arms for Canada!" *Globe and Mail*, July 1, 1961, 27.

dangers associated with nuclear weapons testing, “Even now we might be breeding a race of monsters.”⁷⁶ The British Columbia legislature unanimously opposed nuclear weapons for Canada in a resolution delivered to the federal government in March 1961. It urged Diefenbaker to continue to oppose nuclear testing and the production of nuclear weapons and to work through the United Nations for disarmament.⁷⁷ Protest marches held across Canada on Easter Sunday drew support. In Toronto 1000 people, up from 60 in 1960, marched to city hall where they were addressed by Rabbi Feinberg. Again he found it necessary to defend the reputation of the anti-nuclear cause and claimed that communist groups were not behind the parade: “Our goal is not to obliterate an enemy but to eradicate enmity; our true mission is not to be a good satellite, a faithful echo, but to be a sovereign, mature people burdened by the grim realization that nothing is more urgent than to halt the drift toward doom.” In Montreal one thousand students protested on behalf of nuclear disarmament. Premier T.C. “Tommy” Douglas addressed a crowd of 450 in Saskatchewan while 500 people demonstrated in Vancouver.⁷⁸ Opposition to nuclear arms may have expanded but academics, religious leaders and unionists continued to dominate the anti-nuclear campaign.

The VOW continued to feel the need to justify its efforts and define its goals. Jo Davis stated the VOW was intent on arousing concern about nuclear war without creating hysteria: “A calm approach to women to encourage them to relax the tensions and fears caused by the threat of war will enable them to make the big jump from hysterical fear to

⁷⁶ The vote followed party lines with the 30 CCF delegates voting in favour of the resolution and the 8 Liberal delegates against it. *Time*, (Canadian Edition) April 14, 1961, 16.

⁷⁷ MURA CCND, Box 10, File 12, “Communist Party of Canada, ‘No Nuclear Arms for Canada,’ April 1963.”

⁷⁸ “Duty to Wipe Out Enmity, Not Enemy, Feinberg Tells Peace Marchers at City Hall,” *Globe and Mail*, April 3, 1961, 5.

positive thought.”⁷⁹ She believed it would be irresponsible if the group just stirred up anxiety about survival.⁸⁰ Helen Tucker reassured members that the VOW’s struggles were not unusual, “We can’t make this jump to sophisticated, informed, political interest in one easy step ... and we won’t even get an audience with these people if we get lost in the maze of ban-the-bomb groups.”⁸¹ Thérèse Casgrain founded the Quebec branch of the VOW in early 1961 and focused on the maternal motivation of the VOW: “Who understands more than mothers, who carry babies for nine months and bring them into the world, the frightful threat of this age to their children?”⁸² Casgrain, who was also a member of the CCCRH, helped to win the right to vote for women in Quebec in 1940 and became a leader in that province’s CCF. She dismissed accusations that the women’s peace group sympathized with the Soviet Union.⁸³ The group was in the process of working out its approach to the problem of nuclear war. The VOW’s leaders were intent on remaining independent from other national disarmament groups. Davis stressed the group’s moderate approach and insisted, “We are not a national pressure group.”⁸⁴

Nevertheless, many women withdrew in the first year because of they disagreed with the group’s purpose and tactics. Some believed the group moved too quickly in going to meet with government officials. Several expressed concerns about cooperation with women behind the Iron Curtain.⁸⁵ Davis and Tucker’s emphasis on the group’s moderate approach did not reassure Elsie Inman, a Liberal party supporter from Prince Edward Island who served in Canada’s Senate. Inman resigned as an honorary sponsor in

⁷⁹ “Abandon Their Silence Join Drive for Peace by VOW,” *Toronto Star*, June 17, 1961, 52.

⁸⁰ Voice of Women, *Newsletter*, no. 9-10, March 16, 1961, 33; “VOW Began Over Concern For Welfare Of Children,” *Calgary Herald*, September 18, 1961, 26;

⁸¹ “VOW Raises Funds to Help Nurse,” *Globe and Mail*, June 17, 1961, 11.

⁸² “Form Quebec Branch of ‘Voice of Women,” *Toronto Daily Star*, March 2, 1961, 55.

⁸³ “Peace Aim,” *Toronto Star*, June 21, 1961, 61.

⁸⁴ Voice of Women, *Newsletter*, no. 9-10, March 16, 1961, 33.

⁸⁵ Voice of Women, *Newsletter*, no. 6, 7, 8, February 1, 1961, 5.

June.⁸⁶ Three more honorary sponsors had stepped-down by mid-September. Helen Tucker rejected media reports that they quit because they disapproved of the group's tactics.⁸⁷ Tucker had travelled to Western Canada earlier that year and discovered that Roman Catholic officials had urged women not to join the VOW because of their fears that it was a Communist group. Catholic leaders in British Columbia believed that, while most VOW members were loyal, they overlooked the injustices and oppression committed by the Soviet Union and other Communist regimes.⁸⁸ Tucker was reassured about the VOW's reputation when she met with the Prime Minister. He called it a "respectable organization."⁸⁹ In the midst of this controversy, Judy LaMarsh, the Liberal Member of Parliament for the riding of Niagara Falls, "urged the women to proceed with "care and realism," so as not to destroy their purpose."⁹⁰ Jo Davis later admitted that the group's support of the CCCRH petition played a role in the resignations of the sponsors, "Whatever one may think of them – and I have no respect for their views at all – it did us great harm, and the nuclear arms issue caused it." She also believed that accusations of communist inspiration hastened their departure.⁹¹ Another problem the group encountered came from a different source. In the spring of 1961 five members of the

⁸⁶ "This is what happened," *Voice of Women, Newsletter*, no. 14, October 15, 1961, 13; "Senators Quit VOW," *Calgary Herald*, September 26, 1961, 21.

⁸⁷ Josie Quart was a supporter of the Progressive Conservative party and a Senator from Quebec, Olive Irvine, was a Conservative Senator from Manitoba and Nancy Hodges was a Liberal Senator from British Columbia. *Ibid.*, "VOW Urges Diefenbaker Head Peace Bid," *Toronto Star*, September 26, 1961, 4; Christine Ball, "The History of the Voice of Women/ La Voix des Femmes: The Early Years" (Ph.D. diss., University of Toronto, 1994), 453.

⁸⁸ Ball, "The History of the Voice of Women," 441.

⁸⁹ "VOW Urges Dief Head Peace Bid," *Toronto Daily Star*, September 26, 1961, 4.

⁹⁰ "Hopes For Children in Nuclear Age," *Globe and Mail*, September 18, 1961, 14.

⁹¹ Letter written by Jo Davis, December 14, 1962 in Ball, "History of the Voice of Women," 456, 454.

national executive were pregnant including Jo Davis and Janet Berton. Their pregnancies forced them either to reduce or cease their participation.⁹²

After attending a coffee party where she heard accusations that the VOW was a communist movement, Maryon Pearson felt motivated to publicly defend the group's reputation and "to protest this idiotic attitude."⁹³ She told reporters:

It is ridiculous to be under the misconception that people in democratic countries don't want peace too.... Some people have a tendency to deflate the movement because it openly strives for peace, others because it was started by women. But, really women already have enough strikes against them.

Mrs. Pearson argued that women needed groups like the VOW because they often did not have time to think things out on their own, did not support one another and too often adopted the opinions of their husbands even following the way their spouses voted. She urged moderation in peace activities, "We must work to this end, not hysterically or emotionally." After a brief discussion of her concerns about nuclear war reporters asked about her favourite pastimes. She told them it was shopping but added, "...of course I run the house, which is a job in itself."⁹⁴

The VOW was not alone in the controversy it encountered. Citing time constraints for his decision, Keenleyside resigned as the CCND chairman. However, it appears likely that the controversy he experienced earlier in the year hastened his decision. The Reverend James S. Thomson replaced him in this position. Like Keenleyside, Thomson was forced to defend his views. He explained, "I am not a pacifist. We should still maintain conventional forces to contribute to an international

⁹² Toby Robbins, June Callwood and Leona Chorley were also expecting babies. Ball, "The History of the Voice of Women," 439.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 422.

⁹⁴ Ball, "The History of the Voice of Women," 421-2; Lester Pearson explained that his wife's role as a homemaker involved key financial decisions including the purchase of the home and the family car. Pearson, *Memoirs*, vol. 3, 22; "Pearson's Wife Commends VOW," *Calgary Herald*, September 26, 1961, 20.

police force.”⁹⁵ The TCD also faced criticism for the beliefs of Rabbi Feinberg. He was accused of sympathizing with the Soviet Union. On one occasion he shouted at a heckler, “Some of the new Canadians would like to bury the whole world.... We’ll not go to war to save people like you – Fascists.”⁹⁶

When Canada’s prime minister travelled to Washington early in 1961 to meet with Kennedy, the two leaders appeared to get along well. In a televised interview Diefenbaker announced his support for Canada’s allies and his intention “to maintain [Canada’s] defences.”⁹⁷ In May 1961 John Kennedy visited Ottawa for the first time. The discussions between Diefenbaker and the American President during this meeting set the stage for a difficult relationship. Kennedy hoped to come away from the meeting with a promise that Canada would take nuclear warheads. Instead, Diefenbaker informed Kennedy that he was not prepared to make a decision. Nuclear weapons for Canada, the Prime Minister maintained, attracted strong opposition from respectable circles. It extended beyond “Communists and bums.”⁹⁸ Diefenbaker pointed to the volume of anti-nuclear letters his office received and argued his mail was nine to one against nuclear arms. He listened to these letters at the same time as he dismissed polls as an indicator of public opinion:

I’d never have been Prime Minister of Canada if the Gallup poll was right... How can those fellows tell anything with a sampling of 1,700? I’ve been across this great country, and I know what Canadians are thinking. Sometimes I’d like to ask an audience to raise their hands and see if I could find just one who had been asked a question. I doubt it – I doubt it.⁹⁹

⁹⁵ “Minister Threatened After Peace Panel,” *Globe and Mail*, June 16, 1961, 4.

⁹⁶ “Rabbi and Immigrant in Heated Exchange,” *Globe and Mail*, December 1, 1961, 5.

⁹⁷ *Time*, (Canadian Edition) March 3, 1961, 7.

⁹⁸ Livingston Merchant “Report to State Department by United States Ambassador to Canada, May 11, 1961,” In H. Basil Robinson, *Diefenbaker’s World: A Populist in Foreign Affairs*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1989): 195, 204. Peyton Lyon, *The Policy Question: A Critical Appraisal of Canada’s Role in World Affairs*, (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1963): 125.

⁹⁹ *Time*, (Canadian Edition) May 18, 1962.

Diefenbaker refused to be pushed around by Kennedy and began to proclaim Canadian independence in its defence policy. The Prime Minister was also sensitive to domestic political considerations. He feared he would offend a segment of the public by taking a clear stand on nuclear arms.¹⁰⁰

Pearson, on the other hand, delivered an address in the American capital and reassured Canada's ally of the nation's contribution to its alliances: "Canadians, except for a small minority, are not neutralists in today's world. We agree that the nuclear deterrent in U.S. hands is strategically and politically necessary." He explained his position on the nuclear weapons issue:

Strength is our deterrent against aggression and must remain so until peace can rest on a surer foundation than power. I think that all Canadians appreciate this, though we are inevitably – as a smaller power – worried about miscalculations or accidents, when the result of a mistake may be general annihilation.¹⁰¹

When the CCF merged with labour groups to found the New Democratic Party in 1961, conflicts grew over the new party's stand on defence and foreign policy. Delegates attending the founding convention of the new party in Ottawa debated a resolution in support of a neutral Canada. The discussion of this issue resulted in an emotional argument and a physical fight on the speaker's platform. Ban-the-bomb placards and nuclear disarmament pins were numerous. Speakers grabbed the microphone and chaos broke out on the speaker's platform. In the end, the party rejected neutralism but maintained its position against nuclear arms for Canada.¹⁰² Tommy Douglas was chosen as the new party's leader. Born in Scotland, Douglas' family immigrated to Winnipeg.

¹⁰⁰ Granatstein, "Hail to the Chief," 62.

¹⁰¹ "Neutralism Impossible," *Canadian Labour*, July–August, 1961, 16; "No Neutralism," *Time*, (Canadian Edition) June 23, 1961, 7.

¹⁰² "Neutralism Tide Stemmed By New Party Top Brass," *Globe and Mail*, August 5, 1961, 1.

He worked as a boxer, amateur actor and printer before his interest in the social gospel attracted him to the pulpit. The ordained Baptist minister began his career in federal politics in 1935 and served as the premier of Saskatchewan from 1944. His selection as the leader of the NDP marked his return to the House of Commons.

Relations between the Americans and Soviets deteriorated in the late summer of 1961. The ongoing problem over control of Berlin resurfaced when Khrushchev demanded an end to the western presence in West Berlin. The crisis over control of the divided city increased fears of a nuclear war. The emergency also added urgency to nuclear issues in Canada. The contrast between East and West Berlin exposed the gap between the Soviet and American systems. Diefenbaker commented on the exodus of millions of East Germany for the opportunities of the West, "If the Soviet system is paradise, why is it that the people of West Berlin do not beset the Brandenburg Gate and beseech the burger-master of East Berlin for citizenship?"¹⁰³ Kennedy refused to back down to Khrushchev's ultimatums and pledged American support for the freedom of West Berlin. NATO would view an attack on West Berlin as an attack on the alliance. Kennedy announced to the American people that he planned to dramatically increase spending on both defence and civil defence in order to meet the challenge over Berlin.¹⁰⁴

Howard Green warned that the threat of a nuclear conflict over Berlin was very real, "The world is hovering on the brink of nuclear war. There will be tension for a long, long time."¹⁰⁵ Diefenbaker announced that Canada would defend the freedom of West Berlin while pursuing peace: "For Canadians it is so important at this time not to add fuel

¹⁰³ John Diefenbaker, Halifax, August 15, 1961, in *The Wit and Wisdom of John Diefenbaker*, ed. John A. Munro (Edmonton: Hurtig, 1982.): 108.

¹⁰⁴ John F. Kennedy, "Radio and Television Report to the American People on the Berlin Crisis, The White House, July 25, 1961," http://www.jfklibrary.org/jfk_berlin_crisis_speech.html

¹⁰⁵ "Facing the Sombre Facts," *Time*, (Canadian Edition) September 15, 1961, 19.

to the flames with the world hovering on the brink of a nuclear war.”¹⁰⁶ His moderate response contrasted with the highly provocative statement of Sir Alec Home, Britain’s Foreign Secretary, who boasted, “The British people are prepared to be blown to atomic dust if necessary.”¹⁰⁷ Diefenbaker promised to work for a peaceful settlement. He recognized that many Canadians, because of memories of the last war, did not want to risk war for the Germans or make sacrifices to protect their former enemy.¹⁰⁸ Hazen Argue, the former leader of the CCF who lost out to Douglas in his bid for the leadership of the NDP, suggested that Canada should let the Germans “‘sort out their own reunification problems,’ rather ‘than sacrificing Canadian lives in a fruitless struggle with the Russians over one miserable Teuton city.’”¹⁰⁹ Within a few months the representative from Saskatchewan would cross the floor and join the Liberal party.

Diefenbaker explained that the Soviet Union had violated the agreement on Berlin and concluded, “Communism does not understand any other principle than power.”¹¹⁰ Harkness agreed that the Soviet Union instigated the crisis.¹¹¹ Diefenbaker stated that Canadian forces “must have the most effective weapons available” or they would be forced to guard “the portals of freedom” with “bows and arrows.” It appeared that his decision to arm Canadian forces with nuclear warheads could not be far off.¹¹²

Diefenbaker announced that his government would strengthen its defence against the Soviet Union. For the first time since Korea there would be an increase in the manpower

¹⁰⁶ “International Tension Grows,” *External Affairs*, 13:10 (October 1961): 338.

¹⁰⁷ John Minnion and Philip Bolsover, ed., *The CND Story: the first 25 years of CND in the words of the people involved*. (London: Allison & Busby, 1983): 22.

¹⁰⁸ *Time*, (Canadian Edition) September 8, 1961, 15.

¹⁰⁹ *Time*, (Canadian Edition) September 15, 1961, 20.

¹¹⁰ John Diefenbaker, House of Commons, September 11, 1961, in *The Wit and Wisdom of John Diefenbaker*, ed. John Munro, 35.

¹¹¹ *Time*, (Canadian Edition) September 8, 1961, 15; “Harkness Appeals For Public Support Of Defence Plans,” *Globe and Mail*, September 4, 1961, 4.

¹¹² *Time*, (Canadian Edition) August 25, 1961, 7.

of the armed forces. Canada would send an extra 1100 men to the 4th Canadian Infantry Brigade in West Germany and 250 more airmen to the RCAF's twelve divisions in Europe. The total increase in manpower would be 15 000 men or 12.5 percent.

In the midst of the Berlin crisis Diefenbaker also stepped up civil defence planning. He announced the creation of a civil defence army. One hundred thousand Canadian men would receive six weeks of training in rescue techniques and education in nuclear, biological and chemical warfare.¹¹³ A nation-wide civil defence exercise, Tocsin B, would be fast-tracked. Diefenbaker recognized that children would have questions about Tocsin B but reassured parents they could help save their lives by adopting civil defence plans.¹¹⁴ Diefenbaker explained his government's motivation:

I would not want these measures to be interpreted as being taken in contemplation of an early outbreak of war, but rather as insurance which any prudent government must take. It is hoped they will be regarded not as provocative, but as a manifestation of Canada's intention to stand solidly with its NATO partners.¹¹⁵

He urged Canadians to remain calm about their security as he prepared for a possible war.

Opinion polls showed that Canadians believed that, if the Soviets sought control of Berlin, the chances of war were high. A slim majority favoured an armed response to the crisis.¹¹⁶ The TCD and VOW sent a joint telegram to Diefenbaker and Green to express their concern over the escalating tensions. They suggested that the United

¹¹³ *Time*, (Canadian Edition) September 15, 1961, 19; President Kennedy asked for an appropriation of 3.2 billion for the Armed Forces and to procure weapons, ammunition and equipment. He called for an increase of over 1 million men in the nation's armed forces and the expansion of the draft. He also planned to spend over 200 million dollars on improving civil defence. John F. Kennedy, "Radio and Television Report to the American People on the Berlin Crisis, The White House, July 25, 1961."

¹¹⁴ John Diefenbaker, November 8, 1961, *EMO National Digest*, December 1961, 4.

¹¹⁵ *Time*, (Canadian Edition) September 15, 1961, 19-20.

¹¹⁶ "Should the West fight its way into Berlin if the Soviet Union sealed it off?" 47 percent answered yes, 33 percent responded no and 20 percent had no opinion. "If Russia keeps control of Berlin will it lead to fighting?" 61 percent responded yes, 27 percent responded no and 12 percent had no opinion. "Reasoning on Berlin Explained by Public," *Montreal Star*, November 8, 1961.

Nations should take control of Berlin.¹¹⁷ Yet, the VOW did not refer to the crisis in its *Newsletter*. Rabbi Feinberg later expressed his view that the world was close to war over Berlin.¹¹⁸ The Student Christian Movement (SCM) voiced its fears during “this time of grave international emergency.” It, too, called for a United Nations settlement of the standoff. Keenleyside, who remained active in the CCND, criticized Canada’s policy: “Risking war on the issue of West Berlin is the final evidence of the bankruptcy of our diplomatic policy.” A group of fifty academics at McGill University in Montreal, including deans and department heads, wrote an open letter to the Prime Minister and opposed defence policies: “We believe that extension of the so-called “Nuclear Club” can be conducive neither to peace nor to our security.” It alleged that Diefenbaker’s actions drove the nation toward war. The group condemned national survival plans: “All together the civil defence program tends to induce among Canadians a willingness to regard war as a practicable means for settling international disputes.” It also criticized Diefenbaker for his “distorted presentation” of the Berlin situation; he emphasized the rights of access to the city by West Berliners and obscured the interests of those living in East Berlin.¹¹⁹ The Canadian Peace Congress alleged that “the real source of war danger” during the crisis was the United States.¹²⁰ A Communist leaflet poked fun at the prime minister while it warned Canadians of the increased risk of nuclear war. A cartoon showed an unflattering silhouette of Diefenbaker’s head, complete with his famous jowls, shaped as

¹¹⁷ NA Feinberg, MG 31 F9 TCD vol 4 “Telegram from TCD and VOW to Prime Minister Diefenbaker and Howard Green, August 10, 1961.”

¹¹⁸ Margaret Beattie, *A brief history of the Student Christian Movement in Canada, 1921-1974*, (Toronto: SCM, 1975): 30.

¹¹⁹ The full-time academic staff at the university was 606 with 581 more working part-time. “The Letter to Diefenbaker,” *McGill Daily*, January 9, 1962, 1. 50 signed at McGill University including H.H. Walsh; “Educators Attack Ottawa A-Role, McGill Faculty Group Assails Foreign Policy,” *Montreal Star*, December 14, 1961, 1.

¹²⁰ “Soviet A-Test Action Backed by Tim Buck,” *Globe and Mail*, September 9, 1961, 5.

a nuclear missile with the caption, "Let's Not Die For Berlin! No Nuclear Arms for Canada."¹²¹ The Berlin crisis caused Canadians to evaluate their nation's position in the cold war as well as its defence policies.

Kennedy's strong approach appeared to work and Khrushchev backed down from a direct confrontation over Berlin. Instead, the Soviet selected an alternative method to stop the steady flight of East Germans from the Soviet-controlled section of the city. Soviet and East German forces erected a physical barrier between East and West Berlin at the end of August. Overnight families were separated by the barbed wire and concrete division between the East and West, the Berlin Wall. Khrushchev also made the provocative announcement that he planned to resume the Soviet nuclear testing program and bring the three year moratorium on nuclear testing to an end. Kennedy responded with a declaration that the United States would resume its own nuclear testing program if Khrushchev went ahead with his plans. He gave the Soviet Union until the spring of 1962 to reconsider. Diefenbaker responded to the proposed new series of tests with concern, "This ominous news from Moscow... underlines the serious dangers the world faces as a result of the spiralling arms race and the crisis in Berlin." Officials in the department of external affairs blamed the Soviet Union for taking a "backward step" with its tests. Yet, they expressed support for Canada's ally, "The United States could not sit by indefinitely while the Russians were proceeding with the tests."¹²² The Soviets went ahead and conducted the largest nuclear explosion to date. The 50-megaton bomb renewed concerns about radioactive fallout. The Prime Minister concluded that the tests

¹²¹ Young Communist League of Canada, "Let's Not Die For Berlin!" Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, University of Toronto, Canadian Peace Congress Box 53-7.

¹²² *External Affairs*, 13:10 (October 1961): 338-9.

showed “a flagrant disregard for humanity and its welfare by the U.S.S.R.”¹²³ Green called the Soviet tests “senseless and dangerous” and described the new fallout readings as “real cause for the gravest concern.”¹²⁴ Tim Buck blamed the war preparations in the western democracies for the Soviet Union’s decision to resume nuclear testing.¹²⁵ While James Endicott criticized the resumption of tests by the Soviet Union, he pointed out that the Americans had conducted more tests than all other countries combined. He rejected “the shameless cold war hypocrisy of the U.S.”¹²⁶ Keyston, on the other hand, described the Berlin crisis and the resumption of nuclear testing as the start of a new Soviet policy of all-out threats.¹²⁷ Canadians evaluated their security and the threats of the cold war in the context of Berlin.

Nuclear issues attracted increased interest in the midst of this crisis. Nuclear arms for Canada, the risks posed by radioactive fallout from nuclear tests and civil defence preparations received extensive media coverage. *Time* magazine documented signs of the public’s growing interest in nuclear issues in the fall of 1961:

Never before had Canadians ... been so intimately concerned over the possibility of destruction to their homeland. The threat was now at hand, sharply drawn by Soviet war rumblings and made clearer still by the present hazards of fallout from Russian weapons tests. The questions of Berlin and bomb shelters, of whether Canada should acquire nuclear weapons for its own defenses, [sic] filled many conversations.¹²⁸

Front page headlines announced rumours that the government would soon make a decision on nuclear weapons. Newspapers reported that warheads would be shipped to Canada’s Bomarc sites in secret because the government feared massive public

¹²³ “Fallout Causes Concerns,” *Montreal Star*, September 20, 1961, 1.

¹²⁴ *Time*, (Canadian Edition) October 13, 1961, 23; September 8, 1961, 15.

¹²⁵ “Soviet A-Test Action Backed by Tim Buck,” *Globe and Mail*, September 9, 1961, 5.

¹²⁶ MURA CCND Box 10 Correspondence with other Canadian Organizations, File 11 Canadian Peace Congress, “Press Release, September 1961.”

¹²⁷ J.E. Keyston, “Nuclear Weapons and NATO Unity,” *Exchange*, 1:2 (December 1961): 33.

¹²⁸ *Time*, (Canadian Edition) October 13, 1961, 23.

demonstrations.¹²⁹ John Diefenbaker described the attitude toward nuclear issues in the midst of Berlin in a letter to his brother: "The world situation is terrible and people not knowing the situation are loud in their opposition to Canada having any nuclear defence. It is an ostrich-like philosophy which, while adhered to by many sensible people, is most beneficial to the Communists and of course receives their support."¹³⁰ When the immediate emergency had passed, the Prime Minister reiterated his government's position that Canada would not obtain nuclear weapons in peacetime. While Diefenbaker announced he would seek Parliament's approval for taking nuclear arms, he added his government would decide and would act on the basis of "national security" alone.¹³¹ Divisions over nuclear arms continued to become more apparent within the government. Harkness announced in the House of Commons that it was sensible to obtain the nuclear weapons immediately so that Canadian forces could be trained in their use. He maintained that Canada needed "a nuclear punch equal to the foe." The Minister of National Defence suggested that nuclear warheads would be obtained following a federal election campaign.¹³² *Time* magazine announced that Diefenbaker received the "Nuclear Go-Ahead" from Canadians in a Gallup poll. A clear majority of those surveyed supported nuclear arms for Canadian forces even after the close call with war over Berlin. Half of those in favour of nuclear weapons believed they were necessary to protect

¹²⁹ "Diefenbaker Hints Nuclear Weapons For Armed Forces," *Globe and Mail*, September 12, 1961, 1; "Commons to Decide Atom Arms Issue," *Montreal Star*, September 20, 1961, 1; "Demonstrations Feared, Bomarc Shipped in Secret," *Globe and Mail*, October 17, 1961, 10.

¹³⁰ John Diefenbaker, "Letter to Elmer Diefenbaker, Saskatchewan, September 14, 1961," *Personal Letters of a Public Man: The Family Letters of John. G. Diefenbaker*, ed. Thad McIlroy (Toronto: Doubleday Canada Ltd., 1985): 107.

¹³¹ "Commons to Decide Atom Arms Issue," *Montreal Star*, September 20, 1961, 1.

¹³² *Time*, (Canadian Edition) September 1961, 15.

Canada and defend North America.¹³³ Opponents of nuclear arms argued that Canada should not take them because it was not a leading power and the warheads would increase the chances of an attack on Canada.¹³⁴

Civil defence officials stressed the importance preparations in advance of an attack. The director of Winnipeg's program urged Canadians to take these measures more seriously. Andrew Currie believed "far too many Canadians are sloughing off civil defence because they are certain they will be killed in the first attack."¹³⁵ Canadian newspapers and magazines printed maps on which they plotted the effects of a nuclear attack on the country's major cities. *Time* magazine published a map tracing the path of fallout over Canada.¹³⁶ The government tracked and reported radiation levels and informed the public about the safety of Canada's milk, food and water supplies. Special attention was paid to radiation levels in the milk consumed by the nation's children. Canada's two airlines, Canadian Pacific and Trans Canada, tried to reassure anxious passengers they would be safe from high-altitude fallout. Both announced that they planned to alter their flight paths to avoid the radioactive dust produced by the recent nuclear tests.¹³⁷ The Canadian Association of Consumers demanded that the government keep the public informed about the risks posed by strontium 90. The group considered drafting a report to inform consumers about the risks from sources other than just milk.¹³⁸ The risks to the health and welfare of Canadians appeared to be growing. Was it safe to

¹³³ The poll asked, "Should Canada's armed forces be armed with nuclear weapons or not?" 61 percent answered yes, 31 percent responded no and 8 percent had no opinion on the issue. *Time*, (Canadian Edition) November 24, 1961, 14.

¹³⁴ 61 percent had heard or read about it while 39 percent had not. "Nuclear Go-Ahead," *Time*, Canadian Edition, November 24, 1961, 14; Peyton Lyon, *Canada in World Affairs, 1961-3*, (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1968): Appendix B, 538.

¹³⁵ "Winnipeg Planner Says CD Needed," *Calgary Herald*, September 21, 1961, 3.

¹³⁶ *Time*, (Canadian Edition) November 10, 1961, 13.

¹³⁷ "Airlines to Evade Fallout Cloud," *Globe and Mail*, November 4, 1961, 2.

¹³⁸ "Soon CAC May Compile Reports for Consumers," *Toronto Daily Star*, September 13, 1961, 65.

go outside? Canadians showed signs they feared the consequences of radioactive fallout. A number of people developed a medical ailment soon known as 'fallout fever.' The patients complained of sore throats, coughing, aching joints and a lack of energy. They told doctors they believed their symptoms were caused by nuclear tests. Medical officials in Ontario dismissed any connection between this ailment and radiation.¹³⁹

Officials in the federal government sought to limit the public's fears about the renewed danger of fallout. Monteith explained that, while he shared the public's anxieties, the Soviet tests did not pose a threat. He admitted that the situation could become serious, however, if the testing period was prolonged.¹⁴⁰ He soon revealed that the tests had "produced a startling increase in the amount of contamination over Canada." The amount of radiation in Toronto was 1500 times above normal levels. In Montreal the levels rose more than 400 times higher than usual. Monteith reassured the public that, despite these dramatic increases, fallout did not threaten the health of Canadians.¹⁴¹ By mid-October samples showed that the level of radiation in bone and milk samples was lower than first feared.¹⁴² Monteith declared the nation's milk supply safe for consumption.¹⁴³ A.H. Zimmerman, the chairman of the DRB, admitted that the situation was serious but urged Canadians not to worry about fallout levels. He reassured them that their health was not threatened even if the Soviet Union continued its nuclear tests. Officials in Green's department feared Zimmerman's comments would undermine his

¹³⁹ "Pooh-Poohs Fallout Fever," *Globe and Mail*, October 21, 1961, 1;

¹⁴⁰ "No Fallout Danger From Soviet Tests," *Globe and Mail*, September 15, 1961, 4.

¹⁴¹ "Green Repeats Concern On Russia Test Fallout," *Globe and Mail*, October 27, 1961,

¹⁴² "Less Danger In Fallout Than Feared," *Globe and Mail*, October 12, 1961, 1.

¹⁴³ "Milk Safe at Present, Monteith Stresses," *Globe and Mail*, October 26, 1961, 1.

efforts against nuclear weapons at the UN.¹⁴⁴ Divergent views about the risks posed by fallout reached into government circles.

Nuclear disarmament groups protested the resumption of tests. A TCD resolution condemned the Soviet Union as well as the United States, even before it resumed its experiments. It asked the nuclear powers to abandon nuclear tests for all time. The group described the Soviet's 50-megaton weapons test as "monstrous" and alleged that the high levels of radiation it produced would "seriously endanger the well-being of countless members of the human race."¹⁴⁵ Feinberg concluded that the tests "intensifie[d] the dangerous and widespread feeling that nuclear war is inevitable."¹⁴⁶ The Voice of Women collected baby teeth from thousands of Canadian children, in exchange for balloons, to be tested for radiation. Its members would collect a total of 5500 teeth between 1961 and 1963. They even set up a booth at the Canadian National Exhibition in Toronto where children could contribute their teeth.¹⁴⁷ Dr. Murray Hunt, a professor of dentistry at the University of Toronto, measured the amount of strontium 90 in these teeth. He reached the disturbing conclusion that Canada's children had been absorbing the radioactive substance in growing amounts because of nuclear tests.¹⁴⁸ Alcock alleged that thousands of Canadians would die from the effects of the fallout from the most recent

¹⁴⁴ "Fallout Danger Slight in Canada, Scientist States," *Globe and Mail*, October 26, 1961, 1.

¹⁴⁵ "City Group Asks All-Time Ban on A-Weapons," *Globe and Mail*, October 21, 1961, 5; "Soviet 'Inconsistent' Feinberg Tells Envoy," *Toronto Star*, August 31, 1961, 22.

¹⁴⁶ "Shelter Not Worth It, Atom Scientist Says," *Globe & Mail*, November 27, 1961, 5; "Soviet 'Inconsistent' Feinberg Tells Envoy," *Toronto Star*, August 31, 1961, 22.

¹⁴⁷ Gary Moffatt, *History of the Canadian Peace Movement until 1969*, (St. Catharines, ON: Grapevine Press, 1969), 122; Kay Macpherson, *When in Doubt, Do Both*, With C.M. Donald. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994): 139-140.

¹⁴⁸ Robert Block, "Fallout Warning From Baby Teeth," *Weekend Magazine*, no. 43, 1963, 24, 26-7.

Russian nuclear tests. These deaths, he explained, would occur over generations from leukemia and still-births.¹⁴⁹

Dimitris Roussopolos announced that two thousand university students signed a CUCND's protest against Soviet nuclear tests. The chairman of the group pointed to the petition as proof that the group did not sympathize with communism.¹⁵⁰ The results of surveys carried out at two of Canada's major universities challenged his claims. The student bodies of both McGill University and the University of Toronto disapproved of the CUCND's program and tactics. The *McGill Daily*, the student newspaper, reported that students rejected the "much maligned and highly controversial organization" by a margin of five to one.¹⁵¹ Many students believed its aims were "impractical or detrimental to the safety of Canada." Most of the students pointed to the Soviet threat as the reason they did not approve of the CUCND. They believed that nuclear weapons ensured, rather than threatened, survival. Students at the University of Toronto agreed and rejected the CUCND by a margin of three to one.¹⁵² Roussopolous criticized the results of both polls. He complained that the *McGill Daily* presented the CUCND "as a group of left-wingers" while the *Varsity's* poll was "partial and undemocratic."¹⁵³

In the midst of the Berlin crisis Prime Minister Diefenbaker disclosed the fact that between two and six million Canadians could die in a nuclear war. He urged Canadians to take his government's civil defence measures seriously.¹⁵⁴ The *Vancouver Sun*

¹⁴⁹ "Shelter Not Worth It, Atom Scientist Says," *Globe & Mail*, November 27, 1961, 5.

¹⁵⁰ "CUCND Hears Chairman," *McGill Daily*, October 30, 1961, 3.

¹⁵¹ "CUCND Replies to Detractors on Old McGill," *McGill Daily*, January 13, 1961, 3.

¹⁵² "Students Vote on Nuclear Weapons," *McGill Daily*, October 23, 1961, 5; "Results of Varsity Nuclear Weapons Pool [sic]," *McGill Daily*, November 3, 1961, 6.

¹⁵³ "Anti-Bomb Leader Quits Over Red's Membership," *Globe and Mail*, November 2, 1961, 5; "President of CUCND Walks Out at UofT," *McGill Daily*, November 7, 1961, 3.

¹⁵⁴ "Diefenbunker," *Time*, (Canadian Edition) October 6, 1961, 12; "PM Talks Bluntly On War Terrors, Home Shelter for Diefenbaker if Atom Bomb Drops on Ottawa," *Vancouver Sun*, September 25, 1961, 10.

explained that Diefenbaker's "plain talking" about the threat was meant to "shake Canadians out of their apathy toward survival planning." The Prime Minister informed the public that he would seek refuge in his own basement shelter, "That is where I shall be when and if war should come.... That is where I shall stay."¹⁵⁵ He explained that, while it would not provide protection against a direct hit, it would guard against fallout. The *Vancouver Sun*, concluded that Diefenbaker believed, "There was a great need – and a difficult chore – of educating people to this fact."¹⁵⁶ Hazen Argue demanded that Diefenbaker name the lucky individuals who had been deemed indispensable and, therefore, provided with a space in the government's secret shelter. Why had they been selected for survival while all others faced the possibility of death from a nuclear blast or radiation sickness?¹⁵⁷ Walter Pitman, the NDP representative for Peterborough, Ontario, agreed that the Prime Minister "may be more interested in ensuring the survival of the upper level of government than we are in the welfare of the average man."¹⁵⁸ While Diefenbaker announced "that his duty [lay] in staying in the capital at far greater personal risk," members of the press countered, "Surely, your duty is to remain leader?"¹⁵⁹

Federal officials reported that the public showed more interest in civil defence and that inquiries about shelters had risen during the Berlin crisis. They received 500 calls and letters each day. Civil defence radio advertisements "delivered in voice-of-doom

¹⁵⁵ "Diefenbunker," *Time*, (Canadian Edition) October 6, 1961, 12; "PM Talks Bluntly On War Terrors, Home Shelter for Diefenbaker if Atom Bomb Drops on Ottawa," *Vancouver Sun*, September 25, 1961, 10.

¹⁵⁶ "PM Talks Bluntly On War Terrors," *Vancouver Sun*, September 25, 1961, 10.

¹⁵⁷ "Carp National Capital for Nuclear War," *Monetary Times*, June 1961, 18.

¹⁵⁸ "Diefenbunker," *Time*, (Canadian Edition) October 6, 1961, 12.

¹⁵⁹ MURA CCND, Box 22, Publications Received, Loose, "Clipping, 'Predicts 2-6 Million Dead in Atomic War,' *Edmonton Journal*, September 25, 1961." *Time*, Canadian Edition, October 6, 1961, 12.; Diefenbaker, House of Commons *Debates*, September 23, 1961, 8801; *Time*, (Canadian Edition) November 10, 1961, 13.

tones,” however, created panic among residents of Montreal.¹⁶⁰ Toronto’s civil defence headquarters handled two thousand calls in one week and expected to run out of pamphlets.¹⁶¹ Inquiries rose in Winnipeg as well.¹⁶² Vancouver authorities tallied their inquiries and concluded that over ten thousand people had requested information between mid-July and the end of September.¹⁶³ Visitors to the Canadian National Exhibition showed great interest in a sample shelter on display. Authorities distributed hundreds of thousands of pamphlets and 45 000 people inspected the model.¹⁶⁴ The IODE’s civil defence committee reported that the “deteriorating international situation” created “renewed interest” in civil defence. The resumption of nuclear tests contributed to “alarm on all sides” and resulted in “a noticeable acceleration in plans for survival.” At last, it appeared, concern had replaced the public’s usual apathy.¹⁶⁵

The *Financial Post* reported that the escalating cold war tensions gave civil defence “a new urgency.”¹⁶⁶ Publicity for the shelter program grew in the midst of the crisis. Canadian department stores joined the campaign. Eaton’s planned a line of shelter furnishings and Simpson’s erected a model shelter in its window displays. The eight foot by fourteen foot unfurnished shelter sold for just over five hundred dollars.¹⁶⁷ The CBC arranged for a family of four to spend a week in a model shelter set up on its downtown Toronto lot. Daily radio and television broadcasts reported on the upbeat and positive experience of shelter living. The experiment culminated in a live broadcast of the

¹⁶⁰ *Time*, (Canadian Edition) August 25, 1961, 7.

¹⁶¹ “Crisis Hits Home: 2,000 in One Week Ask About Fallout Shelters,” *Globe and Mail*, August 16, 1961, 5.

¹⁶² “But the only underground thinking,” *Financial Post*, October 7, 1961, 25-6.

¹⁶³ “10, 000 Query Office for A-Shelter Data,” *Vancouver Sun*, September 25, 1961, 25.

¹⁶⁴ “Queries About Shelters Increase in Toronto,” *Globe and Mail*, September 2, 1961, 5.

¹⁶⁵ NA IODE MG 28 I17 Vol 24, File 5 IODE Report of Civil Defence Committee, 1961-2; “Letter to CD Convenors, November, 1961.”

¹⁶⁶ “CD Speed-Up Mean Big Cash Spree?” *Financial Post*, September 2, 1961, 9.

¹⁶⁷ “B.C. Not Geared to Face the Hell of Nuclear War,” *Vancouver Sun*, September 19, 1961.

family's exit. John McCallum announced that he and his family had enjoyed the experience; they found the shelter comfortable, appreciated the family togetherness and complained of no physical or mental side-effects. He announced that he would build a shelter in his own home because of the experience. One hundred opponents of civil defence protested the event and booed the family as they emerged from the shelter.¹⁶⁸ The CUCND condemned the CBC's experiment, "... far from being a realistic test, the nationally televised event was portrayed as an extended picnic."¹⁶⁹

Construction companies and real estate developers hoped to capitalize on the public's fears of nuclear war. Advertisements for shelters appeared in the want-ads of Canada's newspapers.¹⁷⁰ *Home Building in Canada*, the journal of the nation's construction industry, promoted 'a dual purpose fallout shelter.' It suggested upgrading the shelter to provide a sound-proof room where the 'man of the house' could check his bank statements or relax without interruptions or where noisy children could play without disturbing their parents' bridge party.¹⁷¹ In another issue of the magazine, instructions for building a shelter were reprinted from a government pamphlet. The publication expressed faith that the shelter would not be destroyed in a nuclear explosion.¹⁷² Press reports also detailed the construction of shelters by two government officials in Ottawa, Robert Bryce, the clerk of the Privy Council, and R.B. Curry, the federal director of the

¹⁶⁸ "Family Spends Week in Fall-Out Shelter," *Calgary Herald*, September 18, 1961, 19; "Children Liked Shelter Life, Father Claims," *Globe and Mail*, September 18, 1961, 5; *EMO National Digest*, October 1961, cover, 14.

¹⁶⁹ MURA CUCND Box 1, File 1 CUCND Executive Meeting Minutes January 27, CUCND Toronto Office 1960-1; Box 9 Affiliates- CUCND, YUCND, file 3 CUCND- Publications, Leaflets, etc., "CUCND, *The Case Against Civil Defence*."

¹⁷⁰ "Fallout Shelters," (advertisement) *Vancouver Sun*, September 26, 1961, 25.

¹⁷¹ "Dual Purpose Fallout Shelter," *Home Building in Canada*, 42 (autumn 1961): 38.

¹⁷² "Maximum N.H.A. Loan Increased for Fallout Shelter Construction," *Home Building in Canada* 41 (August-September 1960): 36-7.

Emergency Measures Organization.¹⁷³ Bryce called for greater optimism about survival in a nuclear war: "There is a great deal of fiction, a great deal of fantasy and a great deal of nonsense about the nature of a nuclear attack." Canada would not be a primary target and, with enough warning and adequate preparation, it "would not be annihilated."¹⁷⁴ The press reported that one family who lived outside of Toronto took drastic measures to find security from nuclear attack. They decided "to escape the threat of a nuclear attack on Toronto." Possibly influenced by *On the Beach*, they moved to New Zealand, where they might be safe from the radiation produced by a war in the northern hemisphere.¹⁷⁵

Researchers at the Defence Research Board announced plans for "the next thing to a wearable a-bomb shelter." They hoped to develop a material that could be made into clothes, gloves and hoods to protect from harmful radiation at all times. Scientists believed that both Canadian ground attack forces and civilians could wear these garments made from a chemically treated nylon mesh. It resembled a black fish net and came complete with a veil and gloves. A nuclear explosion would cause the material to dissolve into a blanket of non-toxic smoke designed to insulate the person from the blast and screen out fallout. They expected their invention to reduce anxiety about survival as well as save lives. Canadians would no longer have to be lucky enough to be near a shelter during an attack; they would be protected by their clothing at all times.¹⁷⁶

Canada's Postmaster General also joined the campaign for civil defence. The mail service made plans to overcome nuclear fallout in addition to its more traditional obstacles of snow and rain. Post offices across the country would distribute two kinds of

¹⁷³ *EMO National Digest*, October 1961, 10; "Build EMO Shelters in Ottawa: Emergency Measures Men Follow Their Own Advice," *Financial Post*, November 18, 1961, 60.

¹⁷⁴ "We Could Take Atomic Blow, Most of Us Would Survive," *Financial Post*, January 21, 1961, 34.

¹⁷⁵ "Family Flees Atom Threat," *Vancouver Sun*, September 20, 1961, C3.

¹⁷⁶ *Time*, (Canadian Edition) April 14, 1961, 17; "Nuclear Breakthrough," *Monetary Times*, May 1961, 4.

postage-free, change of address cards designed to reunite families separated in the chaos of a nuclear war. Survivors would fill out a pale blue card and send it to the postmaster. Evacuees would send a pink card to tell their relatives and friends they were safe and let them know where they could be reached. *Time* poked fun at this plan designed to cope with the dislocation created by a nuclear attack: "Of course, pink cards mailed from vaporized Vancouver to presumably vaporized Ottawa cannot be delivered until Ottawa's evacuated survivors have mailed their blue cards in to Ottawa's postmaster – whose address will then be Renfrew and vice versa."¹⁷⁷

Civil defence plans for Canada's school children became a subject of debate during the Berlin crisis. Officials in the city of Ottawa decided, if an attack happened during the day, they would move the children out of the city in army trucks. This proposal fell flat when parents rejected the idea of separation from their children. Toronto officials decided they would try to reunite children with their families if time permitted. Otherwise they would remain in shelters at the school. This plan appeared to ease the anxieties of parents. Officials explained that they wanted to provide adequate protection for the young students "without creating panic or undue alarm."¹⁷⁸ *Home Building Canada* concluded that even after the close brush with war over Berlin "most families balk at building a fallout shelter in their homes because of the cost." They did not want to pay for something "that in all probability will never be used."¹⁷⁹ Criticism of shelters often focused on the fact that families would not have time to find refuge in their household shelter. One housewife summed up this attitude, "If I had a shelter, I would

¹⁷⁷ *Time*, (Canadian Edition) December 8, 1961, 16.

¹⁷⁸ "Togetherness in Raid EMO Scheme," *Globe and Mail*, September 26, 1961, 12; "Will Send Pupils Home In Event of A-Attack," *Globe and Mail*, November 3, 1961, 8.

¹⁷⁹ *Home Building Canada*, (Autumn 1961): 38.

put my head out to find my children first and probably not get back in time.”¹⁸⁰ The threat of nuclear war offered no easy solutions.

Prime Minister Diefenbaker informed Canadians of the importance of shelters, “I think our number one responsibility at the moment is home shelters.”¹⁸¹ Yet, it was not easy for officials to estimate the number of shelters constructed across the country. The *Financial Post* concluded that “only a handful of Canadians are actually building shelters.”¹⁸² The newspaper surveyed the residents of 14 cities and found that just 36 out of 420 900 homeowners obtained permits to build shelters. In Ottawa only one permit was issued. Since authorities informed residents of Vancouver that the city, with its population of over 800 000, was not a target, it was not surprising that no one applied for a permit. Officials knew of only ten homes with shelters with twenty more under construction in all of Vancouver. They estimated as many as 100 more shelters they did not know about but added that none had been built in the city’s schools, hospitals or public buildings. Civil defence volunteers also fell short of the required numbers.¹⁸³ In Edmonton, officials reported six private shelters had been built and they concluded that residents were “pretty apathetic about the whole thing.” Sixty homes in Regina ordered shelters. Jean Drapeau, the mayor of Montreal, expressed his opinion that residents showed more interest in the city’s new underground transportation system than they did in shelters.¹⁸⁴ In Fredericton there were no permits issued and the population was not involved in civil defence measures. Officials in the Eastern Canadian city did not even

¹⁸⁰ “But the only underground thinking,” *Financial Post*, October 7, 1961, 25-6; “Many Call; Few Chosen – Bomb-Shelter Trade Slowly Going Broke,” *Globe and Mail*, September 29, 1961, 17.

¹⁸¹ “Uncivil Defence – or the Revolt of the Experts,” *Christian Outlook*, December 1961, 5.

¹⁸² *Financial Post*, September 2, 1961, 9.

¹⁸³ “30 Shelters for 840, 000 People?” *Vancouver Sun*, September 19, 1961.

¹⁸⁴ “B.C. Not Geared to Face the Hell of Nuclear War,” *Vancouver Sun*, September 19, 1961.

warn the public about the dangers they faced.¹⁸⁵ Authorities in Calgary instructed the city's population to evacuate in the event of war instead of relying on fallout shelters. In the midst of the Berlin crisis, officials promised they would mail instructions to inform the city's residents where to go and how to get there. They expressed optimism that, if the plan worked, the whole city would survive an initial attack. These instructions, however, were never distributed and the public remained in the dark about the plans designed to save them.¹⁸⁶

EMO officials admitted that they had no idea about the exact number of shelters built in Canada. They blamed the public's unwillingness to discuss the topic. Since permits were not required in all cities it was difficult to accurately estimate their numbers. People also tried to conceal their plans for a variety of reasons. They feared they would be ridiculed or could face higher taxes as a result of the modifications to their homes. Many recognized the need to keep shelters a secret to prevent invasion by panicked neighbours during a nuclear war. An overcrowded shelter would reduce the chances of survival by taxing the supply of oxygen, food and water.¹⁸⁷ American civil defense authorities estimated that about one million families, or one percent of the population, had access to a shelter. However, the number of shelters was also difficult to assess south of the border. Record-keeping was discouraged and the figures reported varied widely, according to Laura McEnaney who studied the American civil defense program.¹⁸⁸

¹⁸⁵ "But the only underground thinking in Canada is about basement bars and subways...", *Financial Post*, October 7, 1961, 25-6.

¹⁸⁶ "3 Hours – And Survival: Families Flee in Civil Defence Survival Plan," *Calgary Herald*, September 15, 1961, 28.

¹⁸⁷ "But the only underground thinking," *Financial Post*, October 7, 1961, 25.

¹⁸⁸ Laura McEnaney, *Civil Defense Begins At Home: Militarization Meets Everyday Life in the Fifties*. (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2000): 64-5.

The CBC news program, *Close Up*, found that almost all of the people they surveyed in early 1961 rejected the idea of shelters. These individuals believed the structures would not improve their chances of survival. They asked how long they would have to stay in one and expressed doubts that they would offer any protection. Worthington, the former civil defence coordinator, concluded, "Obviously the general public does not know the facts about fallout shelters or for that matter the more pertinent factors regarding survival."¹⁸⁹ A Toronto businessman involved in shelter construction lamented, "This business stinks.... People couldn't care less." Builders across the country shared this "dismal view."¹⁹⁰ The scale of the task was so vast it appeared impossible. John Holmes, the president of the Canadian Institute of International Affairs, described attitudes toward shelters, "People aren't nearly as worried as they are in the United States. In fact, they are not concerned enough about the bomb. Fallout shelters are a cocktail party joke. We're in the middle of another economic lift and that's what seems to count."¹⁹¹

The disarmament movement continued to speak out against civil defence preparations in the midst of the Berlin crisis. Anti-nuclear activists, like Norman Alcock, disputed claims that survival was possible. He questioned how officials believed Canadians could live in the radioactive wasteland that would be produced by a nuclear attack. He concluded, "As a scientist I do not believe my children could survive in the world they would find when they came out." Communists in Toronto condemned Mayor Nathan Phillips for his promotion of fallout shelters.¹⁹²

¹⁸⁹ F.F. Worthington, "After All the Argument War May Come," *Saturday Night*, June 10, 1961, 31.

¹⁹⁰ "B.C. Not Geared to Face the Hell of Nuclear War," *Vancouver Sun*, September 19, 1961,

¹⁹¹ "In the Nuclear Shadow," *Time*, (Canadian Edition) October 13, 1961, 23.

¹⁹² "2 Communists Run in Metro," *Globe and Mail*, October 2, 1961, 5.

Tocsin B was the largest military training exercise undertaken in Canada in peacetime.¹⁹³ Diefenbaker spoke to the nation in a televised address before the November test began to explain why it was necessary. In a nuclear war, Canada would be part of the battlefield; Canadians would “suffer severe losses” and “be exposed to the peril of radioactive fallout.” Tocsin B began when a radar station on the DEW-Line detected a hypothetical enemy aircraft approaching Canada just after dark. Diefenbaker and six cabinet members went to his shelter at 24 Sussex Drive and pretended to sign the War Measures Act. Civil defence workers “fed dummy orders to shattered survivors on an emergency network linking the stand-by capital with ten provincial emergency centers.” Air raid sirens rang and radios broadcast instructions to Canadians: “Go to your fallout shelter. If you haven’t got a fallout shelter, lie down under the basement stairs with a mattress over your head. Don’t try to out-run the fallout cloud. This is not an emergency.” An imaginary 5-megaton bomb fell near the Ottawa airport and three hours later 175 000 of Ottawa’s residents, including the Prime Minister, became pretend victims of the mock nuclear attack. Harkness stepped in for Diefenbaker and worked to restore order to the nation. During the practice attack, bombs fell on fourteen cities and killed a total of four million Canadians.¹⁹⁴

Canada’s state of readiness for a nuclear war was viewed, by many, as a joke. The sirens in Oshawa and Guelph, Ontario failed completely. Residents of Sudbury heard the alert seven minutes after the imaginary bombs had fallen. Montreal officials had rushed to install nearly one hundred air raids sirens in the midst of the Berlin crisis. During Tocsin B, mothers in Montreal complained “that the din of sirens was terrifying

¹⁹³ The first Tocsin took place in May 1960 and Tocsin A was held in May 1961. “100 000 In Militia Courses for Survival,” *Monetary Times*, November 1961, 19.

¹⁹⁴ *Time*, (Canadian Edition) November 24, 1961, 3.

their babies.” In Edmonton the emergency broadcast began five minutes late and none of the sirens, even the backup ones, worked. In Vancouver they worked so well they “screamed for as long as two hours.”¹⁹⁵ Even the sirens designed to warn those in parliament failed. Few inside the House of Commons heard a sound. The *Montreal Star* reported, “The sirens did not seem anywhere nearly as loud as those with which many Canadians became familiar in Britain during World War II.”¹⁹⁶

Diefenbaker admitted the mixed results of the exercise: “it ... served its purpose adequately” but “there were many gaps in survival plans.” He concluded, “The efficiency of the operation was less than is requisite, and much remains to be done.”¹⁹⁷ Media evaluations were varied. *Time* praised the exercise as “a highly useful test of the capability of the government to warn of impending attack and to carry on after the bombs fell.”¹⁹⁸ The *Globe and Mail* concluded that Canada was “woefully unprepared to deal with an atomic attack.” The exercise exposed the gaps in civil defence planning but it could not “break the prevailing public apathy, even if all the faulty sirens detected in the exercise were repaired and even if people could hear them.”¹⁹⁹ Douglas called Tocsin B “a bizarre performance.” He believed the government used the ‘travesty’ of an exercise to divert attention from its lack of policy on nuclear weapons. If the government believed the threat of World War Three was real, it should build shelters itself or assist the public.²⁰⁰ Disarmers booed the mention of Tocsin B at a public meeting in Toronto.²⁰¹

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, *Time*, (Canadian Edition) August 25, 1961, 7.

¹⁹⁶ “Sirens Fail to Warn People in Parliament,” *Montreal Star*, November 9, 1961, 17.

¹⁹⁷ Saywell, ed. *Canadian Annual Review*, (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1961): 157.

¹⁹⁸ *Time*, (Canadian Edition) November 24, 1961, 13.

¹⁹⁹ “Survival Without Defense!” *Globe and Mail*, May 18, 1961, 6.

²⁰⁰ “Douglas Terms Tocsin B a Bizarre Performance,” *Globe and Mail*, November 16, 1961, 4.

²⁰¹ “Survival Without Defense!” *Globe and Mail*, May 18, 1961, 6.

The national survival training program did not fare any better than Tocsin B. It quickly became the subject of derision. Paul Hellyer, the Liberal party's defence critic, dubbed it a 'broomstick army' equipped with mops and brooms to clean up after a nuclear disaster. His description borrowed from traditional gender roles. Just as the militia had bristled over its assignment to a mop-up role in future wars, Hellyer focused on the female function of cleaning. Hellyer belittled the idea of the civil defence army: "I can see them now, out with their brooms sweeping up the radioactive debris. Of course, I forgot one thing -- they will be dead."²⁰² A cartoon published in the *Vancouver Sun* suggested that civil defence was not a masculine enough task for the Canadian military. It showed a male member of the "broomstick army" holding a dust pan and wearing an apron decorated with frills as well as epaulets. This clean-up role threatened the masculinity of Canadian men at the same time as it appeared unlikely to save lives.²⁰³ *Maclean's* agreed that the biggest challenge facing the survival army was survival. The members of "the mop-up militia ... are apt to be among the victims themselves" since over half lived in designated target areas. Even army officials could not explain how the trainees would manage to reach the outlying areas to rescue victims and restore order.²⁰⁴ The fact that much of the training focused on marching and shooting drew criticism in the House of Commons. Army authorities argued that while these drills instilled discipline and obedience most of the training involved education about fallout and training in rescue. The program failed to meet its quotas despite the rising levels of unemployment across the country. One week before the first course was set to begin just 10 000 had

²⁰² "Next Mission for the survival army: to survive," *Maclean's*, March 10, 1962, 1.

²⁰³ "Canada's Civil Defence Militia to be a 'Broomstick Army' Says MP," *Vancouver Sun*, September 15, 1961.

²⁰⁴ "Next Mission for the survival army: to survive," *Maclean's*, March 10, 1962, 1.

enrolled in a program designated for 25 000 men. The controversy about the 'survival army' grew when it was reported that officials had failed to notice when the same men signed up for a second round of training. *Time* magazine reported on the Prime Minister's disappointment: "John Diefenbaker deplored the apparent apathy toward the broomstick army."²⁰⁵ Hellyer dismissed the government civil defence plans as "shadow boxing" and demanded that more should be done to ensure the population survived.²⁰⁶

Canadians were evenly divided when polled whether they approved of the government's civil defence efforts.²⁰⁷ Opinion polls showed that Canadians were also evenly divided as to the chances of a nuclear war. However, a clear majority recognized the bleak prospect of surviving such a conflict. A poll asked Canadians for their views on their chances in an all-out nuclear war. Just 6 percent believed the chances were very good, 60 percent thought they were poor and 30 percent saw them as fifty-fifty.²⁰⁸ The public recognized the scale of the threat, and for this reason, perhaps rejected civil defence preparations as futile.

Those working to keep nuclear arms out of Canada recognized that cold war tensions over Berlin and the resumption of nuclear tests made their task more difficult. Tommy Douglas argued that Canada should refuse to be bullied into accepting nuclear arms. The SCM urged the government to reject nuclear arms for Canada, "Already the

²⁰⁵ *Time*, (Canadian Edition) November 10, 1961, 13.

²⁰⁶ "CD Plan Called Shadow Boxing," *Globe and Mail*, September 14, 1961, 11.

²⁰⁷ CIPO, *Gallup Poll*, "And what about the problem of Civil Defence in case of a nuclear war – do you approve or disapprove of the way the government is handling it?" 40.4 percent approved, 38.4 percent disapproved and 21.2 percent remained undecided. Lyon, *Canada in World Affairs, 1961-63*, Appendix B, Table 5, 540.

²⁰⁸ CIPO, *Gallup Poll*, September 1961. "If we should happen to get into an all-out nuclear war, what do you think our own chances would be of living through it – very good, poor, or 50/50?" 6 percent said very good, 60 percent said poor, 30 percent said 50/50 and 4 percent had no opinion. *Gallup Poll*, November 1961, "Would you say there is much danger of world war or not much danger?" 42 percent said there was much danger, 44 percent thought there was not much danger and 14 percent did not know. Lyon, *Canada in World Affairs, 1961-3*, Appendix B, 539; 535-6.

danger of nuclear war is great: Canada dare not make it greater.”²⁰⁹ Rabbi Feinberg proclaimed that a nuclear-free Canada represented the “will of the people.” He pointed to the power of the individual over the decision makers in elected office.²¹⁰ Hugh MacLennan, a supporter of the disarmament cause, described the Berlin crisis as a turning-point in attitudes toward the nuclear threat. For the first time, Canadians took the threat seriously and imagined themselves as victims in a nuclear war. He argued that it seemed as if the whole atmosphere surrounding nuclear issues changed after the close call with nuclear conflict over Berlin:

Until 1962, the idea of nuclear war was not horrible to any but a few people.... But now the atmosphere is different. In the summer and fall of 1961, there were signs all over the world that at last the bomb had emerged from dreamland and had become a horrible reality. Millions at last began to imagine themselves and their families under that light brighter than a thousands sun. They imagined what it would be like to cower in some shelter after the thing had gone off. To emerge from it into what? To be the last, or next to the last, human being on a blasted planet.²¹¹

MacLennan, like many other disarmament advocates, believed that in the aftermath of the Berlin crisis opposition to nuclear weapons in Canada might grow.

The CCND organized a Thanksgiving Day lobby on Parliament Hill. It planned to deliver its petition against nuclear arms to the Diefenbaker government. In June the group tallied the signatures it had received to that point. The support for the appeal was strongest in British Columbia and Ontario. It was weak in Alberta, Manitoba and the Maritime Provinces, where there was just one branch of the group. Quebec, where anti-

²⁰⁹ “Berlin Misrepresented by U.S., Douglas Says,” *Globe and Mail*, September 25, 1961, 12; Beattie, *A brief history of the Student Christian Movement in Canada*, 30.

²¹⁰ “Soviet ‘Inconsistent’ Feinberg Tells Envoy,” *Toronto Star*, August 31, 1961, 22.

²¹¹ MURA CCND Collection, Box 25, File 18, Clipping, Hugh MacLennan, “You *can* do something about nuclear war,” *Liberty: Canada’s Young Family Magazine*, 39:1 (April 1962): 47.

nuclear opinion was strong, collected fewer signatures than Saskatchewan.²¹² Between 140 000 and 160 000 people had supported the petition. However, just 500 protestors demonstrated outside of the Parliament Buildings.²¹³ Diefenbaker turned down the group's request. The CCND evaluated the results of its campaign and concluded most Canadians did not want to sign their petition. They feared it "would weaken the Western defence effort."²¹⁴ By late 1961, with the erection of the Berlin Wall and the resumption of nuclear tests, many peace activists concluded they lost the fight against nuclear warheads. They believed that, faced with the brush with war, the government made up its mind to take nuclear weapons.

The threat of war grew in late 1961 and the Diefenbaker government took steps to protect Canadians and to fulfill the nation's commitment to its allies. The Prime Minister tried to balance the Soviet threat against the dangers of nuclear war. He believed that anti-nuclear opinion was growing and changed his nuclear policy to reflect this change. He promised not to take nuclear arms as long as progress toward disarmament continued. The government maintained its efforts to protect the population from nuclear attack. The disarmament movement convinced the Prime Minister of its strength but continued to experience internal divisions and faced external attacks. Gallup polls showed that Canadians supported the acquisition of nuclear arms by a clear margin. In late 1961 Canadian favoured equipping Canadian forces with nuclear weapons by a majority of two

²¹² The total number of signatures was almost 30 000. 14 614 in B.C., 711 in Alberta, 1817 in Saskatchewan, 780 in Manitoba, 9471 in Ontario, 1176 in Quebec and 352 in the Maritimes. MURA CCND, Box 5, File 3, CCCRH, "Annual Meeting Report, 1962."

²¹³ "500 Plan Ban Bomb Protest," *Toronto Daily Star*, October 2, 1961, 1; MURA CCND Box 18 Activities, File 1, 3rd Annual Conference, February 26-27, 1962, 'Minutes.' "Toronto Group Planning Drive Against A-Arms," *Globe and Mail*, November 23, 1961, 5.

²¹⁴ MURA CCND, Box 5, File 3 "CCCRH, *National Newsletter*, 1962, 3."

to one.²¹⁵ The Berlin Crisis and the resumption of nuclear testing reinforced the danger of the cold war. Diefenbaker pledged his support for a strong defence and it appeared that he might reverse his position and obtain nuclear arms in peacetime. Efforts to increase the public's concern about nuclear war and move them to take action continued to progress slowly despite increased publicity and expanded planning. Nuclear issues expanded to attract the concern of a greater number of groups. However, the complexities of providing security against the nuclear threat at the same time as ensuring a strong defence against the Soviet Union continued to limit the efforts of nuclear disarmers, civil defence planners and even challenged Canada's top officials.

²¹⁵ 54 percent approved of nuclear arms for Canadian forces. *Time* (Canadian Edition) November 24, 1961, 14.

Chapter Five:

“Down the slope to universal destruction:”

A Federal Election and a Crisis over Soviet Missiles in Cuba, 1962.

The crisis over Berlin contributed to a reconsideration of Canada's security and its place in the cold war. Elected officials grappled with the question of how to ensure safety for Canadians. Civil defence officials and those active in the nuclear disarmament movement also continued to confront the problem of security in the nuclear age. The close brush with war and the resumption of nuclear tests by both the United States and the Soviet Union revealed the risks Canadians faced. John Diefenbaker announced a federal election. The nuclear disarmament movement hoped to influence Canadian voters. However, its reputation had declined and its members were divided about its methods and programs. They continued to face external attacks for their motives. In the fall of 1962 the Cuban crisis brought the world to the brink of a nuclear war. It also focused attention of Canada's security and its defences. The debate over nuclear weapons reached a peak as Diefenbaker and Pearson faced off over Canada's commitments to its allies and the nature of its contribution to defence.

In early 1962, Lester Pearson addressed a group of New Canadians celebrating their escape from communist Europe at Toronto's Massey Hall. He labelled Communist colonialism the primary threat to world peace. The Liberal party leader rejected the stark choice between being either red or dead: “Peace at the price of submission to Communist dictation is no peace at all. Strength without provocation and firmness without fear are required.... We reject the idea that there is only a choice between suicide and surrender.”¹ Pearson had obviously learned a lesson from his 1960 “Red or Dead” interview with

¹ “Firmness Only Answer to Reds: Pearson,” *Globe and Mail*, January 15, 1962, 4.

Pierre Berton. He no longer expressed a willingness to live under Khrushchev. An opinion poll asked Canadians whether they would rather be red or dead. Six out of ten of those surveyed responded that they would rather fight a nuclear war than live under communism. The number of young Canadians prepared to face a nuclear conflict rose to seven out of ten.²

The nuclear disarmament movement confronted the problem of maintaining the public's interest in its campaign against nuclear arms. Rabbi Feinberg addressed the third annual meeting of the CCND. He concluded that Canadians may have demonstrated greater concern about survival during international emergencies but, their "anxiety and excitement" did not extend beyond these periods of tension. Feinberg stressed that only a moderate approach would gain public support: "Absolute pacifism, unilateral disarmament, will scarcely get a hearing by the bulk of Canadians."³ He referred to the encouraging results of a poll taken by the group. Unlike all other national surveys taken either by the Canadian Institute of Public Opinion or the CPRI, it concluded that more Canadians opposed nuclear arms than supported them. The poll appeared to confirm J.E. Keyston's accusation that the CCND used evidence selectively to further its agenda.⁴

The close brush with war the previous fall moved Canadians to consider Canada's defence policy, civil defence planning and the issue of nuclear tests. Politicians debated how to provide security for Canadians. The Prime Minister suggested that Canada would

² "Suppose you had to make the decision between fighting an all-out nuclear war or living under Communist rule – how would you decide?" 65 percent would fight a nuclear war, 11 percent would choose a life under Communism and 24 percent could not decide. 81 percent in the United States and 21 percent in Britain stated they would risk a nuclear war to avoid submission to communism. "Red or Dead? Six to One Would Choose Nuclear War," *Montreal Star*, February 24, 1962, 9.

³ MURA CCND Box 18 Activities, File 1 "3rd Annual Conference, February 26-7, 1962, 'The Canadian Peace Movement – Its Program Today,' Keynote Address by Rabbi Abraham Feinberg, February 26, 1962;" "Extremist Pressures Feared by Feinberg," *Globe and Mail*, February 27, 1962, 4.

⁴ "Keyston Gives Reason for Disagreeing with Keenleyside," *Globe and Mail*, March 31, 1961, 9.

obtain nuclear warheads if war broke out and would have “No bow and arrow arsenal.” He added, however, that his government would only take the nuclear arms when necessary.⁵ A few days after he made this statement he found it necessary to clarify his position. He explained that, while disarmament remained in the forefront of world affairs, the decision to arm Canadian forces with nuclear warheads remained hypothetical.⁶ At the same time, Douglas Harkness announced that Canada would use nuclear arms in the event of war. He refuted criticism of the government’s indecisive nuclear policy and suggested that the acquisition of the warheads was imminent: “If there is a war ... we’ll need the best weapons we can arms ourselves with. We have taken the precaution of building a weapons system to handle nuclear arms.”⁷ Robert Spencer outlined the government’s position on nuclear arms in the *Canadian Annual Review*: “With an election in prospect, and believing that nuclear warheads would win few votes and undoubtedly lose many, the government moved with a caution that entailed confusion and ambiguity.”⁸

Pressure began to mount on the Diefenbaker government to make a decision on Canada’s defence policy. Paul Martin, the critic of foreign policy in the Liberal Opposition, attacked the government’s position on nuclear arms and accused Diefenbaker of putting domestic policy before international responsibility. He believed Canada’s reputation had been damaged: “Mr. Diefenbaker’s prolonged procrastination about nuclear arms does not appear to our allies to be based on thoughtfulness for the interests of the team. This present Government is afraid to offend any segment of public

⁵ “Use Nuclear Arms If War Comes, PM Hints,” *Globe and Mail*, February, 24, 1962, 1.

⁶ “A Arms Question Hypothetical, PM Says,” *Globe and Mail*, February 27, 1962, 9.

⁷ “Harkness Says Canada to Use Nuclear Arms in Event of War,” *Montreal Star*, February 24, 1962, 5.

⁸ John Saywell, ed *Canadian Annual Review*, (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1962): 89.

opinion.”⁹ Paul Hellyer, the Liberal critic for defence, argued that any decision on nuclear arms should be based on military and political rather than the moral arguments put forward by opponents of nuclear weapons. He challenged the perception of nuclear warfare as immoral saying, “War is war; death is death and disability is disability. It doesn’t make much difference whether a man is killed by a rifle bullet or an atom bomb.” He urged the government to strengthen Canada’s defence as the cold war moved toward “the lip of disaster.” As long as the Soviets had the advantage in conventional weapons, Hellyer concluded, “We have the choice of using nuclear warfare or retreating.”¹⁰ Politicians in the Liberal party stressed the need to provide a strong defence even though the party officially opposed nuclear arms for Canada. They rejected the perception of nuclear arms as a moral issue or one in which domestic political gain should be given priority. Tommy Douglas criticized the government for its stand on nuclear weapons and declared that Canada risked losing its influence in the maintenance of world peace. He alleged that the survival of the planet depended on Canada’s ability to encourage agreement on disarmament. Nuclear war would be more likely, he argued, as long as Canada’s nuclear policy remained “vague and non-committal.”¹¹ Increasingly Canada’s elected leaders attempted to define the nature of the nuclear weapons question. Evaluation of the issue as a moral or a political matter would continue to increase.

Groups outside the nuclear disarmament movement also continued to evaluate the best way to ensure Canada’s security. The CLC unanimously endorsed general, simultaneous and complete disarmament as the best defence against nuclear war. It

⁹ “Martin Says Canada Guilty of Posturing,” *Globe and Mail*, January 4, 1962, 4.

¹⁰ “Nuclear Decisions Held Political Matter,” *Globe and Mail*, January 29, 1962, 5.

¹¹ “Take Nuclear Stand, Douglas Tells Ottawa,” *Globe and Mail*, January 9, 1962, 2.

persisted in its opposition to nuclear arms for Canada.¹² The Very Reverend J.R. Mutchmor, the moderator of the United Church of Canada, created controversy when he voiced his support for nuclear arms for Canada. He declared that there was little moral difference between relying on atomic bases in the United States and refusing to accept them in Canada. He also explained that Canada could not afford to weaken the defence effort against Communism.¹³ Rabbi Feinberg was critical of the United Church minister's statement, "The moral courage Dr. Mutchmor manifests in matters such as bingo and gin bottles might be put to better use." Jo Davis announced, "I believe the United Church is as split down the middle on this issue as Canadians are."¹⁴ Father E.F. Sheridan, the rector of the Jesuit Regis College at the University of Toronto, agreed in Mutchmor: "It seems to me that the use of nuclear weapons, defensively, to repel aggression is patently moral, unless there is proximate danger of thereby causing a global catastrophe."¹⁵ Support for a nuclear defence was expressed by Protestant and Catholic religious leaders. Delegates attending the Royal Canadian Legion's biennial convention in Halifax also encountered divisions over the nuclear arms issue. They defeated a resolution in support of nuclear arms. Instead, they compromised and appealed to the government to obtain the most modern and effective weapons available.¹⁶

The government's efforts to improve civil defence planning did not achieve the desired results. The civil defence army did not benefit from the increased fears of war created by the Berlin crisis. The number of recruits grew in early 1962, yet these efforts

¹² "Tests Denounced," *Globe and Mail*, April 14, 1962, 9; "Keep Defences, shun atom, says CLC," *The Province*, [Vancouver] April 14, 1962, 3.

¹³ "Clerics Assail Mutchmor Backing of 'Bases,'" *Globe and Mail*, February 21, 1962, 5.

¹⁴ "Mutchmor 'Cynical' on A-Arms – Rabbi," *Toronto Daily Star*, February 26, 1963, 2; "Mutchmor Shocking On A-Arms—Feinberg," *Toronto Daily Star*, February 21, 1962, 31.

¹⁵ "Churches and Nuclear Arms," *Observer*, February 1, 1963, 7.

¹⁶ "Legion Drops Atom Arms Resolution," *Globe and Mail*, June 5, 1962, 31.

to increase the number of experts in civil defence ultimately produced disappointing results. The government's suggestion that businesses release their young employees to allow them to receive training went largely unanswered. Thousands of the volunteers left the training course to take civilian employment.¹⁷ The Royal Canadian Legion proposed a solution to "John Diefenbaker's unemployment army."¹⁸ It supported compulsory national survival training for all Canadians under 25.¹⁹ Harkness insisted that his own government needed to expand its efforts to ensure the security of the population. He felt the public needed to be given more information about the "procedures to follow in case of nuclear attack." He argued that Canada needed better warning systems; all Canadian homes should be equipped with electronic devices to alert them of an attack.²⁰ The problems of providing protection for millions of Canadians in the event of a nuclear attack continued to be debated.

An article in the United Church magazine, *The Observer*, described the increased attention shelters and civil defence received after Berlin: "Suddenly, nearly everybody's talking about it.... From east to west and across two countries... how effective would either of them be if nuclear war came? Would life be worth living if one should survive a nuclear attack?"²¹ Toronto's Mayor, Nathan Phillips, defended his decision to build a shelter as the act of both a good citizen and a good husband.²² Christina Newman, a journalist who contributed articles to the women's magazine, *Chatelaine* and the wife of fellow journalist, Peter Newman, recounted the indecision one Ottawa housewife felt over

¹⁷ "Second Survival Course Attracts More Men Than First," *Globe and Mail*, January 5, 1962, 13; "7,300 Drop 2 Survival Courses," *Globe and Mail*, March 16, 1962, 2.

¹⁸ "The Nuclear Answer to Unemployment," *Canadian Forum* 42 (July 1962): 77.

¹⁹ "Legion Drops Atom Arms Resolution," *Globe and Mail*, June 5, 1962, 31.

²⁰ "Harkness Says Canada to Use Nuclear Arms in Event of War," *Montreal Star*, February 24, 1962, 5; "Ban-Bombers Mislead Nation, Harkness," *Globe and Mail*, May 19, 1962, 11.

²¹ F. Chamberlain, "Fallout Shelters," *The Observer*, January 15, 1962, 12.

²² "Phillips Defends Plan For Fallout Shelter," *Globe and Mail*, January 29, 1962, 5.

building a shelter. She had changed her mind at least ten times and explained she was torn between hope and despair. On one hand she did not believe that survival would be possible. On the other hand she believed that if there was a chance a shelter might work she should try to save her children.²³ Gordon Sinclair, who had worked as a correspondent for the *Toronto Star*, was a radio personality on the CBC and was also a panellist on *Front Page Challenge*, argued, “Shelters are for moles and cowards.”²⁴

Part of the difficulty involved in gaining support for these preparations involved the depiction of nuclear war by civil defence authorities. The nuclear disarmament movement continued to complain that civil defence publicity presented a false view of nuclear war. Journalists joined in this critique. Christina Newman described the reality of fallout shelters: “There has been an unrealistic tendency among advocates of fallout shelters to make them look like underground picnic areas. They won’t be. They’ll be cramped, stuffy, stinking cages, where you’ll suffer the nerve-tearing suspense of not knowing whether you and your family will emerge alive.”²⁵ Clive Baxter, a frequent contributor to the *Financial Post*, concluded that the public rejected the way in which civil defence pamphlets presented nuclear war: “The bombs always fell somewhere else and Canadian families were pictured sitting things out in relative calm and comfort.” The public did not accept this positive, benign and, therefore, unrealistic portrayal. Civil defence officials planned a new publication in 1962 to redress this problem. *Survival in Likely Target Areas* would provide information that was “completely frank” about the horror of nuclear war. Officials admitted that previously released literature “painted too happy a picture” of nuclear weapons but promised that this new material would “offer no

²³ Christina Newman, “Can you protect your family from the bomb?” *Chatelaine*, April 1962, 31.

²⁴ F. Chamberlain, “Fallout Shelters,” *The Observer*, January 15, 1962, 14.

²⁵ Newman, “Can you protect your family from the bomb?” 83.

easy answers.”²⁶ The new pamphlet did not skim over the grim aspects of nuclear war and showed men and women running from nuclear explosions and victims lying on the ground.²⁷ These graphic images and blunt descriptions of the toll of an attack replaced the benign images of families waiting patiently inside fallout shelters or gathered around a kitchen table happily planning their escape routes in the event of an attack. Canadians were unsure whether survival was possible and questioned the optimistic message of civil defence authorities. The more graphic images did not appear to help the program.

The nuclear disarmament movement continued its attack on civil defence plans. Rabbi Feinberg rejected national survival and concluded that its “futility has been proven ... when the booklets and televised commercials picture the carnage of nuclear war as a minor Red Cross emergency created by a single picayune five-megaton bomb.”²⁸ Norman Alcock and his wife Norma, who was a member of the VOW’s national executive, rejected civil defence and told reporters they had no plans to build a fallout shelter for their own family. The couple explained, “Any money we have left can be put to much better use to build peace.”²⁹ The VOW condemned civil defence in a brief to the Prime Minister in March 1962: “We want life, for ourselves and our children, not in shelters or underground caves, but in the wide, clean spaces of an expanding universe.”³⁰ The Saskatchewan branch of the group called on the federal government to withdraw civil defence pamphlets from circulation.³¹

²⁶ Clive Baxter, “More Bickering, Soul –Searching on EMO,” *Financial Post*, April 7, 1962, 27.

²⁷ Canada, Emergency Measures Organization, *Survival in Likely Target Areas*, Ottawa: Queen’s Printer, 1962.

²⁸ MURA CCND Box 18 Activities, File 1 “3rd Annual Conference February 26-7, 1962, ‘Keynote address, Rabbi Abraham Feinberg.’

²⁹ “Alcocks Find It Easy to Adopt New Mode of Life,” *Globe and Mail*, January 16, 1962, 10.

³⁰ Voice of Women, *Newsletter*, no. 19, March 25, 1962, 10.

³¹ “VOW Urge Government Aid In Education for Living Under Nuclear Conditions,” *Saskatoon Star-Phoenix*, January 5, 1963.

Delegates at the CCND's annual meeting, however, disagreed whether the group should campaign against civil defence. Some local branches had already begun to protest these measures. The Ottawa group published a pamphlet critical of shelters:

There is no defence against all-out nuclear attack. Our government is proposing a programme of Civil Defence consisting of fallout shelters and survival courses is misleading us. We must not allow our basic instincts of protection for ourselves and our families nor [sic] our reasonable desire to uphold our way of life, to hinder us from seeing the futility and immorality of such a programme.

The British Columbia wing of the organization also condemned shelters: "This is not the time to give way to despair and burrow underground but to stand up in favour of peace."³² Dimitri Roussopolos accused Diefenbaker of using civil defence to reassure Canadians they could survive a nuclear conflict in order to gain support for the government's plans to obtain nuclear warheads. He urged the CCND to take a stand against national survival preparations and concluded, "Civil Defence is a categorical fraud, a Tory criminal conspiracy." Justice Joseph T. Thorson, the President of the Exchequer Court of Canada and a former Liberal member of parliament, argued that the CCND should not take a stand on national survival efforts because its members were not unanimous in their opposition. Instead, the group should focus on its main goal of preventing nuclear weapons for Canada: "The organization would be inviting division of opinion and give the opponents of the CCND's first objective an argument of attack against it." By the end of the meeting, the delegates passed a resolution critical of civil defence by a margin of seventeen to seven:

We believe that the efforts of the Canadian people should be directed toward the prevention of war through negotiations for disarmament and peace, rather than toward support of Civil Defence efforts, which cannot provide adequate security

³² MURA CCND Box 18, File 1, "Peace is the Only Safe Shelter, Now Is The Time To Act (Not Dig)," The B.C. Committees on Radiation Hazards, n.d.

against nuclear attack, and which tend to lull people into a fatalistic acceptance of the inevitability of nuclear war.³³

The Winnipeg Committee for Disarmament realized that its opposition to civil defence diverted attention from the real threat of nuclear war. They were labelled as fanatics who wanted to prevent “innocent people from protecting themselves,” of denying “poor unemployed men a few weeks on training pay,” and for giving “aid and comfort to our enemies.”³⁴ They assumed that, “The Minister of National Defence will meet every embarrassing question about his own lack of policy with a dilation [sic] of the incredible naivety, irresponsibility, or worse, of those who would snatch from the poor even the protection of their little shelters.” The group was correct in its assessment of Douglas Harkness. He belittled those opposed to civil defence: “The idea of telling people not to build fallout shelters is folly. They profess that if there is a nuclear war the whole country would be destroyed overnight. This is false of course.”³⁵

As the debate over the domestic policies continued, international events also drew attention to nuclear issues. The world waited anxiously to see if Kennedy would follow through on his threat to resume nuclear testing if the Soviets broke the test ban agreement. Green stated that “world opinion” was against the United States’ plans. He added, “But one should bear the Soviet record in mind when considering the U.S. position.”³⁶ By April, the United States announced it would start testing again. The resumption of nuclear tests by the superpowers signalled the escalation of the arms race and renewed anxieties about radioactive fallout. Prime Minister Diefenbaker, who had made a strong

³³ MURA CCND Box 18 Activities, File 1 “3rd Annual Conference February 26-7, 1962, ‘Minutes,’ 27.”

³⁴ MURA, CCND, Box 18, File 1, Winnipeg Committee for Disarmament, “Draft on CIVIL DEFENCE.”

³⁵ “Ban-Bombers Mislead Nation, Harkness,” *Globe and Mail*, May 19, 1962, 11.

³⁶ “Women’s Group Fails to Sway PM,” *Globe and Mail*, March 8, 1962, 21; “PM Reaffirms Policy Against Atom Tests,” *Globe and Mail*, March 5, 1962, 3.

statement against the Soviet Union the previous fall, now called Kennedy's decision "preposterous." He argued that Canada's ally had lost its moral advantage.³⁷ Pearson, on the other hand, argued that Kennedy had no alternative once the Soviet Union had ignored his ultimatum.³⁸ British Prime Minister Macmillan agreed with Pearson. He maintained that American nuclear tests were vital and ensured the safety of the west.³⁹ Already there were signs that Diefenbaker's support for the United States was weakening.

Officials in the department of national health and welfare announced a slight rise in the amount of fallout detected in Canada. They revealed that strontium 90 levels had risen gradually in the first three months of 1962. They reassured the public, however, that tests of rainfall had shown that the levels were still far below those reached in 1958.⁴⁰ The average in June, though, climbed even higher and reached three times the levels traced in January. The level of strontium 90 doubled the highest level tracked in the previous year and was nearly as high as those reached in June 1959.⁴¹ Polls showed that Canadians, by a slim majority, believed the Americans should stop testing. While a clear margin of English Canadians supported the American tests, a majority of French Canadians wanted them to stop.⁴² Sidney Katz noted the extent of concerns over radiation: "When the U.S. continued nuclear testingand newspapers reported on the

³⁷ *Time*, (Canadian Edition) August 25, 1961, 7.

³⁸ "Pearson Blames Reds for Provoking Tests," *Globe and Mail*, April 3, 1962, 4.

³⁹ "Mac Says N. Tests Vital," *Toronto Star*, May 5, 1962, 53.

⁴⁰ "Fallout Count Rise Slightly," *Globe and Mail*, June 5, 1962, 5; "Strontium 90 Levels Show Gradual Rise," *Globe and Mail*, July 25, 1962, 3; "U.S., Soviet Tests Blamed," *Globe and Mail*, October 18, 1962, 1.

⁴¹ "U.S., Soviet Tests Blamed," *Globe and Mail*, October 18, 1962, 1.

⁴² CIPO, *Gallup Poll*, June 1962, "Do you think the United States should stop atomic bomb tests or do you feel those tests should be continued?" 45.5 percent believed the Americans should stop their tests, 37.5 percent felt they should continue, 13.5 percent had no opinion and 3.5 percent had no answer. Among English speaking respondents, 40.5 percent felt the tests should stop, 45 percent thought the tests should continue, 13.5 percent had no opinion and 1 percent had no answer. Among French speaking respondents 55.5 percents felt the tests should stop, 27.5 percent believed the tests should go on, 15 percent had no opinion and 2 percent gave no answer. Peyton Lyon, *Canada in World Affairs, 1961-63*, (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1968): Appendix B, 545.

spread of fallout by precipitation, a Montreal teacher noted that many children in her classes anxiously followed the weather reports, fearing the downpour of “poisonous” rain and snow.”⁴³

Canada’s peace groups and labour unions protested against American nuclear tests. The CLC condemned the United States for its plans to resume nuclear testing and called on the Canadian government to arrange a truce between the nuclear powers. A protest in Montreal drew a large crowd.⁴⁴ Members of the VOW asked the Prime Minister to work to end the tests. Three hundred members from the province of Quebec travelled on the “Peace Train” in cars decked with anti-nuclear banners proclaiming “Let Our Children Live.” Another 150 women from Cornwall, North Bay and Ottawa joined them in the capital. Press reports described the women as “old and young, matronly and chic.” They came with their babies in their arms or in carriages with “men folk tagging along.” The delegation asked Kennedy to reconsider his plans because American tests would only lead to more Soviet explosions. It expressed its belief that competition in nuclear testing “leads finally and fatally to the destruction of the human race.” Some of the women proposed the “more drastic” suggestion of unilateral disarmament. Tucker informed the Prime Minister, however, that the VOW supported multilateral disarmament.⁴⁵ It appeared that the group was divided over its approach to the issue. Diefenbaker told the women that a ban on tests required inspection and blamed the Soviets for rejecting all disarmament agreements since 1945. It would be “suicidal,” he

⁴³ “Fallout on Canada,” *Time*, (Canadian Edition) November 10, 1961, 13; “Toronto Under Attack: Can You Protect Your Family From the Bomb?” *Chatelaine*, April 1962, 30-31; Sidney Katz, “How Nuclear Fears Affect Children Even in Peacetime,” *Maclean’s*, June 15, 1963, 23.

⁴⁴ “Tests Denounced,” *Globe and Mail*, April 14, 1962, 9; “Keep Defences, shun atom, says CLC,” *The Province*, [Vancouver] April 14, 1962, 3; “Bomb Protest Marches Held Around Globe: 1,200 Parade in Montreal,” *Montreal Star*, April 23, 1962.

⁴⁵ “Try to Stop A-Tests Women Ask P.M.,” *Toronto Star*, March 8, 1962, 29.

maintained, if the United States were to stop testing unilaterally. The *Globe and Mail* reported, “Mr. Diefenbaker, in a strongly worded statement on the Soviet Union’s failure to live up to agreements in the past, said that the Government had the security of the state as its responsibility. The Government could not put its head in the sand; the country’s defenses must be protected.”⁴⁶ Howard Green told the women the government could not support unilateral disarmament: “That would diminish our influence. It would be far better to follow the present course. We have a good standing. I think if we suddenly decided to give up our arms we’d lose our influence with our friends.” Ann Gertler, a member of the VOW in Montreal, recalled the cooperation between the government and the women who rode the ‘peace train’ to Ottawa in March 1962. She explained, “Diefenbaker had been resisting the U.S. By protesting, we were helping him.”⁴⁷ However, there were signs that the good relationship between the group and the government might be declining.

Reporters focused on the emotional behaviour of the VOW delegation during its meeting with Canada’s top officials: “Excited French-speaking women jumped up to hurl questions at Mr. Balcer [Léon Balcer, the minister of transport] and a couple rushed up to the ministers in a state of agitation.”⁴⁸ The efforts of the group’s leaders to work for peace in a dignified and unemotional manner seemed to have failed. In a Mother’s Day protest against nuclear tests VOW members wore black arm bands “as a sign of mourning for their children.” The badges were marked with the popular disarmament slogan SOS

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷ “600 rode ‘62 peace train,” *Montreal Gazette*, March 5, 1989, D-6.

⁴⁸ “PM Reaffirms Policy Against Atom Tests,” *Globe and Mail*, March 5, 1962, 3.

for 'Suicide or Survival.'⁴⁹ Despite the maternal inspiration behind the Mother's Day protests many members complained of the sensational and militant tactics.⁵⁰ Charlotte McEwan, the president of Ottawa's VOW branch, described the maternal motivation behind her protests outside a meeting taking place between Diefenbaker and Britain's Prime Minister in the nation's capital, "I have four children and I feel they could have no future unless the children of all the world have a future."⁵¹ The Council of Women of London, Ontario refused the application for membership from the city's Voice of Women branch. It explained that efforts for the control of nuclear weapons did not increase Canadian security: "This action, we believe, is not in the best interests of our country, as it tends to weaken the will to fight and to promote pacifism at a time when Canada is already committed to go to war if necessary, by its membership in NATO and through other international agreements."⁵² Just as civil defence planners faced the problem of approaching nuclear war in its publicity efforts, peace activists encountered difficulties in finding tactics that would attract attention to their cause at the same time as they maintained their ladylike behaviour and did not stray into the ban-the-bomb field.

Prime Minister Diefenbaker ended the growing speculation and announced that a federal election would be held on June 18, 1962. Nuclear disarmers were hopeful that the time was right for a national debate on nuclear issues. The recent nuclear tests and the increased civil defence preparations after the cold war crisis over Berlin gave momentum to the nuclear debate. Nuclear arms acquisition had been discussed in the aftermath of the

⁴⁹ "Anti-Nuclear Marchers Picket U.S. Consulate," *Montreal Star*, March 26, 1962, 9; *Christian Outlook*, 17:7 (May 1962): 1.

⁵⁰ NA VOW MG 28 I218 Vol 1, File 4 Correspondence, Josephine Davis, VP 1962, "Letter from Margaret Robinson, November 20, 1962."

⁵¹ "Mac Gives Dief Latest Word on Euromart," *Toronto Star*, April 30, 1962, 1.

⁵² NA VOW MG 28 I218 Vol 21, File 12, London, Ont. Correspondence, "Letter from Membership Chairman, London Council of Women to Mrs. D.W. Handford, Voice of Women, National Office, Toronto, April 12, 1962."

crisis as Canada's leaders attempted to provide security for the nation. Rabbi Feinberg expressed confidence that nuclear weapons for Canada would "undoubtedly" dominate the campaign.⁵³ The candidates clarified their positions on defence. Lester Pearson announced that, "on the basis of present information," he opposed the acquisition and manufacture of nuclear weapons by Canada. Pearson believed that the spread of nuclear weapons "greatly multiplied" the threat to peace. He explained that "in present circumstances" a nuclear defence would not increase Canada's security. The Liberal leader left an opening for a possible change in policy. Pearson criticized the Conservative government's wait-and-see nuclear policy and belittled the idea that nuclear arms could be moved to the Bomarcas at the last minute. Once nuclear weapons were on their way to North America, he pointed out, "It will be too late to sing Praise John and pass the Bomarc ammunition."⁵⁴ Pearson described Diefenbaker's policy as confused and blamed him for placing political considerations first. The government made defence decisions without thinking and, as a result, wasted money and failed to fulfill Canada's obligations. "This Government," he alleged, "has made Canada look pretty silly."⁵⁵

In a televised address Diefenbaker discussed his government's policy:

To the mothers and wives we have given the assurance that Canada will not join the family of nuclear nations, but at the same time discharge our responsibilities for the security of Canada by assuring that if war should come – which God forbid- Canadian forces will be in a position to defend with the best defences available.⁵⁶

⁵³ "Feinberg Would Curb Extremists," *Toronto Star*, April 11, 1962, 25.

⁵⁴ "PCs Confused, Undecided on Defense Policy, Pearson Says," *Globe and Mail*, May 1, 1962, 9; "Liberal Platform Rules Out A-Arms," *Toronto Star*, April 30, 1962, 1.

⁵⁵ "Pearson Defends Views on NATO Nuclear Controls," *Globe and Mail*, May 2, 1962, 8.

⁵⁶ Peter C. Newman, *Renegade in Power: The Diefenbaker Years*, (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1963): 352.

He balanced a sentimental approach to mothers with pragmatism in this promise to support disarmament and discharge Canada's responsibilities.⁵⁷ During the election, the Prime Minister also accused Pearson of failing to stand up to communist imperialism. He chose to ignore Pearson's stronger statements against communism and focused on his 1960 'Better Red than Dead' interview instead.⁵⁸ The Conservative party suffered its own confusion over its nuclear weapons policy. While Diefenbaker pledged Canada would take nuclear arms in an emergency, Raymond O'Hurley, the minister of defence production, announced that as long as Diefenbaker was in office Canada would not take nuclear weapons.⁵⁹ Howard Green confirmed that Canada would accept nuclear weapons if international conditions worsened. He added the nation's first goal was still to prevent nuclear war. The government, he maintained, "is keeping a measure of sanity in a crazy world while spending millions of dollars to keep up its defences." He explained that Canada "want[ed] to continue to be held in high regard by communist countries as a sincere proponent of disarmament and peace." Like Pearson, Green expressed concern about Canada's reputation. Yet, he appeared more concerned about the views of Canada's opponents rather than its allies.⁶⁰

The NDP viewed the election as an opportunity to rally Canadians in a crusade for peace. Douglas argued that a nuclear-armed Canada represented a step closer to war. He warned that if Canada took nuclear weapons other nations would follow its example.

⁵⁷ "PCs Confused, Undecided," *Globe and Mail*, May 1, 1962, 9; "Canada Not to Have Nuclear Arms While Hope for Ban Glimmers, PM," *Globe and Mail*, May 19, 1962, 1; Newman, *Renegade in Power*, 352.

⁵⁸ John English, *The Life of Lester Pearson*, vol. 2, *The Worldly Years*, 222.

⁵⁹ "No A-Weapons As Long as PM Holds Office," *Globe and Mail*, June 4, 1962, 13.

⁶⁰ "Accept A-Arms If Conditions Worsen: Green," *Globe and Mail*, May 19, 1962, 1.

Canada should work to stop nuclear war and encourage a test ban treaty instead.⁶¹ In a prescient remark, Robert Thompson, the federal leader of the Social Credit party, noted that if Canada obtained nuclear weapons there would be nothing to prevent Cuba from obtaining them too. Just five months later his hypothetical suggestion would become a reality. Thompson expressed optimism that a nuclear war could be avoided because of the deterrent; Khrushchev did not want a nuclear war. If the Soviet Union dropped one bomb on the United States, the Social Credit leader warned, “a hundred more would drop on Moscow.”⁶² Delegates at the Communist Party’s 1962 convention warned the public, “Canadians Are Not Expendable! Let Us Have Peace!” The party campaigned against nuclear arms for Canada and supported its withdrawal from both NATO and NORAD.⁶³

F.C. Hunnius, the executive secretary of the CCND, concluded that the disarmament movement in early 1962 was still a campaign of the minority. He explained, “It has not yet managed to appeal to broad sections of the population. But important changes are in the wind.”⁶⁴ He remained optimistic that disarmers could influence the election results. The CCND polled the candidates for their positions on nuclear weapons for Canada and published the responses in order to educate voters. The group suggested that there should be a national nuclear debate between the leaders of the federal parties.⁶⁵ The CCND announced its first step in making ‘No Nuclear Arms for Canada’ a major election issue. It would send a delegation to Ottawa to meet with the leaders of each party. The CCND concluded: “The country is too little aware of the issue facing the world

⁶¹ “Ban A Weapons to Help World Peace,” *Globe and Mail*, May 3, 1962, 10; “NDP to Rally People Against Atomic Arms,” *Globe and Mail*, May 25, 1962, 4; “Atom-Armed Canada A Step Toward War, NDP Chief Declares,” *Globe and Mail*, April 2, 1962, 1.

⁶² “Canada Doesn’t Need Nuclear Weapons, Thompson Declares,” *Globe and Mail*, May 8, 1962, 8.

⁶³ Communist Party of Canada, “Canadians Are Not Expendable! Let Us Have Peace!” (Toronto: Ontario Committee, Communist Party of Canada, 1962): n.p.

⁶⁴ F. C. Hunnius, “Will Canada Lead?” *Our Generation Against Nuclear War* 1:3 (spring 1962): 114.

⁶⁵ “Poll Candidates On A-Weapons For Canada,” *Globe and Mail*, February 28, 1962, 4.

“at the crossroads between suicide or survival.”⁶⁶ Like the CCND, the VOW surveyed candidates for their positions on nuclear arms.

The disarmament movement was not united in its campaign to make nuclear arms the number one topic of the election campaign. Norman Alcock, elected as the president of the CPRI at the end of March, explained that the group would not take a stand on nuclear arms. While he personally opposed the arming of Canadian forces with nuclear warheads, Alcock concluded that thorough study would be needed before the group could announce its position.⁶⁷ Lotta Dempsey explained that thousands of women had worked to raise funds for the CPRI with projects that ranged from parties and teas to art and craft sales.⁶⁸ The Saskatchewan branch of the VOW requested that the provincial government provide the CPRI with a grant.⁶⁹ The Canadian United Auto Workers and the Canadian Labour Congress both pledged to support the CPRI “morally and financially.”⁷⁰

The CPRI did not live up to expectations despite its prominent supporters including Gérard Pelletier, the editor of *La Presse*, Pierre Trudeau, a lawyer and professor at the University of Montreal who would go on to become Prime Minister, Helen Tucker, the Very Reverend James Thomson, Hugh Keenleyside, Frances Winspear, former president of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce, Walter Koerner, the director of the Toronto Dominion Bank, and Dr. Brock Chisholm, the former director of the World Health Organization.⁷¹ The group hoped to collect two million dollars from Canadians

⁶⁶ MURA CCND Box 18 Activities, File 12 CCND Ottawa Delegation, “News Release, April 16, 1962.”

⁶⁷ “Peace Research Drive Declared a Success,” *Globe and Mail*, May 21, 1962, 5.

⁶⁸ Lotta Dempsey, “Private Line,” *Toronto Daily Star*, April 30, 1962, 45.

⁶⁹ “VOW Urge Government Aid In Education for Living Under Nuclear Conditions,” *Saskatoon Star-Phoenix*, January 5, 1963.

⁷⁰ MURA CCND Box 10, File 11 “Resolution No. 1, Peace.”

⁷¹ Gérard Pelletier, a journalist who had covered the 1949 Asbestos strike for *Le Devoir* and was the editor of *La Presse* between 1961 and 1965, entered federal politics as a member of the Liberal party and with Trudeau represented the new French prominence in Ottawa. Trudeau was another supporter of the CPRI.

and another two million dollars from the federal government. Alcock pointed out that this amount was less than one third of the cost of the Bomarc bases without their warheads and less than one fifth of the amount spent on the national survival courses.⁷² The CPRI failed to achieve its goal and gathered just three hundred thousand dollars from 25 000 Canadians.⁷³ Alcock offered a possible explanation for the disappointing results of the CPRI's campaign; the public remained concerned about the respectability of peace activism. He added, "There is a vague worry caused by the word in the backs of people's minds, however. I think this is because they feel peace would upset the status quo."⁷⁴ The Association for the Liberation of Ukraine distributed a pamphlet accusing the CPRI of being a communist front organization: "We can predict that after years of "scientific" research this institute will come up with the old communist line "let us understand Soviets," which means let us help them to bury us."⁷⁵ Alcock explained the steps the CPRI took to avoid communist infiltration. It would seek support from prominent supporters who would be vigilant and would deal only in unclassified information.⁷⁶ The fact that the CPRI did not take a stand against nuclear arms for Canada precipitated its split from some of its biggest supporters, members of the VOW.⁷⁷

He worked with the labour unions and supported the rights of the workers during the Asbestos Strike and later taught law at the University of Montreal. Trudeau won a seat in the election of 1965 and served as the Justice Minister in Pearson's government. He became Prime Minister in 1968 when 'Trudeaumania' spread across Canada. Paule Des Rivières, "Un homme de conviction," *Le Devoir*, juin 25, 1997, A1-A8; *Christian Outlook* (June-July 1962): 2.

⁷² C.G. Gifford, "The Canadian Peace Research Institute," *Christian Outlook*, 17:2 (December 1961): 5.

⁷³ Dr. N.Z. Alcock, "Today's Urgent Challenge," *Our Generation Against Nuclear War* 1:1 (fall 1961): 7-8; Canadian Peace Research Institute, *CPRI, 1961-1970*, (Oakville, ON: CPRI, 1970): 2.

⁷⁴ "Peace Research Drive Declared a Success," *Globe and Mail*, May 21, 1962, 5; CPRI, *Christian Outlook*, June-July 1962, 2.

⁷⁵ MURA CCND Box 10, Other Groups, Correspondence, File 3 Association for the Liberation of Ukraine, "Association for the Liberation of Ukraine, "Peace? or Communism? March, 1962."

⁷⁶ Dr. Norman Z. Alcock, "Can the Scientist Win the Peace?" February 8, 1962, *The Empire Club of Canada*.

⁷⁷ Marion Scott Kerans, *Muriel Duckworth: A Very Active Pacifist: a Biography*, (Halifax, NS: Fernwood, 1996): 141.

The NDP, alone, committed its campaign to rallying Canadians against nuclear arms. Pearson and Diefenbaker largely avoided the issue. Anti-nuclear groups concentrated on surveying the candidates' stands on nuclear issues. Their tactics failed to ignite a national debate. Robert Spencer noted, "Defence might have been expected to be a major issue in [the] campaign." Although mushroom clouds ascended from the nuclear explosions and experts released a new pamphlet on survival, nuclear topics did not become a priority. Almost all politicians seemed happy to avoid the issue. Spencer concluded, "Although discussed from time to time, defence questions were largely swept out of sight, and relatively little was heard of Bomarcas and warheads, conventional or nuclear."⁷⁸ An article in *Time* magazine explained the reason why most candidates downplayed defence issues:

Both the Tories and Liberals ran pre-campaign surveys on the issues most likely to win friends and influence people, turned up the conclusion that, on the prickly question of nuclear arms for home defence, the electorate was about evenly divided. As a result, everyone except the New Democrats let well enough alone. While the New Democrat's T.C. ("Tommy") Douglas made his promise to keep Canada out of the nuclear club a major pitch, the Liberal and Tory leaders were content briefly to get their vaguely similar views on record (nuclear arms if necessary, but not necessarily) and then drop the subject.⁷⁹

Thérèse Casgrain ran as an NDP candidate in the Montreal riding of Outremont- St. Jean-de-la-Croix. She noted that the campaign was not an easy one for candidates of peace. Casgrain had been targeted for her work in the VOW by more conservative groups in Quebec. The *Action Catholique* was a Catholic newspaper that belonged to Quebec's "la bonne presse," a group of papers aimed at spreading Christian influence in the mass media. It described Casgrain and other peace advocates as "falsely humanitarian and

⁷⁸ Saywell, ed, *Canadian Annual Review*, (1962): 105.

⁷⁹ *Time*, (Canadian Edition) June 15, 1962, 11.

misguided in their political aims.”⁸⁰ David Gauthier ran for the New Democratic Party in the Toronto riding of Eglinton. Gauthier hoped to bring attention to his campaign against nuclear arms. However, he could not compete with the organization and funding of the two other candidates. In the Eglinton riding, like many others across the country, the economy was the central issue. Even with an anti-nuclear candidate running in a prominent riding and in a close race, Gauthier could not mobilize volunteers to help his campaign. He relied on just four other people to help in his election bid.⁸¹

Defence issues were not Diefenbaker’s sole concern by early 1962. Canadians faced economic troubles as early as 1957. In 1962 unemployment levels continued to rise and the economy had slowed down. Economic issues distracted the population from concerns about war or cold war conflicts in Europe. The government could not manage to balance the budget and, in 1962, had no choice but to devalue the Canadian dollar. In May the government set the value of the dollar at just ninety two and a half cents in American currency. The Liberals poked fun at the ‘Diefendollar’ or the ‘Diefenbuck.’⁸² Canadians saw that the economic advances of the postwar period and their own economic security were at risk. Nuclear issues did not dominate the federal election of June 1962. Polls showed economic concerns remained the priority for Canadians. They worried about the devalued Canadian dollar and unemployment more than fallout produced by nuclear tests or the increased threat of nuclear war.⁸³

⁸⁰ Thérèse F. Casgrain, *A Woman in a Man’s World*, (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1972): 160; 85.

⁸¹ Denis Smith, “The Campaign in Eglinton,” in *Papers On the 1962 Election: Fifteen Papers on the Canadian General Election of 1962*, ed. John Meisel (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1964): 83, 86.

⁸² Robert Bothwell, Ian Drummond and John English, *Canada since 1945: power, politics and provincialism*, Rev ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1989): 211, 214.

⁸³ J.L. Granatstein, *Canada 1957-1967: The Years of Uncertainty and Innovation*, (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1986): 123.

Despite the economic downturn and the government's indecisive defence policy, Canadians re-elected the Conservatives with a minority government. The Conservative party won 116 seats compared to the Liberal's 98. The NDP received 19. A study of the election results showed that less than one percent of voters, including supporters of the anti-nuclear NDP, in the Winnipeg North Centre riding considered nuclear weapons an issue in the campaign. A sample of voters in the riding of St. John's West showed that foreign and defence policies did not rank among the top ten issues. In the province of Quebec just two percent of advertisements for all parties and five percent of speeches reported in the press mentioned nuclear arms.⁸⁴ Casgrain received 4308 votes or twenty percent of the ballots cast.⁸⁵ Gauthier received 4113 votes. Both Gauthier and Mitchell Sharp, the Liberal candidate, lost when Donald Fleming, the finance minister in the Conservative government, was re-elected.⁸⁶ Disarmers tried to remain optimistic following the re-election of John Diefenbaker. Helen Tucker pointed to the influence of the VOW in the vote.⁸⁷ Anti-nuclear activists believed that many Canadians remained undecided on nuclear issues. They recognized that Diefenbaker's decision to take nuclear warheads was imminent, but hoped that the election results might lead to further delays.⁸⁸

The re-election of Diefenbaker was not the only setback the nuclear disarmament movement experienced in 1962. Over the summer, attacks on its reputation increased. Calvin MacDonald publicly accused the VOW, CCND and NDP of being influenced by communists. An individual with a mysterious background, MacDonald claimed to have

⁸⁴ Newman, *Renegade in Power*, 332; Leon Dion, "The Election in the Province of Quebec," in *Papers on the 1962 Election*, ed Meisel, 112-113; T. Peterson and I. Avakumovic, "A Return To The Status Quo: The Election in Winnipeg North Centre," *Ibid.*, 103; George Perlin, "St. John's West," *Ibid.*, 14.

⁸⁵ Thérèse F. Casgrain, *A Woman in a Man's World*, (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1972): 160; 85.

⁸⁶ Smith, "The Campaign in Eglinton," 83, 86.

⁸⁷ Helen Tucker, "Voice of Women: And the Conference For International Cooperation Year," *Our Generation Against Nuclear War*, 1:4 (summer 1962): 29.

⁸⁸ "Bomb-Banners To Meet MPs on Atomic Arms," *Globe and Mail*, September 24, 1962, 4.

worked for the RCMP as an undercover agent after he had infiltrated Canada's communist party. It was during this period as a "Communist" that he claimed to have discovered that many nuclear disarmers in Canada were actually sympathetic to the communist cause. The RCMP refused to comment on his claims. In the aftermath of the allegations, delegates at the VOW's national meeting restated the group's purpose: "We speak as women who would wish to accept some risks on the road to peace, rather than insist on the obsolete concept of national security to push us down the slope to universal destruction." Tucker reassured members of the group that, not only had it "weathered" attempts to "smear" the group, it had gained respect for how it had handled them.⁸⁹ However, many women who belonged to the Manitoba branch shared "the general impression" that the VOW was "too much of a fringe slightly fanatic, 'Ban-the-Bomb' pressure group." The branch's membership fell by one third and went from a total of 750 paid members to just 204.⁹⁰ Feinberg dismissed MacDonald's allegations as "irresponsible and insupportable." He argued that they were part of "the smear campaign being conducted against the Canadian peace movement" and concluded "... the Canadian people will not be fooled by it."⁹¹ MacDonald was not alone in his allegations against the loyalty of the CCND. Rabbi M.J. Nurenberger condemned the CCND for following the 'Soviet peace line' in the *Canadian Jewish News*.⁹² The CUCND experienced difficulties in setting up branches on many university campuses. For example, student leaders at the University of Western Ontario opposed the creation of a branch of the CUCND at the university. They feared that the anti-nuclear group would bring "free love, crack pots,

⁸⁹ "Mrs. Tucker Heads International VOW," *Globe and Mail*, September 17, 1962, 13.

⁹⁰ NA VOW, MG 28 I218 Vol 1 Second Annual Meeting, Minutes and Proceedings, 1962, "Reports, 2nd Annual Meeting, Montreal, September 16- 17, 1962."

⁹¹ "Charges Denied," *Globe and Mail*, July 30, 1962, 9.

⁹² Rabbi M.J. Nurenberger, "Non-Intervention: From Spain to Cuba," *Canadian Jewish News*, September 21, 1962, 1.

and radical thoughts” to the campus. The CUCND defended its reputation by downplaying the number of communists among its members. It expressed confidence that out of the three hundred members in Toronto only two or three were communists and none served on the executive.⁹³ Leaders at St. Michael’s College, the Roman Catholic college at the University of Toronto, refused to allow the CUCND to meet in its buildings. They explained that they had a right to agree with the government’s policy.⁹⁴

The CCND experienced negative publicity when the Halifax branch planned an event to commemorate Hiroshima day with a memorial for the victims of the attack at the city’s cenotaph. Local veterans objected to a service in honour of a former enemy of Canada at the site of a sacred monument. A heated exchange erupted between the two groups and the Legion members blocked the way to the cenotaph. J.M.C. Duckworth, who was the chairman of the branch worked for the YMCA and his wife was active in the VOW. He argued that the ceremony did not dishonour Canada’s dead; it reminded the public of the anguish caused by the atomic bomb. Under pressure from the veterans the protestors retreated and placed their wreath away from the cenotaph. This was not the first time that the Canadian Legion clashed with anti-nuclear protestors. Veterans in the city of North Bay requested that the city council refuse permission for anti-Bomarc demonstrations to be held in city parks. The Legion insisted it was not a place for protests directed against the government.⁹⁵ An editorial in the *Halifax Mail-Star* criticized the CCND for its “ill-advised publicity attempt.” The demonstration only served to “alienate” residents of the city “to whom the Cenotaph is a memorial to a father,

⁹³ “CUCND Admitted by UWO Council,” *McGill Daily*, January 8, 1962, 3; MURA, CUCND, Box 7 File 17 Pamphlets, “Is the CUCND Communist Run?” n.d.

⁹⁴ “College Closes Door to Disarmament Body,” *Globe and Mail*, January 27, 1962, 4.

⁹⁵ MURA, CUCND-SUPA, Box 1, File 10 CUCND Toronto Office, 1960-1, “Douglas Campbell, A History of the Ban-the-Bomb Movement, Toronto, 1959-1961.”

a son, a daughter who made the supreme sacrifice.”⁹⁶ By the fall of 1962, the anti-nuclear campaign struggled to defend its image and tactics. Nevertheless, its leaders struggled to remain optimistic. Rabbi Feinberg concluded that the CCND “has been successful in arousing public opinion against nuclear arms and will now concentrate on making opposition to them official policy.”⁹⁷

In September government officials announced that nuclear tests appeared to be responsible for near-record levels of fallout in Canada. It announced plans to add new sampling stations and report fallout levels more frequently. Monteith, who remained the minister of national health and welfare following the 1962 election, disclosed details of the countermeasures the government planned to implement if the levels continued to rise toward a dangerous level. Farmers would have to remove their cattle from pasture and Canadians would have to switch to using powdered milk. By October the amount of strontium 90 detected in Canadian milk reached a new record high.⁹⁸ The cause, Monteith explained, was nuclear tests carried out by the Americans and the Soviets. The nuclear threat to Canadians appeared to be climbing rapidly.⁹⁹

Fears about the possibility that war would break out over Berlin persisted in September 1962. In the House of Commons Diefenbaker announced that the situation developing in the divided city was grave and that a show-down was likely.¹⁰⁰ He assured his fellow members of parliament that he watched the situation carefully. The Prime Minister restated his stand that, if there was a war, Canadian troops would not be denied

⁹⁶ “Legion and CND call truce Wreath is laid- - at flagstaff,” *The Chronicle-Herald* (Halifax), August 7, 1962, 20; MURA CCND Box 9 Affiliates, File 17 Our Generation Against Nuclear War – Correspondence, Clipping, “An Ill-Advised Publicity Attempt,” *Halifax Mail-Star*, August 7, 1962.

⁹⁷ “Bomb-Banners To Meet MPs on Atomic Arms,” *Globe and Mail*, September 24, 1962, 4.

⁹⁸ “U.S., Soviet Tests Blamed,” *Globe and Mail*, October 18, 1962, 1.

⁹⁹ Sidney Katz, “How Nuclear Fears Affect Children Even in Peacetime,” *Maclean’s*, June 14, 1963, 23.

¹⁰⁰ “November Announcement Expected: Canada Set For Atomic Arms East-West Struggle At Grave Impasse, PM Warns Commons,” *Globe and Mail*, October 17, 1962, 1.

nuclear weapons. In October Diefenbaker faced questions in Parliament about whether he would take nuclear weapons as the crisis in Berlin grew.¹⁰¹ At this time a new threat emerged much closer to home. President Kennedy went before his nation to announce the build-up of a military presence by the Soviet Union in Cuba. He reassured the public that these forces were defensive in nature. By mid-October, however, American U2 planes collected photographic evidence that the Soviet Union planned to locate offensive nuclear arms in Cuba, less than 100 miles off the coast of the United States. These missiles would be capable of reaching targets in both the United States and Canada. The construction of this Soviet nuclear base in Cuba signalled the expansion of the cold war into the North American sphere. On October 22, Kennedy addressed the American people to outline the position of his administration in the face of this new threat. He announced that he would act to prevent the Soviet action. He intended to block the shipment of offensive military equipment to Cuba. American ships would patrol the waters surrounding Cuba. A confrontation between Soviet ships on their way to deliver more hardware to Cuba and American ships set to block their way seemed imminent. This standoff brought the world close a nuclear war. It would be the most serious of all threats to the security of North America in the cold war.

The world watched anxiously as the standoff developed. It was not clear if the American brinksmanship would succeed in forcing the Soviets to back down. The world waited to see which side would blink first. Diefenbaker declared the standoff brought the world to "the brink of war." Pearson expressed alarm that the events of late October could lead to "the indescribable horror of nuclear war." Douglas believed that Kennedy

¹⁰¹ "PM Reaffirms Right of Canadian Forces To A-Arms During War," *Globe and Mail*, October 18, 1962, 1; "Now MPs Ask If Dief Will OK Nuclear Arms, *Toronto Daily Star*, October 17, 1962, 1.

was “shooting craps with the destiny of mankind.”¹⁰² Following Kennedy’s televised announcement, Diefenbaker addressed the House of Commons: “This is a time for calmness... Above all, it is a time when each of us must endeavour to do his part to ensure the preservation of peace not only in this hemisphere, but everywhere in the world.”¹⁰³ Diefenbaker responded indecisively to the crisis. He expressed doubts about the American evidence of a Soviet military build-up in Cuba and focused on the American behaviour in the crisis. He accused John Kennedy of threatening Canada’s independence and its security. The Prime Minister stressed that nothing should be done to provoke the situation and suggested that the United Nations could negotiate a settlement. Green repeated this advice in a televised interview on the evening of October 24: “The government ... is trying to keep the Canadian people from getting all excited about this business.”¹⁰⁴

A peeved and frustrated John Diefenbaker was not happy that he had learned of the emergency at the last minute through the American ambassador to Canada rather than from the President himself.¹⁰⁵ He resented Kennedy for his unilateral action and for the lack of consultation Canada, one of his closest allies, received. He delayed in meeting American requests for a heightened Canadian military alert. While Diefenbaker pressed for calm and patience, Harkness became frustrated. He waited 48 hours after the request and then took the unprecedented step of putting the military on alert himself. Canadian forces, like their American counterparts, were placed on the second highest warning level. On October 25, Diefenbaker publicly announced that Canada’s forces had been placed on

¹⁰² Saywell, ed, *Canadian Annual Review*, (1962): 128.

¹⁰³ John Diefenbaker, House of Commons, *Debates*, October 22, 1962.

¹⁰⁴ Newman, *Renegade in Power*, 336.

¹⁰⁵ English, *The Life of Lester Pearson*, vol. 2, *The Worldly Years*, 228.

heightened alert. Attention has been focused on the lack of support the Canadian government showed Kennedy in the midst of the crisis. However, the government prepared for a military response to the crisis. Green announced that Russian planes would not be given permission either to fly over Canada or to land at Canadian bases en route to Cuba. All aircraft from other Communist countries landing in Canada on their way to Cuba were to be searched for "warlike materials." The government closed all RCAF stations to prevent sabotage, fuelled RCAF planes and wheeled them onto the runways and sent all available Canadian ships into the Atlantic. The Canadian NATO squad in Europe went on alert with the rest of the NATO forces. However, the Cabinet refused to approve American requests to move their interceptors to Canadian bases. It also turned down proposals to arm interceptors based at Goose Bay and Stephenville in Newfoundland with nuclear arms.¹⁰⁶ The Bomarcas, too, remained unarmed.

While Pearson pledged his party's support in seeking "peace and freedom," Douglas pointed to the hypocrisy of the American policy. He called for caution and said, "Before we get too excited, we should remember that for fifteen years the Western powers have been ringing the Soviet Union with missile and air bases."¹⁰⁷ The NDP leader opposed the American blockade and asserted that "no nation ha[d] the right to take unilateral action to threaten the peace of the world."¹⁰⁸ Minifie reported a similar response among young people in the province of Quebec. They expressed their frustration that Quebec was not independent and complained that the location of American nuclear warheads on its soil would violate the province's sovereignty. They

¹⁰⁶ *Time*, (Canadian Edition) November 9, 1962, 19-20; "Must halt nuclear arms race- PM," *The Ottawa Citizen*, November 6, 1962, 5.

¹⁰⁷ Saywell, ed, *Canadian Annual Review*, (1962): 128.

¹⁰⁸ *Time*, (Canadian Edition) November 2, 1962, 9.

suggested that they might get more attention for their plight if they allowed the Soviets, too, to place nuclear warheads at sights in Quebec.¹⁰⁹ Canadian communists condemned American brinksmanship. They alleged that Diefenbaker and Pearson “gave support to this policy in complete disregard of the best interests of the Canadian people.”¹¹⁰ Rabbi Feinberg objected to the ultimatum and believed Kennedy gave the Soviets no way to save their prestige. He suggested that before initiating the blockade Kennedy should have shown his evidence to the United Nations.¹¹¹

Many Canadian politicians revealed their fears that the world would end some time during the last weekend in October. Diefenbaker recalled, “Most Canadians and most people the world over went to bed each night without confidence that they would see tomorrow, or even that they would want to if a nuclear war began during their slumbers.” The Prime Minister was so anxious, one of his aides recalled, that he “jumped on” anyone on his staff who did not believe “we would all be obliterated in a few days.”¹¹² Diefenbaker described his uncertainty in a letter to his brother, Elmer: “The International situation is very serious and its implications keep me continually on call. Where things will lead no one knows. ... The situation is more serious than at any time since the end of the Second World War and all one can do is wait.”¹¹³ Howard Green related his fears about Canada’s fate during this crisis: “On the Saturday night after the Cuban crisis arose I believed, and I have no doubt many other people did, that before

¹⁰⁹ James M. Minifie, *Open at the Top: reflections on U.S. - Canada Relations*, (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1964): 78-9.

¹¹⁰ “Crisis of National Policy,” *Questions for Today*, 1964: 62.

¹¹¹ “Has Kennedy Done the Right Thing?” *Toronto Daily Star*, October 25, 1962, 33.

¹¹² John G. Diefenbaker, *One Canada: The Memoirs of the Right Honourable John G. Diefenbaker*, vol. 3 *The Tumultuous Years, 1962-1967* (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1977): 77; H. Basil Robinson, *Diefenbaker’s World: A Populist in Foreign Affairs*, (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1989): 291.

¹¹³ John G. Diefenbaker, “Letter from John G. Diefenbaker to Elmer Diefenbaker, October 24, 1962,” in *The Personal Letters of a Public Man: The Family Letters of John G. Diefenbaker*, ed. Thad McIlroy (Toronto: Doubleday Canada, 1985): 115-16.

morning Ottawa might be demolished as well as Montreal, Toronto, and my home city of Vancouver.”¹¹⁴ Frank McGee, the Conservative representative for Scarborough, Ontario and the parliamentary secretary, described the anxiety he experienced during the emergency: “The Cuban crisis scared the hell out of me and my wife and everybody else.” Separated from his loved ones in Ottawa, he described his feeling of helplessness: “Where does your first duty lie ...? Do you stay there and let your family cook somewhere else? Do you go to the bomb shelters that are presumably available to members of Parliament ... and let your family be submitted to a nuclear bomb? There are some pretty terrifying implications.”¹¹⁵ These officials feared for the safety of themselves and their families. They believed that Canadian cities could be destroyed in late October.

Disarmament supporters also described their impressions of the crisis. Thérèse Casgrain, who replaced Helen Tucker as the president of the VOW earlier in the year, believed that Canadians carefully considered their fate during the standoff:

All too recently we have been a hair's breadth from war. I am sure the question was in everyone's minds – to-morrow will my children, my family, my home, my neighbours, my city be here, or will we all be in the death throes of radiation agony or more mercifully dead?

She described the situation as “the ultimate crisis.”¹¹⁶ Rabbi Feinberg noted that the standoff over the build-up of the Soviet nuclear arsenal in Cuba brought the danger of nuclear war to North America for the first time.¹¹⁷

In the tense atmosphere surrounding the Cuban crisis Canadians looked for ways to protect themselves in the event of war. The public listened closely to television and

¹¹⁴ *Time*, (Canadian Edition) February 1, 1963, 10.

¹¹⁵ Peter Stursberg ed, *Diefenbaker: Leadership Lost, 1962-7*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1976): 19-20.

¹¹⁶ Thérèse Casgrain, “President's Message,” *Voice of Women Newsletter*, no. 23, November 15, 1962, 1.

¹¹⁷ “Soviets Reject War, Rally for Peace Told,” *Globe and Mail*, September 17, 1962, 5.

radio broadcasts for the latest news. Civil defence officials reported that interest in their efforts grew. School officials across Canada instituted drills to prepare the nation's students for nuclear attack. The threat of nuclear war seemed real in late October 1962. *Time* magazine described the behaviour of Canadians in the midst of the crisis: "Across the country, most people did not stray far, or for long, from radio and television sets."¹¹⁸

The threat of war stopped normal routines at the University of Toronto:

Even the cynics were scared silly. Perhaps that indicates the awful proximity to death and destruction felt by most of us during the Cuban crisis. At this university, we could not help hearing of the half-empty classrooms, the assignments forgotten or the professor who cancelled his seminars for two days.¹¹⁹

Gordon Stronach, the mayor of London, Ontario, asked the city's residents to follow his example and prepare for life below ground over the weekend of October 27. He hastily constructed a shelter out of sandbags in his basement during the crisis: "My wife has instructions as to what to do if the alert siren goes... If my son's away from home, he has instructions to come home immediately." While his family found refuge in the shelter, he would remain at city hall.¹²⁰

As the American quarantine of Cuba went into effect Diefenbaker refused to answer questions about civil defence preparations "which at this time might be considered as provocative or fear-producing."¹²¹ At a time of real danger he offered no advice to Canadians. Preparations appeared to be insufficient. The month before the crisis officials responsible for preparing the residents of Toronto for a nuclear attack purchased signs to mark fourteen designated evacuation routes. They delayed the installation of the signs in

¹¹⁸ *Time*, (Canadian Edition) November 2, 1962, 9.

¹¹⁹ MURA CCND Archives, Box 14, File 2 CUCND Clippings and Publications and Documents, 1963-4, "Howard Zinn, 'War and Peace,' *The University College Gargolye*, Thursday November 8, 1962, 8."

¹²⁰ "London Mayor Turns Basement Into a Shelter," *Globe and Mail*, October 27, 1962, 10; Sidney Katz, "How Nuclear Fears Affect Children Even in Peacetime," *Maclean's*, June 14, 1963, 23.

¹²¹ Lyon, *Canada in World Affairs, 1961-3*, 43-4.

late September because they feared they might confuse drivers. At the same time, traffic authorities pointed to the “serious physical limitations” of the routes. They concluded that, since it would take sixteen hours to empty the city, residents should not rely on evacuation.¹²² Civil defence officials across the country reported increased inquiries from concerned Canadians. The advice they provided remained vague. In Toronto 1700 “very worried and somber” people called in the first two days of the crisis. Officials offered to mail civil defence literature to anxious citizens. It seemed doubtful that it would arrive in time to be of use. It is unlikely that this suggestion would have reassured those callers who believed nuclear war was likely to break out at any moment. Other officials suggested civilians could choose to go north or move to the centre of their apartment building. They instructed the public to listen to the radio or television and gather items such as food, water, warm clothing and a battery operated radio. An official in Montreal reported that his office received 200 calls by October 25. The worried callers were instructed to remain calm and told they would be advised what to do if necessary. In the meantime, they should wait and see how the crisis progressed. In Vancouver, civil defence authorities received one call every ten minutes. Many of the city’s residents informed the civil defence office that they planned to evacuate into rural areas of the province.¹²³ After fourteen years of preparation the results of the civil defence program appeared poor. Those who feared a nuclear attack on their communities, homes and families at any moment seemed to be on their own.

The security of the nation’s children became a priority during the crisis. School officials across the country quickly organized drills to train students what to do in case of

¹²² “Stall EMO Signs,” *Globe and Mail*, September 18, 1962, 5.

¹²³ “Cuba Crisis Increases EMO Calls,” *Globe and Mail*, October 25, 1962, 5.

a nuclear attack. Principals sent letters to parents describing plans motivated by “recent world events.” One principal of a downtown Toronto school told parents they were responsible for the care of their own children. Since the city’s school buildings offered limited protection civil defence officials ordered that children be sent home immediately. Only as a last resort would children remain at the school.¹²⁴ A report in *Time* announced that transistor radios were distributed to the city’s public schools “to receive civil defense instructions if needed.”¹²⁵ The radios would assist in the evacuation of the children in an emergency. One school trustee criticized the plan as “panic button pushing.” He added, “I hope we never have to hear the radios.”¹²⁶ Drills took place in schools in cities such as Toronto, Ottawa, Winnipeg and Edmonton. Many concerned parents in London, Ontario wanted fallout shelters in the city’s schools. Education authorities discussed whether to organize test evacuations during the tense weekend of October 27.¹²⁷ Robert Gavin, an EMO official in London, pointed to the public’s increased concern: “What is annoying is the fact that civil defense has been operating in Canada since 1948, but it took the Cuban crisis to wake people up.” He rejected school fallout shelters because, in the event of an attack, parents would be “banging on the shelter door to bring Johnny home.”¹²⁸ In the heat of the crisis the policy about what to do in the event of an attack was still not established. Proponents of civil defence admitted Canadians showed only “mild concern” about nuclear war and it quickly disappeared after the situation ended.¹²⁹

¹²⁴ MURA CCND Box 10, File 2, “Letter to Parents from Principal of the Huron Street School, October 25, 1962.”

¹²⁵ *Time*, (Canadian Edition) November 2, 1962, 9.

¹²⁶ “Use of EMO Radios,” *Globe and Mail*, October 26, 1962, 5; “Opposes Radios,” *Globe and Mail*, October 25, 1962, 5.

¹²⁷ “Shelters Criticized,” *Globe and Mail*, October 27, 1962, 10.

¹²⁸ “London Mayor Turns Basement Into a Shelter,” *Globe and Mail*, October 27, 1962, 10.

¹²⁹ NA IODE Vol 24, File 5 “National Civil Defence Committee, Report, 1962-3.”

Child experts like Dr. Karl Bernhardt, the director of the University of Toronto's Institute of Child Study, argued that civil defence drills in schools should be discontinued. He explained, "The kids are frightened enough without adding "fuel to their fears."" The CPRI found that children did not want to go to a shelter during an attack because they feared being separated from their families.¹³⁰ American authorities also discussed civil defence measures. Dr. Benjamin Spock, the most famous child expert of the postwar period and a prominent supporter of SANE, opposed school drills as an "unwise and unfair" practice. He rejected 'duck and cover' exercises since there was "no safety under the desk."¹³¹ Ann Landers, on the other hand, advised Americans to "make an effort" to survive a nuclear war and build family shelters. Famous for her sound advice, Landers explained that she did not plan to follow her own counsel: "I prefer to stay above the ground and try to live each day with dignity – and take whatever comes."¹³²

The VOW and CCND voiced objections to school drills. Florence Aymong, the president of Toronto's VOW, believed that the exercises "[could] only have the effect of contributing to the crisis atmosphere and spreading alarm and fear in parents and children."¹³³ Mrs. L.H. Truelove, the president of the Manitoba branch, received calls from mothers who were upset about air raid "rehearsals" held in Winnipeg area schools. In a letter to school board officials she condemned the drills as "irresponsible rehearsals of panic measures." She felt the drills would not save lives and only served to create "dismay, apprehension, and in many cases mental suffering" in small children. VOW members wrote over 200 letters against civil defence drills to teachers, school trustees and

¹³⁰ Sidney Katz, "How Nuclear Fears Affect Children Even in Peacetime," *Maclean's*, June 14, 1963, 23.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, 38.

¹³² F. Chamberlain, "Fallout Shelters," *The Observer*, January 15, 1962, 14.

¹³³ "Object to School Drills: War Talk Terrifies, VOW Objects," *Globe and Mail*, October 26, 1962, 5.

home and school associations and departments of education.¹³⁴ Executive members of the Edmonton branch of the CCND protested civil defence measures in the city's schools. Their speeches and letters did not persuade the school board to discontinue the drills.¹³⁵

As the American and Soviet ships moved close enough to engage one another, Kennedy's use of brinksmanship proved successful. The Soviet ships turned back before they delivered their shipment of military hardware and, by Sunday, October 28, the emergency had passed. Diefenbaker did not express praise or gratitude to the American President. Instead, he warned Canadians not to feel too secure in the days after the crisis: "The introduction of missiles into the Western hemisphere has brought the world too close to disaster for anyone to indulge in either self-congratulation or complacency at this time." After the world moved back from "the brink of war" Diefenbaker described the "grim but clear lessons" of the Cuban crisis. He warned Canadians, "We must ensure that the momentum toward peace generated by this close brush with war is not lost in the days ahead. ... If the nations of the world do not take effective steps the next crisis may not permit the world to stop short of the abyss of war."¹³⁶ Diefenbaker and Green called for the immediate resumption of disarmament talks and expressed their hopes that an agreement might now be possible after the Soviet Union had accepted inspection in Cuba.¹³⁷ Pearson also advised Canadians to respond with caution, "We should keep our relief, as we should our fears, in perspective." He added, however, that if the settlement

¹³⁴NA VOW MG 28 I218 Vol 7, File 7, "Letter from Mrs. L.H. Truelove, President Manitoba Branch, Voice of Women, to Board of Trustees, Winnipeg Schools, November 6, 1962." *Voice of Women, Newsletter*, 11:1 (January 1964): 33.

¹³⁵MURA CCND Box 8 Edmonton Branch Files, File 2 Edmonton Branch Minutes October 62-May 63, January-October 1964, "Minutes November 13, 1962."

¹³⁶"Must halt nuclear arms race- PM," *The Ottawa Citizen*, November 6, 1962, 5.

¹³⁷*Time*, (Canadian Edition) November 9, 1962, 19.

reduced world tensions, "... we can indeed be grateful to the President of the United States for the stand taken last week."¹³⁸

The Cuban crisis directly threatened the security of Canadians. The risk of nuclear war peaked in the tense days in late October. The public showed strong support for the American President. A clear majority approved of his strong stand to resolve the crisis. Polls showed three quarters of those questioned condoned his use of brinksmanship in forcing the removal of the missiles.¹³⁹ *Time* magazine described public opinion in the aftermath of the emergency, "The man-in-the-street's consensus clearly supported the U.S. action; the most common criticisms were either that the U.S. should have dealt with Castro long before- or that now it should have taken its case to the UN first." The magazine concluded that the Canadian government showed "a glaring weakness of postponed decision and uncertain policy."¹⁴⁰ Basil Robinson, an aide to the Prime Minister, noted that after the Cuban crisis many Canadians considered Diefenbaker to be indecisive. They doubted his ability to lead at important times.¹⁴¹ Even the organization representing young Progressive Conservatives condemned his actions. They called Diefenbaker's stand as "wishy-washy" and demanded that the government show full support for President Kennedy.¹⁴²

The emergency that had developed over Cuba raised questions about how to achieve security in the cold war. Was power still an opportunity or did it represent a

¹³⁸ Robert W. Reford, *Canada and Three Crises*, (Toronto: Canadian Institute of International Affairs, 1968): 198; 200.

¹³⁹ A poll taken by the CPRI found that 79 percent of Canadians approved of the American stand on Cuba, 13 percent disapproved and 8 percent did not know. "Poll Finds Canadians Back U.S. Cuban Stand," *Globe and Mail*, November 23, 1962, 5.

¹⁴⁰ *Time*, (Canadian Edition) November 2, 1962, 9, 19.

¹⁴¹ H. Basil Robinson, *Diefenbaker's World: A Populist in Foreign Affairs*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1989): 294.

¹⁴² "Ottawa Wishy-Washy Young PCs Charge," *Globe and Mail*, October 26, 1962, 1.

threat? Would Canada stand with the United States or take an independent path? Did American brinksmanship bring security or insecurity? Was Canada ready for an attack? The issues of Canadian security, its relationship with the United States and the nature of Canada's defence contribution drew greater attention following the crisis. The Cuban crisis contributed to the climax and resolution of the debate over Canada's security in the nuclear age and its response to the threat of nuclear war. Diefenbaker later recalled that the problem of nuclear weapons acquisition attained greater importance in the aftermath of the standoff.¹⁴³

The emergency also offered peace activists their biggest chance to increase support for their campaign. Whitaker and Hewitt argued the peace movement benefited from the Cuban crisis as fears of war grew and criticism of the United States increased.¹⁴⁴ Activists in the CCND and CUCND tried to capitalize on the Cuban crisis to gain more support. In advertisements for their upcoming lobby against nuclear weapons on Parliament Hill the groups reminded Canadians how close the world came to a nuclear war. The real risk of annihilation added urgency to their campaign: "Canada has even gone further than Cuba." They alleged that "just before the world shivered for seven frightful days" rumours spread that the government had decided to take nuclear arms. They believed the crisis demonstrated the danger of *any* expansion of the nuclear club no matter which side was responsible, Cuba *or* Canada.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴³ Diefenbaker, *One Canada*: vol. 3, *The Tumultuous Years*, 90.

¹⁴⁴ Reg Whitaker and Steve Hewitt, *Canada and the Cold War*, (Toronto: James Lorimer & Co. Ltd, 2003): 148.

¹⁴⁵ CCND. Advertisement, *Our Generation Against Nuclear War*, 2:1 (fall 1962): n.p.

The VOW, however, recognized that the crisis increased the pressure on the government to take nuclear weapons.¹⁴⁶ The group rejected the military solution of the Cuban crisis: "The lives of our children are of more value than any country's prestige in brinksmanship politics."¹⁴⁷ Delegates travelled to Ottawa in early November to meet with the Prime Minister. They expressed their approval of his leadership during the crisis, "In these tense hours we fully realize that you have made a great effort to stave off the final tragedy." The group argued that attitudes toward the nuclear threat had changed, "These recent weeks have made millions of Canadians feel the necessity for reappraisal of present policies to assure human survival."¹⁴⁸ Its brief stated, "In the past few days, humanity has come close to the rim of the abyss. These tense and anxious days have taught us this is no time to panic. help us restore an atmosphere of calm in which thoughtful, steady, practical steps can be taken towards life for ourselves and our children."¹⁴⁹ The accommodating tone of the appeal did not prevent the deterioration of the group's relationship with the nation's leaders. National newspapers described the acrimonious meeting between Howard Green and 300 VOW members. Green was stunned by the ladies' behaviour. He could not understand the emotional, angry and noisy reception he received in, what reporters called, a "Lioness' Den." Green, "normally the VOW's favorite cabinet minister," struggled to maintain control of the meeting.¹⁵⁰ He explained to the group that Canada intended "to remain strong and at the same time, try to bring about disarmament." Green insisted, "The very fact these deadly missiles were sneaked into Cuba is vindication of this policy." He added that it was not possible to

¹⁴⁶ Voice of Women, *Newsletter*, no. 23, November 15, 1962, 27.

¹⁴⁷ "Object to School Drills," *Globe and Mail*, October 26, 1962, 5.

¹⁴⁸ *VOW Newsletter*, no. 23, November 15, 1962, 26.

¹⁴⁹ NA VOW MG 28 I218, Vol. 47, File1, Voice of Women, "Brief to the Prime Minister Presented on November 1, 1962."

¹⁵⁰ "Green hard pressed ducking bomb showdown," *Ottawa Citizen*, November 2, 1962, 51.

predict future events and that any decision on nuclear arms depended on the international situation.¹⁵¹ The *Globe and Mail* expressed surprise at the “strong tone of the women’s protests” and concluded that the Cuban crisis was the reason behind their new militancy.¹⁵² The *Ottawa Citizen* reported that the group gave Green and Balcer “a hard time” on the topic of nuclear weapons and demanded to see the Prime Minister so they could give him a hard time too. Green was disappointed with the atmosphere of the meeting: “I think we deserve a little better from you people for what we have done.”¹⁵³

Divisions within the VOW over image and policy intensified after this meeting. Aileen Powers, a member of the Edmonton VOW, explained that “many members had not renewed [their memberships] because of the emphasis on the nuclear arms stand as a political one, not a moral one.” Jo Davis complained that the group’s image “suffered” because it “abandon[ed] its moderate, responsible approach in favour of militant, aggressive tactics.” She wrote a letter to all members calling for a less confrontational approach. Christine Ball, who studied the history of the Voice of Women in her doctoral dissertation, described the split as one over approach; those who favoured a non-political focus clashed with those who wanted to take on political issues. Davis did not want to follow a narrow, ban-the-bomb program since it created negative publicity, discouraged moderate and politically undecided women and hurt other projects like the group’s support of the CPRI. On the other hand, Kay Macpherson and others believed that refusing to take a stand on nuclear arms showed “a lack of moral courage.”¹⁵⁴ Davis preferred peace projects such as fundraising and letter writing campaigns while the other

¹⁵¹ “300 Irate VOW Delegates Demand Canada Voice Stand on Arms,” *Globe and Mail*, November 2, 1962, 13.

¹⁵² “Mr Green and the VOW,” *Globe and Mail*, November 21, 1962.

¹⁵³ “Green hard pressed,” *Ottawa Citizen*, November 2, 1962, 51.

¹⁵⁴ Christine Ball, “The History of the Voice of Women/ La Voix des Femmes: The Early Years” (Ph.D. diss. University of Toronto, 1994): 478-480.

segment wanted to participate in political actions and join in public demonstrations against war.¹⁵⁵ The group's leaders concluded that members supported its campaign against nuclear arms for Canada but "wanted that stand to be a little less militant, a little less aggressive, a little more feminine."¹⁵⁶ Diefenbaker met with representatives of the RCAF Association shortly after Green's heated meeting with the VOW. He thanked them for "not lobbying all over the place" like some disarmament groups. His statement calls into question the traditional interpretation of his sympathies for the nuclear disarmament movement. His delays in the field of nuclear weapons may not have been influenced by the lobbies of groups like the CCND and the VOW. It seems that he might have been more influenced by his concern about public opinion, his sensitivity to relations with the United States and his feeling that a decision was not necessary and could be delayed in order to avoid angering either side of the issue. Diefenbaker refused the RCAF delegation's request that Canada's armed forces receive the most modern and effective weapons immediately. He informed them that they held a minority view; they were the first pro-nuclear group he had met.¹⁵⁷

While the Prime Minister believed in the strength of the anti-nuclear movement, even nuclear disarmers recognized their limited success. They had failed to mobilize public opinion or shape Canada's defence policy. In the midst of the crisis over Cuba, C.B. Macpherson, a member of the CCND and a left-leaning professor at the University of Toronto, described the indifference of Canadians to the nuclear threat, "No very

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 475.

¹⁵⁶ NA MG 28 I218 VOW Vol 1 Correspondence, Josephine Davis, "Letter to T. Casgrain from Helen Charney, November 29, 1962;" Voice of Women, *Newsletter*, no. 25-6, January- February 1963, 7; For more on the internal divisions in late 1962 see Kay Macpherson, *When in Doubt, Do Both*. With C.M. Donald. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994): 102-3.

¹⁵⁷ "PM Turns Down Demand to Accept Nuclear Arms," *Ottawa Citizen*, November 16, 1962, 1; "Air Veterans Ask A-Arms for Canada," *Globe and Mail*, September 29, 1962, 1.

extensive survey is needed to discover that there is in Canada a fairly wide reaction of apathy.” Macpherson’s wife, Kay, was the provincial chairman of Ontario’s VOW at the time of the crisis and would soon become the group’s national president.¹⁵⁸ F.C.

Hunnius, the secretary of the CCND, revealed that the CCND lobby on Parliament Hill found that the majority of the cabinet ministers were “uninformed” on the issue of nuclear arms. He told reporters, “The ministers seemed to know little about the destructive capabilities of nuclear arms and the effects of radiation.” Hunnius recalled that one minister claimed “he wasn’t concerned enough about the question of nuclear disarmament to do any thinking about it.”¹⁵⁹

The Quebec Peace Coordinating Committee, a body that oversaw the cooperation of anti-nuclear activities by labour and nuclear disarmament circles in the province, met to discuss its goals during the tensions over Cuba. Those in attendance concluded that “the entry of nuclear weapons into Canada is no longer a question of will they enter but when will the entry be announced.” Some of the groups represented in the QPCC were the CNTU, the QFL, the Quebec Committee for Nuclear Disarmament (QCND), the McGill CUCND, the Montreal Committee of 100 and a new group organized by students at the University of Montreal in November 1962, the Mouvement du désarmement nucléaire (MDN).¹⁶⁰ The MDN circulated its own petition titled, “Non Aux Bases Nucléaires.” It condemned the fact that of the ten nuclear weapons bases in Canada, nine were located either in, or close to, the province of Quebec. The group claimed these

¹⁵⁸ MURA CCND Box 9 Affiliates – CUCND, YCND, File 19 CUCND- OGANW Publications, Professor “C.B. Macpherson, ‘Between Apathy and Paranoia – The Citizen’s Nuclear Quandary,’ speech for benefit dinner of *Our Generation Against Nuclear War*, University of Toronto, October 18, 1962: 1.”

¹⁵⁹ “Non-Nuclear Role Best- Pearson,” *Toronto Daily Star*, November 10, 1962, ?

¹⁶⁰ MURA CCND Box 9 Affiliates – CUCND, YCND, File 17, *Our Generation Against Nuclear War*-Correspondence, “Letter from D. Roussopolos to Ken Woodsworth, Chairman Executive Committee, CCND, October 29, 1962.”

installations increased the threat of war. It demanded all nuclear bases be removed from Quebec soil and that Canada be declared a nuclear-free zone.¹⁶¹ Marcel Rioux, an agnostic who supported an independent Quebec, taught sociology at the University of Montreal and served as the president of the MDN. Quebec's Union Catholique des Cultivateurs (UCC), established in 1924 to protect the rights of farmers in the province, opposed nuclear arms for Canada. The Société St. Jean Baptiste was a patriotic institution set up in the nineteenth that worked to promote the progress of the French Canadian nation. It was responsible for making June 24, Quebec's national holiday. The group also joined in calls for a non-nuclear defence policy.¹⁶² Thérèse Casgrain pushed VOW members to protest against the government's nuclear arms policy because she believed the "fatal decision" could happen very soon.¹⁶³ Disarmament supporters recognized they were fighting a losing battle. They failed to convince the public of the threat they faced. Their daunting task became even more apparent when their brush with nuclear war did not move Canadians from apathy to action.

In a survey taken by the CPRI in November, sixty percent of those questioned supported the acquisition of nuclear arms by Canada.¹⁶⁴ A Gallup poll released in December showed that a majority of Canadians supported the acquisition of nuclear arms

¹⁶¹ Simonne Monet Chartrand, *Les Québécoises et le mouvement pacifiste, 1939-1967*, (Montreal: Éditions Écosociété, 1993): 48.

¹⁶² Gow, "Opinions of French Canadians in Quebec on the Problem of War and Peace," 1211.

¹⁶³ NA VOW MG28 I218 VOW Vol 20, File 2, "Telegram from T. Casgrain to Mrs. C.B. Macpherson, December 9, 1962." MURA CCND Box 19 Activities, File 5 "Howard Green Wire, September 1962;" "Memo to All Branches from K.C. Woodsworth, Chairman, December 12, 1962."

¹⁶⁴ 41 percent of those sampled supported nuclear weapons for one or both locations, 17 percent opposed nuclear weapons for Canada's forces, 20 percent favoured obtaining nuclear weapons now since it was an emergency and 14 percent did not feel it was an emergency and did not favour nuclear arms for Canada. By March 1963 37 percent French Canadians supported nuclear arms for Canadian forces compared to 57 percent of English Canadians. 74 percent of young French speakers supported nuclear weapons acquisition in November 1962 but only 43 percent held the same view by March 1963. John Paul and Jerome Laulicht, *In Your Opinion: leaders' and voters' attitudes on defence and disarmament*, vol 1, (Clarkson, ON: CPRI, 1963): 84; MURA CCND Box 10, File 13, Canadian Peace Research Institute, "Press Release, January 17, 1963."

for Canada's military.¹⁶⁵ These surveys demonstrated that Canadians believed nuclear weapons provided security to Canadians. The public did not share the VOW's opinion that efforts to ensure national security were obsolete and dangerous. The CPRI survey also asked Canadians for their views on the costs of a nuclear attack on their country. Those questioned believed that most of the population would not survive a nuclear war with the Soviet Union.¹⁶⁶ Canada's business leaders and politicians, who believed very few would die in a nuclear war, expressed more optimism than the general public. The CPRI also asked respondents how much they thought the area right around their homes would suffer. A majority believed their own regions would suffer more heavily or at least as much as most other parts of the country.¹⁶⁷ Just months after the near brush with nuclear war, however, an opinion poll showed that most of the population did not believe that a nuclear war would break out.¹⁶⁸ Polls showed that by early 1963, just months after those "seven frightening days," few Canadians worried about a nuclear war.

The Cuban crisis contributed to the re-assessment of Canada's cold war commitments. Calls for a more effective defence grew. By late 1962 Pearson appeared to be rethinking his anti-nuclear stand. He criticized the indecisive defence policy of the

¹⁶⁵ "Just from what you know or have heard, in your opinion, should Canada's armed forces be armed with nuclear weapons or not?" 54 percent said yes, 32 percent said no, 6 percent expressed a qualified opinion and 8 percent had no opinion. "Pearson Stirs Storm: Big Reaction to Atom Call," *Globe and Mail*, January 14, 1963, 1.

¹⁶⁶ "If Canada was involved in a nuclear war with Russia, how many Canadians do you think would be killed? Just your best guess. 16 percent said about 25 percent or very few would be killed, 22 percent said about half of Canadians would be killed, 24 percent said 75 percent of the country would be killed, 29 percent believed almost everyone would be killed and 9 percent did not know. Paul and Laulicht, *In Your Opinion*, 97.

¹⁶⁷ "If a 5 megaton bomb, which is 250 times more powerful than the bomb dropped on Hiroshima, was dropped on the centre of Toronto, about how many people would it kill?" 11 percent said more than half of the population of Canada, 32 percent said almost everyone in Ontario, 39 percent said between ¼ and ½ of the population of Toronto and its suburbs, 8 percent said about 10 000 to 20 000 and 10 percent did not know. Paul and Laulicht, *In Your Opinion*, 98.

¹⁶⁸ "How worried are you about the chance of a nuclear war breaking out – very worried, fairly worried or not worried at all?" 11 percent were "very worried," 32 percent were "fairly worried" and 56 percent were "not worried at all." "Most Canadians don't believe nuclear war will break out," *Toronto Daily Star*, February 6, 1963, 5.

Diefenbaker government: "This [the acquisition of nuclear warheads] is a decision which should have been made when we took the commitments, and must be made now." He appeared ready to reverse his anti-nuclear policy on the basis of Canada's obligations to its allies.¹⁶⁹ Paul Martin accused the government of forfeiting Canada's defence for political considerations. He claimed that Diefenbaker had opted out of supporting Canada's allies because of his concern about votes, "He knew that there were a lot of peace-minded people in the country who didn't like nuclear weapons, who would admire a government that was non-nuclear in its approach."¹⁷⁰ Paul Hellyer pointed out that Canadians faced the choice between nuclear war or retreat from the Soviets.¹⁷¹ Douglas alleged that the Conservatives risked peace and survival for votes.¹⁷² By late 1962 the competing arguments in the nuclear debate were established. The issue of nuclear arms would be resolved in 1963 as a contest between emotional and moral arguments against nuclear weapons and political and military factors in favour of these arms. Canadians would soon have another opportunity to demonstrate their views on nuclear issues as the debate over nuclear arms acquisition and the way to ensure security for Canada's population climaxed.

¹⁶⁹ "A Arms Ruling Long Overdue, Pearson Says," *Globe and Mail*, December 24, 1962, 4.

¹⁷⁰ Stursberg ed, *Diefenbaker: Leadership Lost*, 18.

¹⁷¹ "Nuclear Decisions Held Political Matter," *Globe and Mail*, January 29, 1962, 5.

¹⁷² "Take Nuclear Stand, Douglas Tells Ottawa," *Globe and Mail*, January 9, 1962, 2.

Chapter Six:

“Playing Politics with Four Million Dead Canadians:”

Canada's Nuclear Election and the Climax of the Nuclear Arms Debate, 1963.

The Cuban crisis drew attention to the security of North America. It called into question the government's plan to wait until an emergency to obtain nuclear warheads for its unarmed weapons systems. While the Soviet Union moved missile sites within range of Canadian targets, its own nuclear weapons systems remained useless and armed with sandbags. The Cuban crisis had proved that the nuclear deterrent worked. The Soviet Union presented a real threat and politicians and ordinary Canadians became convinced that Canada needed a strong and effective defence. The nuclear debate grew in the aftermath of the emergency. Politicians stressed the need to resolve Canada's defence issues. It appeared that Canada's nuclear arms question would receive increased attention as a result of the real threat of war in late 1962.

Lester Pearson announced a new defence policy for his party early in 1963. If elected prime minister, he would obtain nuclear warheads for Canadian forces at home and abroad. He explained, “As a Canadian I am ashamed if we accept commitments and then refuse to discharge them.” He accused the Diefenbaker government of providing Canadians with an ineffective and partial defence. Pearson reassured the public that the acquisition of nuclear arms by Canada would not reduce its independence in matters of defence. The Canadian government would continue to make decisions about when nuclear warheads would be used. He explained, “In such an agreement, a U.S. finger would be on the trigger; but a Canadian finger would be on the safety catch.” The Leader

of the Opposition suggested that it might be possible to renegotiate a “more appropriate,” non-nuclear role sometime in the future.¹

Pearson admitted that he became a politician when he delivered this speech.² In his memoirs, he recalled that the Cuban crisis was responsible for his policy switch; it proved that the arms issue could not be resolved during periods of “dangerous uncertainty.”³ Paul Hellyer and Judy La Marsh visited Canadian forces in Europe in late 1962 and found that NATO leaders and Canadian soldiers believed Canada must take nuclear warheads to fulfill its alliance obligations. Their report also moved Pearson to abandon his anti-nuclear stand. In early January the retiring commander of NATO visited Ottawa and created controversy with his comments about Canada’s defence policy. General Lauris Norstad told reporters that Canada was committed to take nuclear arms.⁴

Walter Gray reported on Pearson’s nuclear policy announcement in the *Globe and Mail*:

Mr. Pearson’s new pro-nuclear policy represents a complete about-face. It means that the various pressure groups which have so far concentrated their anti-nuclear efforts on the Government, can now turn on the Liberals. Mr. Pearson is gambling that the Canadian public will support the Liberal stand when election time rolls around again. However, the Opposition Leader, according to his associates, hopes the nuclear issue will not become part of the election campaign.⁵

Pearson’s staff informed reporters that the response to Pearson’s announcement had been positive: “Every bit of what you would call general reaction that we have been able to pick up has been favourable.”⁶ The majority of the Liberal supporters who attended the meeting approved of nuclear arms for Canadian forces at home and abroad. A poll taken

¹ Lester Pearson, “On Canadian Defence Policy,” in *Words and Occasions: An Anthology of Speeches and Articles selected from his papers*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1970): 202-4.

² Denis Smith, *Gentle Patriot: A Political Biography of Walter Gordon*, (Edmonton: Hurtig, 1973): 119.

³ Lester Pearson, *Mike: The Memoirs of the Right Honourable Lester Pearson*, vol. 3, 1957-1968. ed. J.A. Munro and A.I. Inglis (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1975): 69-70; Pearson, “On Canadian Defence Policy,” in *Words and Occasions*, 198.

⁴ Pearson, *Memoirs*, vol. 3, 72.

⁵ “Mr. Pearson’s Big Gamble on Nuclear Policy,” *Globe and Mail*, January 14, 1963, 7.

⁶ “Pearson Stirs Big Storm: Big Reaction To Atom Call,” *Globe and Mail*, January 14, 1963, 1.

before Pearson's address showed that 66 percent of the crowd supported nuclear arms on Canadian soil while 34 percent did not. A slightly higher number, 70 percent, favoured nuclear arms for Canadian troops in Europe while 30 percent did not.⁷

Lester Pearson entered the 1963 election campaign with confidence and felt that the nuclear weapons issue was "a winning issue." His advisers disagreed.⁸ Walter Gordon, the Liberal finance critic, and Keith Davey, Pearson's campaign chairman, pointed to polls that showed economic topics generated greater interest.⁹ Pearson explained his stand in his northern Ontario riding:

Don't let anyone tell you the Liberals are in favour of nuclear weapons; we are not in favor of any weapons at all. ... We are in favour of disarmament, security and peace, but until we can get to the point where peace rests on something other than power, we must accept the necessity of that power to maintain the peace....I don't think we can enhance the chances of peace by breaking up the NATO alliance.¹⁰

Many members of Pearson's own party expressed surprise at his announcement.¹¹ Most followed the leader and accepted the new nuclear policy. However, some expressed their dissatisfaction and announced their intention to oppose nuclear weapons within the Liberal party. Others decided to quit the party and some even threw their support to the NDP. Walter Foy, the Liberal representative of Sarnia, Ontario, who was elected in 1962, announced his intention to vote against nuclear weapons even if sponsored by a Liberal government. He compared Canada's policy to Cuba's, "If Canada can have nuclear weapons, I don't see why Cuba shouldn't have them or, for that matter, any other country

⁷ A few "aggressive ban-the-bomb pickets" demonstrated outside the meeting. "Ban-Bombers Picket Pearson Talk," *Globe and Mail*, January 14, 1963, 17.

⁸ John English, *The Life of Lester Pearson*, vol. 2, *The Worldly Years, 1948-1972* (Toronto: A. A. Knopf, 1992): 261.

⁹ English, *The Life of Lester Pearson*, vol. 2, *The Worldly Years*, 261-2. Robert Bothwell, Ian Drummond and John English, *Canada since 1945: power, politics and provincialism*. Rev ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1989): 192.

¹⁰ "Liberals Are For Peace Most of All'—Pearson," *Toronto Daily Star*, January 17, 1963, 26.

¹¹ "Pearson Nuclear Policy Drives Liberal to NDP," *Montreal Star*, January 16, 1963, 1.

in the world.”¹² Vincent Kelly, a University of Toronto law student who ran unsuccessfully as the Liberal candidate for Lanark, Ontario in the 1962 election, resigned in protest. He felt the party’s new policy would neither defend Canada nor preserve freedom. Pierre Léger, a journalist who ran as the Liberal candidate in the Quebec riding of Vaudreuil-Soulanges in 1962 and was an anti-nuclear activist, quit the Liberal party over Pearson’s nuclear weapons position.¹³ Pierre Trudeau, a prominent Liberal party supporter pledged his support to the NDP. The future prime minister called Pearson “the unfrocked pope of peace.” However, Trudeau asserted that the nuclear issue, itself, was of limited importance. In a few years, everyone would have similar bases, he maintained, and the issue did not change a single vote. He was most upset by the influence that American “hipsters” had demonstrated over Pearson and did not agree with Pearson’s complete control over the party’s policy decisions.¹⁴

Pearson’s new defence stand received a mixed response from politicians in other parties. Diefenbaker and Harkness criticized the Liberal leader for his frequent changes in policy.¹⁵ George Nowlan, the Conservative party’s finance minister, however, praised the Liberal leader’s stand. He believed that ninety percent of his own party’s supporters favoured nuclear arms.¹⁶ George S. Bain, the president of the Manitoba NDP, called Pearson’s proposal to accept nuclear weapons “a suicidal policy, both for Canada and for

¹² “Ex-Candidate Quits Party Over Pearson’s Nuclear Stand,” *Montreal Star*, January 15, 1963, 14.

¹³ “Liberal Quits Party On A-Issue,” *Montreal Star*, January 17, 1963, 1; “Ex-Candidate Quits Party Over Pearson’s Nuclear Stand,” *Montreal Star*, January 15, 1963, 14; C. Brown, a Manitoba pool elevator supervisor and the Liberal candidate for the Brandon-Souris riding in Manitoba in 1962, announced he was “all through” with active politics following Pearson’s speech in Toronto. Dr. D.A.D. Milne, the past president of the Bruce Riding Association, also quit the Liberal Party in response to Pearson’s reversal of policy. “Ex-President in Bruce, Another Liberal Quits Over A-Weapons Issue,” *Globe and Mail*, January 24, 1963, 1.

¹⁴ Pierre Elliott Trudeau, “Pearson ou L’abdication de l’esprit,” *Cité Libre* xiv:56 (avril 1963): 7, 12, 11.

¹⁵ “Pearson Stirs Big Storm: Big Reaction To Atom Call,” *Globe and Mail*, January 14, 1963, 1.

¹⁶ “Nowlan Liked Pearson’s Stand on A-Weapons,” *Globe and Mail*, March 9, 1963, 10.

other nations.” “If Canada acquires nuclear arms,” he maintained, “the world will be one step closer to the brink of war.”¹⁷

Pearson recalled that he received angry letters following this speech “accusing [him] of shameless immorality.” He explained the response he had encountered:

I was told that I was making Canada worse than the United States, that we were American toadies, and that we were going to drop nuclear bombs on innocent people. This sort of thoughtless criticism never disturbed me unduly.... In contrast with Mr. Diefenbaker’s position, mine was at least a decision. I think it was the right decision, although I deplored the circumstances which made it necessary.¹⁸

It was not surprising that Pearson’s reversal on nuclear weapons policy drew heated criticism from peace activists. They expressed their shock and regret over what they perceived to be Pearson’s abandonment of their cause. Casgrain described the VOW as “shattered” following Pearson’s announcement. She explained that “confusion reigned, people were wondering who they could really trust to work for peace.”¹⁹ Charlotte McEwen agreed and said, “Because people had so much faith in Pearson it came as a real shock.”²⁰ Justice Joseph T. Thorson, the honorary President of the CCND, described the group as “shocked and disappointed.”²¹ When Pearson travelled to speak to the Kiwanis and Rotary Clubs in London, Ontario local branches of the CCND and the VOW picketed his appearance.²² The RCAF Association, on the other hand, endorsed the Liberal party’s new nuclear stand. Phillip F. Connell, its national president, praised Pearson for accepting “the responsibility for the proper defence of Canada and its people.”²³

¹⁷ “Suicidal: NDP Group,” *Globe and Mail*, January 16, 1963, 13.

¹⁸ Pearson, *Mike*, vol. 3, ed. Munro and Inglis, 71.

¹⁹ Voice of Women, *Newsletter*, no. 28, July 1963, 6.

²⁰ Candace Loewen, “Mike Hears Voices: Voice of Women and Lester Pearson, 1960-1963,” *Atlantis* 12:2 (Spring 1987): note 39, 30.

²¹ “Pearson Stirs Storm: Big Reaction to Atom Call,” *Globe and Mail*, January 14, 1963, 1.

²² “2 Groups Protest,” *Globe and Mail*, January 19, 1963, 4.

²³ “Pearson Nuclear Policy Drives Liberal to NDP,” *Montreal Star*, January 16, 1963, 1.

Pearson rejected the interpretation of nuclear issues as an emotional or moral issue. He insisted it was really a political issue. He recalled in his memoirs, "This was never in my view a moral question."²⁴ The debate over the nature of the nuclear weapons issue continued to grow in the aftermath of Pearson's announcement. Rabbi Feinberg responded to Pearson's new stand and rejected his interpretation of nuclear arms as a political issue:

Canadians who oppose nuclear weapons will not change their conviction or courage because Lester Pearson changed his mind.... Many thousands of parents in this country are more concerned with the lives of their children than with jumping on a political Bandwagon or a military juggernaut. If nuclear arms are to be used as a political tactic to win elections, may God and the good sense of the Canadian people defend us.²⁵

Major-General Macklin, too, expressed his hope that Pearson's speech considered the security of North America rather than votes in an election.²⁶

The Conservative Party upheld the Diefenbaker government's nuclear policy at its national meeting held in the weeks following Pearson's speech. Eddie Goodman, a lawyer from Toronto, a decorated war veteran and the chair of the resolutions committee, urged the party to take a stand in favour of nuclear arms acquisition in keeping with the majority view. He explained, "It was clear from the resolutions that came in that there was a strong feeling across the country that we should accept nuclear warheads and live up to our commitment to take them for the Bomarc missiles."²⁷ His efforts to alter the party's stand failed and Goodman resigned over his defence disagreement with

²⁴ Pearson, "On Canadian Defence Policy," in *Words and Occasions*, 201; Pearson, *Mike*, vol. 3, ed. Munro and Inglis, 71.

²⁵ NA CCND MG 28 I 389 Vol 1, File 29 News Releases n.d. 1961-1963, "Release by Rabbi Feinberg, January 16, 1963, 'The War Against Nuclear Weapons Must Go On To Prevent War;'" "Liberal Jumps to NDP Over Nuclear Platform," *Globe and Mail*, January 17, 1963, 21.

²⁶ Letter to the editor, *Globe and Mail*, January 17, 1963, 6.

²⁷ Peter Stursberg, *Diefenbaker: Leadership Lost, 1962-67*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1976): 30.

Diefenbaker.²⁸ Only the Young Conservatives came out in support of nuclear arms. The party's youth wing reached this stand only "after a long and ... bitter fight" and by a narrow margin.²⁹ John Bassett, the publisher of the *Toronto Telegram* and a supporter of the Conservative party, campaigned to remove Diefenbaker as its leader. He explained, "This was an emotional issue. I strongly urged that we had to meet our commitments. I didn't care about nuclear weapons or not, up in North Bay or wherever it was. I didn't think they'd do much good, and I'm sure they wouldn't. But the issue to me was that we'd made a commitment to the United States."³⁰ Those on both sides of the issue demonstrated emotion in their attempts to realize their goals.

Diefenbaker withstood the challenges to his leadership and clarified his government's defence policy in the House of Commons in late January. He argued that technological changes made Canada's nuclear weapons systems outdated. Conventional weapons, not nuclear warheads, would provide a better defence against the Soviet Union. He explained that the Bomarc, designed to intercept Soviet bombers, was no longer effective. Canada could expect to be attacked by missiles instead. The Prime Minister admitted that Canada had nuclear obligations but explained that the delays in making a decision on nuclear arms should be blamed on technological changes rather than on his government. *Time* magazine referred derisively to the Prime Minister's "now-you-see-it-now-you-don't nuclear policy." The magazine accused him of "working both sides of the nuclear street."³¹ The United States' State Department issued a press release following Diefenbaker's speech. American officials contradicted his claims and expressed

²⁸ "Senior PC Official Quits Party Post," *Globe and Mail*, February 6, 1963, 10.

²⁹ "Tories Sidestep Nuclear Issue: A-Arms Policy Left in Hands of Government Convention Goes Along with Diefenbaker Plea," *Montreal Star*, January 19, 1963, 1.

³⁰ Stursberg, ed, *Leadership Lost*, 79.

³¹ *Time*, (Canadian Edition) February 8, 1963, 7.

dissatisfaction with Canada's defence contribution: "The Canadian government has not yet proposed any arrangement sufficiently practical to contribute effectively to North American defense." Diefenbaker jumped on the press release as an "unwarranted intrusion in Canadian affairs."³² He continued to insist that Canada would only obtain nuclear warheads in an emergency and became even more stubborn in his efforts to avoid any action that would appear to fulfill the wishes of the United States.

Douglas Harkness increased his pressure on Diefenbaker. He threatened to resign from cabinet if the government did not begin negotiations to obtain nuclear arms from the Americans immediately. His ultimatum proved unsuccessful and he tendered his resignation on February 4. The same day the Diefenbaker government was defeated in a non-confidence motion, introduced by Pearson, for its failure to provide strong government. The Diefenbaker minority government had lasted just eight months. Harkness went on the offensive after he stepped-down. He told reporters that the members of parliament supported him, not the prime minister, on nuclear weapons. He reported that a "great majority" of Conservatives and Canadians in general wanted nuclear weapons.³³ Pierre Sévigny, the deputy minister of national defence, and George Hees, a war veteran and the minister of trade, also quit the Diefenbaker cabinet in protest. Their attempts to force Diefenbaker to resign as leader failed.³⁴

Proponents of nuclear weapons began to speak out more forcefully and challenged the interpretation of the issue offered by disarmament supporters. Students at the University of Toronto set up a group called the Committee for Nuclear Arms and

³² Peter C. Newman, *Renegade in Power: The Diefenbaker Years*, (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd, 1963): 352.

³³ "'MP's For Me on A-Arms, Not PM' - Harkness," *Toronto Daily Star*, February 5, 1963, 1.

³⁴ Newman, *Renegade in Power*, 358; 370-2.

organized a meeting in support of nuclear arms for Canada. A third year student explained that this group hoped to dispel the idea “that the university is full of ban-the-bomb types.” Michael Marrus, a member of the anti-nuclear group who later became a professor of history at the University of Toronto and an expert on the Holocaust, “accused the group of operating at a lower moral level than his organization.”³⁵ The McGill University branch of the CUCND encountered similar opposition from proponents of nuclear arms for Canada who set up their own group called the National Defence Committee.³⁶ The Toronto and District Labour Council experienced divisions over its stand on this aspect of Canada’s defence policies. While some of its members believed that Canada should live up to its obligations to NATO by taking nuclear arms, others supported the anti-nuclear policy of the CLC. John White, a member of the Ironworkers Union and an NDP candidate, told the group that the working classes around the world had to fight for peace, “We Can’t fight for peace by accepting nuclear weapons.” Frederick Prentice, a British war veteran, a supporter of the NDP and representative of the United Automobile Workers, disagreed. He maintained that nuclear weapons prevented a world war.³⁷ The debate over nuclear arms for Canada exposed the complexities involved in providing security for the country.

Most of the population still did not believe that a nuclear war would break out. They expressed confidence about the nuclear threat a few short months after the close brush with war over Cuba. While 11 percent divulged that they were “very worried” about the chance of a nuclear war, 32 percent admitted to being “fairly worried” and 56

³⁵ “Nuclear Views of UofT Body Under Attack,” *Globe and Mail*, January 22, 1963, 3.

³⁶ This group labelled the CUCND “Jewish and Bolshevik.” Stanley Gray, “CUCND Will Not Honour Smear Tactics,” *McGill Daily*, January 29, 1963, 2.

³⁷ “Urges Nuclear Stand,” *Globe and Mail*, February 8, 1963, 4.

percent confidently expressed that they were “not worried at all.” These results were almost identical to the results of a poll that asked the same question in 1958. The *Toronto Daily Star* explained, “Canadian opinion has changed very little in five years as to the possibility of a nuclear war breaking out.... Then, as now, more than half the public reported no concern at all about a disaster befalling the world.”³⁸ Canadians also demonstrated a limited knowledge of defence matters. A CPRI poll showed almost half of those surveyed could not identify the function or purpose of the Bomarc. Canadians also displayed confusion about Canada’s nuclear capabilities. The majority of those sampled by the CPRI either did not know if Canada had nuclear missiles or believed that it already had the warheads.³⁹ Even cabinet ministers in the Diefenbaker government shared the population’s confusion about Canada’s involvement with nuclear weapons. Late in 1962, George Hees told a group of University of Toronto students that Canadian troops in Europe had nuclear weapons. Hees defended his error and explained he referred to Canada’s nuclear capability. He added that he did not know everything about departments other than his own.⁴⁰ Diefenbaker declared that everyone in his government knew that Canada did not have these arms and Harkness confirmed that, despite Hees’ confusion, the government’s nuclear policy remained the same.⁴¹

³⁸ “Most Canadians don’t believe nuclear war will break out,” *Toronto Daily Star*, February 6, 1963, 5.

³⁹ 42 percent correctly stated that Canada had missiles that could carry nuclear weapons but did not have any nuclear warheads, 24 percent did not know, 15 percent thought Canada did not have the missiles or warheads, 8 percent thought Canada had ICBMs and 11 percent thought there were missiles with nuclear weapons at North Bay but not at La Macaza. When asked what the function of the Bomarc was 53 percent responded correctly that it was an anti-aircraft missile, 24 percent did not know what it did, 8 percent thought it was a Canadian-made military transport, 3 percent identified it as an American submarine while 11 percent thought it was a missile that could fly as far as Russia. “Miss on Missile,” *Globe and Mail*, February 3, 1963, 9.

⁴⁰ “Hees Beats Off A-Arms Queries,” *Globe and Mail*, December 5, 1962, 2.

⁴¹ “Have Canadian Troops in Europe Got A-Arms? Hees Says Yes, No,” *Globe and Mail*, December 4, 1962, 1.

The fall of the government appeared to be largely the result of its defence policy. Canadians would go to the polls on April 8, 1963. It seemed as if the nuclear arms issue would be a priority in this election. A report in the *Toronto Daily Star* suggested that defence issues were building up to be the major issue of the campaign.⁴² The Canadian Labour Congress concluded that "Canada's defence problems have become a subject of growing public interest."⁴³ For the first time the two major parties campaigned on different sides of the nuclear weapons issue. Pearson pushed for strong defence and the need for power in the conflict with the Soviet Union. Diefenbaker competed with allegations that a Liberal government would result in the death of millions of Canadians.

The disarmament movement anticipated that nuclear issues would dominate the election campaign.⁴⁴ The CCND took credit for the growth of public opinion in favour of a non-nuclear role for Canada.⁴⁵ K.C. Woodsworth, the chairman of the CCND, accused those who supported nuclear arms for Canada of being uninformed about the issues:

Public opinion is pretty evenly divided on the issue. We have wide support for our views. But many people are opposed, not because they understand the issues, but because they take the attitude "We want to defend Canada with the best weapons possible" but nuclear weapons add nothing to Canada's defence and add to the nuclear threat.⁴⁶

The CCND worked to make defence and foreign affairs the main issues in the election. It even called the 1963 campaign "The Nuclear Election." It believed that more Canadians would oppose nuclear arms if they knew where the candidates stood on the issue. The group also aimed to convince the public that nuclear arms would not strengthen Canada's

⁴² "'We Must Stockpile A-Arms' Pearson Commits Liberals," *Toronto Daily Star*, February 21, 1963, 1-2.

⁴³ "Canada's Defence Policy," *Canadian Labour*, April 1963, 25.

⁴⁴ "Ban-Bomb Row Delays Voting Coldwell Chief," *Toronto Daily Star*, February 23, 1963, 1.

⁴⁵ MURA CCND Box 24 Activities, File 1 Sanity, "Sanity, 1: 2 (February 1963): 1."

⁴⁶ MURA CCND Box 1 History, Membership, Founding Minutes, File 9 CCND Annual Meeting- Minutes, Reports February 1963, "Appendix II: Report to Annual Meeting, K.C. Woodsworth, Chairman, Executive Committee."

defence against nuclear attack.⁴⁷ Rabbi Feinberg alerted the public that a nuclear-armed Canada increased the dangers it faced. Universal nuclear disarmament, he maintained, was “the only sure defense against the desolation of Canadian cities, the destruction of Canadian lives and the total dislocation of the Canadian economy.”⁴⁸

The Pearsons faced difficult questions when their positions on nuclear weapons appeared to be, embarrassingly, at odds. When Lester Pearson announced his intention to arm Canadian forces with nuclear weapons he became one of the men criticized by his wife’s group. Mrs. Pearson tried to continue as a sponsor of the VOW while she remained by her husband’s side. When the press jumped on their domestic disagreement, a secretary responded that Mr. Pearson made all of the nuclear statements in the household.⁴⁹ In an attempt to stem the growing controversy, Maryon Pearson explained that the VOW “was meant as a protest by women the world over against war in a world where mass destruction has become a possibility.” She pointed out that it did not oppose defence against communism, “It is not, or was not, meant to be a ‘ban the bomb’ organization as such. We are for disarmament, of course, but not for concessions in the name of peace which would mean a loss of freedom, and even make war more, rather than less likely.”⁵⁰ Thérèse Casgrain sympathized with her situation, “It is always difficult for a married woman whose husband is in an official position.”⁵¹ Nevertheless, the group refuted Mrs. Pearson’s definition of its purpose and reaffirmed its position against nuclear arms for Canada. Maryon Pearson announced her resignation from the VOW mid-way through the election campaign. She criticized the group for abandoning

⁴⁷ MURA CCND Box 24 Activities, File 1 Sanity, “Sanity, 1: 2 (February 1963): 1.”

⁴⁸ “A-Arms Issue Being Obscured Rabbi Declares,” *Globe and Mail*, March 25, 1963, 9.

⁴⁹ “Liberal Leader’s Wife Honorary VOW Sponsor,” *Globe and Mail*, January 14, 1963, 17.

⁵⁰ “Pearson Atom Policy Supported by Wife,” *Globe and Mail*, January 15, 1963, 1.

⁵¹ “VOW Plans Peace Travel,” *Globe and Mail*, January 21, 1963, 13.

its general concern about nuclear war to embark on a “belligerent” campaign against nuclear arms for Canada.⁵²

Mrs. Pearson was not the only member of the VOW to find that her peace activities conflicted with her political affiliation by early 1963. In an interview with Pierre Berton broadcast on CBC television, Jo Davis announced her resignation from the group and expressed support for “a more subtle way of action.”⁵³ Pat Alcock, the wife of Norman Alcock, also resigned from the group.⁵⁴ Kathleen Langston, the national vice president and the president of the British Columbia branch, expressed disapproval of the group’s program, “I do not think VOW as an organization should have too rigid a position on controversial political issues.”⁵⁵ Kay Macpherson noted that many of the group’s “Liberal members were very unhappy” with its decision to anti-nuclear campaign after Pearson’s announcement.⁵⁶ Judy LaMarsh acknowledged that support for peace and the instinct to protect their families was part of the “fabric of being a woman.” However, the Liberal Member of Parliament suggested that members of VOW be cautious or they could “unwittingly play into the hands of our enemies.”⁵⁷

Diefenbaker promised to take nuclear arms for Canada if war broke out. Canada would not be armed with “bows and arrows.” He added, “We don’t want to do anything that will increase the nuclear family of nations.” Disarmament was Canada’s primary goal. When asked whether the warheads could be obtained quickly enough in the event

⁵² “Mrs. Pearson Resigns as VOW Sponsor,” *Globe and Mail*, March 6, 1963, 1.

⁵³ Voice of Women, *Newsletter*, no. 25-6, January- February 1963, 1; Gary Moffatt, *History of the Canadian Peace Movement until 1969*, (St. Catharines, ON: Grapevine Press, 1969): 117.

⁵⁴ Christine Ball, “The History of the Voice of Women/ La Voix des Femmes: The Early Years” (Ph.D. diss. University of Toronto, 1994): 480.

⁵⁵ Voice of Women, *Newsletter*, no. 27, March 2, 1963, 12.

⁵⁶ Kay Macpherson and Meg Sears. “Voice of Women: A History,” in *Women in the Canadian Mosaic*, ed. Gwen Matheson (Toronto: Peter Martin Associates, 1976): 75.

⁵⁷ “Aid to Enemies Seen,” *Globe and Mail*, March 6, 1963, 1.

of an emergency the Prime Minister refused to answer citing security reasons.⁵⁸ During the campaign Diefenbaker stressed the cost of a nuclear war for Canada. He provided graphic accounts of the fate the population could expect if Canada acquired nuclear warheads and emphasized that the nation had a moral responsibility to limit their spread. The Conservative leader declared, "I will not have Canada used as a storage dump for nuclear weapons."⁵⁹ He boasted that, unlike his opponent, he would not make Canada a nuclear battlefield just to please the Americans. Diefenbaker told voters, "The day the strike takes place, eighteen million people in North America will die in the first two hours, four million of them in Canada. Mr. Pearson shouldn't play politics with four million dead Canadians." Diefenbaker capitalized on secret testimony released by the Congress of the United States in the last week of the campaign. He believed that the evidence given by Robert McNamara, the American defense secretary, would help him to win re-election. McNamara testified that the Bomarc's only use was to attract Soviet firepower toward Canadian targets. Diefenbaker suggested that Pearson's support of the Bomarc made Canada "a burnt sacrifice" and "a decoy duck in a nuclear war."⁶⁰ John English, a biographer of Pearson, wrote, "It was an outrageous comment, but it captured attention."⁶¹ Diefenbaker's campaign was high on anti-American sentiment. The populist views that won him public support in 1957 contributed to his paranoia by 1963. He frequently referred to the forces at work against him as "they" and his attitude verged on paranoia.⁶² In a speech in Kingston, Diefenbaker continued his assault on Pearson, "The Liberal Party would have us put nuclear warheads on something that's hardly worth

⁵⁸ "We'll Get A-Arms If War, P.M. Hints," *Toronto Daily Star*, February 26, 1963, 2.

⁵⁹ John Saywell, ed. *Canadian Annual Review*, (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1963): 22.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 312.

⁶¹ English, *The Life of Lester Pearson*, vol. 2, *The Worldly Years*, 264.

⁶² Newman, *Renegade in Power*, 388, 397.

scrapping. What's it for? To attract the fire of intercontinental missiles. North Bay-
knocked out. La Macaza- [the military base at Mont Laurier] knocked out. The Liberal
policy is to make Canada a decoy for intercontinental missiles." Peter C. Newman, a
journalist who wrote an account of Diefenbaker's political career, explained,
"Diefenbaker made effective fun of the Liberal's policy switch and talked about the
horrors of atomic war, as if Pearson were about to start one.... [He] impl[ied] that a vote
for the Liberals was a vote for atomic war."⁶³ Diefenbaker conveniently overlooked the
fact that it was his government that had made the decision to take the Bomarc in 1959.
Harkness refuted the claims of his party's leader and argued that Bomarc missiles armed
with nuclear warheads did not put Canadians at risk. Instead, they would help to increase
their security.⁶⁴

Pearson responded to Diefenbaker's inflammatory charges that he risked a nuclear
war by reminding the voters that it was the Conservative leader who had made the
decision to acquire the Bomarc.⁶⁵ He told voters in Nanaimo, British Columbia, "If Mr.
Diefenbaker thinks the Bomarc is nothing but a decoy ... why doesn't he scrap it? ...
What would you think of a commander who sent a company of men into the front-line
trenches with guns, but said: "We're not going to give you the bullets, or you'll be
decoys."⁶⁶ The Liberal leader began his campaign with a pledge to work for "peace,
security and freedom" including an international agreement to abolish nuclear weapons.
He told the Quebec Liberal Federation that the NATO alliance would need defensive

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 391-2

⁶⁴ "Biased Views Cloud Nuclear Arms Issue for Public: Harkness," *Globe and Mail*, March 22, 1963, 8.

⁶⁵ English, *The Life of Lester Pearson*, vol. 2, *The Worldly Years*, 264.

⁶⁶ Newman, *Renegade in Power*, 397.

nuclear weapons as long as “the Russian Communist empire” had a nuclear arsenal.⁶⁷ He informed the wives of Canadian army personnel that the army needed strength to do its job. He noted that he opposed nuclear weapons just as he stood against war but believed that “a better peace could be reached if Canada fulfilled its commitments.”⁶⁸ Pearson promised a Liberal government would “[keep] them as long as they [were] useful for defence.”⁶⁹

Tommy Douglas kicked off his campaign by rallying the public against nuclear weapons: “This election is, first of all, and most important of all, a referendum on the question of nuclear warheads.” The difference between the Liberals and the Conservatives, Douglas told voters during the election campaign, was getting nuclear weapons in April or in May.⁷⁰ The only choice for Canadians who wished to keep nuclear arms out of Canada was to vote for the NDP. He warned a crowd of 16 000 supporters at Toronto’s Maple Leaf Gardens that “the Canadian people would not approve of useless Bomarc being used as missile bait in Canada.”⁷¹ Neither the disappointment the VOW experienced over Pearson’s support for nuclear arms nor Douglas’ pledge to make nuclear issues the focus of the election pushed the group to support the NDP. At the end of February, the VOW executive decided not to officially support the NDP in the election campaign. It hoped to appease their Liberal members at the same time as it maintained the group’s non-partisan basis.⁷² When Casgrain first became involved in the VOW the group worried about her ties to the

⁶⁷ “Need A-Arms Blunt Pearson Tells Quebec,” *Toronto Daily Star*, February 23, 1963, 1.

⁶⁸ “Services Need Power, Pearson Tells Wives Outside Army Camp,” *Globe and Mail*, March 1, 1963, 8.

⁶⁹ “‘We Must Stockpile A-Arms’ Pearson Commits Liberals,” *Toronto Daily Star*, February 21, 1963, 1-2.

⁷⁰ “‘Nuclear Arms Main Issue’ - NDP Leader,” *Toronto Daily Star*, February 16, 1963, 1; CAR 1963, 29.

⁷¹ “Bomarc Missile Bait Douglas Tells 16, 000,” *Globe and Mail*, March 30, 1963, 1.

⁷² “NDP Refused Official Backing By VOW Heads,” *Globe and Mail*, February 28, 1963, 9; Macpherson and Sears, “The Voice of Women,” in *Women in the Canadian Mosaic*, ed. Gwen Matheson, 75.

CCF/NDP. Davis was given the task of ensuring that Casgrain did not link the VOW with the New Party. The group's members believed its efforts would suffer "by this close association with any one political party."⁷³ Around the same time the CCND planned to announce that M.J. Coldwell, the former CCF leader, would replace the Reverend J.S. Thomson as its president. The announcement was postponed until after the election. The group pointed to the fact that the nuclear weapons issue would play a large role in the campaign as the official reason for the change. However, Coldwell's ties to the CCF challenged the group's non-partisan position.⁷⁴

Other Liberal candidates shared Pearson's support for a strong defence. Senator David Croll, a Liberal party supporter, urged voters that, since geography meant that Canada would be threatened in a nuclear war, Canada could not become the Achilles heel of western defence. Croll challenged Diefenbaker's wait-and-see policy, "What kind of protection will our Bomarcas provide for Toronto, Ottawa or Hamilton if the warheads are stored in Buffalo?"⁷⁵ Hellyer belittled the government's suggestion that nuclear warheads could be obtained whenever necessary even if they were stored in the United States. "If they have any military usefulness whatever," Hellyer insisted, "we must have them before a crisis arises."⁷⁶ Walter Gordon admitted that a number of Canadians worried about nuclear weapons. Yet, he concluded that it was not the central issue of the election. Canadians, he insisted, preferred to leave the issue of nuclear arms to the government to

⁷³ The Quebec branch of the VOW created controversy. Unlike other provincial branches it did not defer to the leadership in Toronto but tried to work as a partner, parallel body. The Central Committee expressed frustration that it was not consulted and even Maryon Pearson called the Committee because she was upset about the situation. Casgrain denounced NORAD in a public address in 1961 and took the controversial step of publicly endorsing the CCCRH petition. Ball, "The History of the Voice of Women," 457-8, 383-4, 401, 407.

⁷⁴ "Ban-Bomb Row Delays Voting Coldwell Chief," *Toronto Daily Star*, February 23, 1963, 1.

⁷⁵ "Emotions Threaten Nuclear Arms Truth," *Globe and Mail*, February 20, 1963, 9.

⁷⁶ "Canadians Overseas Ashamed: Liberal MP," *Globe and Mail*, February 13, 1963, 10.

decide.⁷⁷ The Social Credit party led by Robert Thompson believed that nuclear weapons issues should be removed from the campaign.⁷⁸ Monteith also disparaged nuclear topics at his nomination meeting saying, "The nuclear issue is phoney and a smokescreen." He alleged that the Liberals realized they would lose the election on economic issues so chose to focus on nuclear arms instead.⁷⁹

The 1963 campaign became a debate over the definition of the nuclear issue. The leaders of each party differed over what considerations should be used to decide whether or not to arm Canadian forces with nuclear arms. Douglas relied on a sentimental approach to the problem of nuclear war:

At my age... dying in a nuclear war is no great tragedy. But I have a three-and-a-half-year-old grandson, and I want him to walk proudly through life. We have a responsibility that our children get that opportunity. How you cast your ballot in this election will decide whether or not Canada joins the nuclear club.⁸⁰

The NDP leader, however, condemned Diefenbaker's approach, "His statements on nuclear weapons have been directed at the emotions of his hearers rather than their common sense."⁸¹ Pearson also criticized Diefenbaker's campaign strategy:

It was irresponsible... to play on fears and emotions, on Canadians' horror of war and special horror of nuclear war, falsely asserting that the acceptance of nuclear warheads for certain defensive weapons would brand Canadians as immoral, while Canadians would be pure if only they stored, south of the border, the nuclear ammunition which would be used later, when it would be too late.⁸²

The Liberal leader suffered criticism for his approach to the nuclear issue as well.

Harkness disparaged the "political opportunism" behind Pearson's nuclear policy and alleged that the Liberal leader lacked sincerity. The former defence minister did not limit

⁷⁷ "La question des armes-A n'est pas primordiale - - Gordon," *La Presse*, mars 5, 1963, 1.

⁷⁸ "Thompson's A-Arms Switch," *Toronto Daily Star*, February 25, 1963, 1-2.

⁷⁹ "Arms Issue 'Phony,'" *Globe and Mail*, March 7, 1963, 11.

⁸⁰ Newman, *Renegade in Power*, 389.

⁸¹ Peyton Lyon, *The Policy Question: A Critical Appraisal of Canada's Role in World Affairs*, (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1963): 122.

⁸² "Giant Pearson Meeting Cheers Sacrifice Appeal," *Globe and Mail*, April 6, 1963, 2.

his attacks to the Liberal Party. He believed that the “emotional and biased statements” of those opposed to nuclear arms “clouded” the nuclear arms issue for the public. These views, Harkness alleged, prevented “a well-informed decision” at the polls. The *Globe and Mail* reported that the former minister of national defence believed “the issue was the most important in the election campaign, but the voters were not being given the opportunity to make a clear-cut decision.”⁸³ Léon Balcer charged Pearson with changing his nuclear stand to win the military vote.⁸⁴

David Croll argued that emotion clouded Canadian public opinion on nuclear weapons and challenged the truth.⁸⁵ Perry Ryan, the Liberal candidate for the Toronto riding of Spadina, told party workers that the stand of the communists and the NDP on nuclear arms was similar. The NDP, he alleged, created an emotional turmoil on the subject for partisan political reasons.”⁸⁶ Robert Thompson shared this view. He charged that the only groups who opposed nuclear arms were ban-the-bombers and fellow travellers.⁸⁷ William Malnychuk, the Communist Party’s candidate for the High Park riding in Toronto, warned that Canadian nuclear arms would bring war. Bruce Magnuson, the leader of the Ontario Communist Party, said the choice on April 8 was easy, “life or death.” A total of twelve communist candidates ran for election in 1963.⁸⁸

Like the leader of the NDP, the CCND hoped that Canadians would cast their votes against nuclear arms. The group’s members handed out leaflets at shopping malls, mailed its literature to voters and went door-to-door to spread its message of

⁸³ “Biased Views Cloud Nuclear Arms Issue,” *Globe and Mail*, March 22, 1963, 8.

⁸⁴ “Pearson Seeks Military Vote, Balcer Claims,” *Globe and Mail*, March 25, 1963, 9.

⁸⁵ “Emotions Threaten Nuclear Arms Truth,” *Globe and Mail*, February 20, 1963, 9.

⁸⁶ “Reds and NDP Seem to Agree on Arms Issue,” *Globe and Mail*, March 7, 1963, 11.

⁸⁷ *Time*, (Canadian Edition) March 15, 1963, 13.

⁸⁸ This was the same number of Communist candidates who ran in the 1962 election. “Canada A-Arms Will Bring War, Communist Says,” *Globe and Mail*, March 27, 1963, 8; Ivan Avakumovic, *The Communist Party in Canada: A History*, (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1975): 241.

‘No Nuclear Arms for Canada.’⁸⁹ Patricia McMahon argued that the CCND was poorly organized and did not influence the election campaign.⁹⁰ The efforts of the VOW focused on finding out where candidates stood on the nuclear question. Members attended rallies where they questioned candidates and then distributed the results of their surveys.⁹¹

Anti-nuclear activists, described as ‘rowdies,’ disrupted Lester Pearson’s campaign appearances. They clashed with his supporters and heckled his speeches. They tried to warn the public about the risks associated with his nuclear policies with slogans like “A Vote for Nuclear Arms is a Vote for More Hiroshimas” and “Nuclear Canada Today, Nuclear War Tomorrow.”⁹² Rowdiness was not something new to Canadian politics in 1963. In the 1962 Diefenbaker’s campaign stops attracted vocal and violent opposition from young people and miners involved in a labour dispute.⁹³ In 1963, however, it was Pearson’s support for nuclear arms that drew protesters.

The *Globe and Mail* described a Liberal rally in Quebec City as “an almost complete fiasco.” Party supporters scuffled with a group of ban-the-bomb demonstrators.⁹⁴ At a campaign stop in Hamilton, Ontario, Pearson endured some of the worst heckling of his campaign. Over 200 protestors marched outside Pearson’s rally and carried anti-nuclear signs reading “Ashes to Ashes, Dust to Dust with Pearson.” One placard showed a cardboard version of Pearson’s trademark bowtie decorated with the American stars and stripes. The anti-nuclear camp provocatively suggested that Pearson

⁸⁹ NA CCND, MG 28 I389 Vol 1, File 5 Activities, “Bulletin no. 16, June 1963.”

⁹⁰ Patricia McMahon, “The Politics of Canada’s Nuclear Policy, 1957-1963” (Ph.D. diss., University of Toronto, 1999), 343.

⁹¹ “Women Poll Views On A-Arms,” *Globe and Mail*, March 23, 1963, 11; Simonne Monet Chartrand, *Les Québécoises et le mouvement pacifiste, 1939-1967*, (Montreal: Éditions Écosociété, 1993): 86-8.

⁹² “Giant Pearson Meeting Cheers Sacrifice Appeal,” *Globe and Mail*, April 6, 1963, 2.

⁹³ Newman, *Renegade in Power*, 328.

⁹⁴ “Gremlins for Pearson,” *Globe and Mail*, March 20, 1963, 7.

risked Canadian lives in a nuclear war and was controlled by the United States. Chaos plagued Pearson's address to a crowd of 16 000 in Vancouver. Demonstrators expressed both anti-nuclear and anti-American sentiments. Cheers of "We want peace" competed with chants of "We want Mike." Pearson refused to call off the event even though hecklers shouted over his speech for close to an hour. He blamed communists for the disturbances and labelled the rowdies "organized goons and little brothers."⁹⁵ The police and local reporters backed up his allegations. The police ejected 30 people from the event and set dogs on the demonstrators. Near the end of the campaign protestors attempted to interrupt a Pearson speech at Toronto's Maple Leaf Gardens. The situation escalated when Liberal party supporters surrounded the hecklers, grabbed their signs and ripped them into pieces. Pearson recalled that the threatening reception he received throughout the campaign caused his wife to collapse into tears.⁹⁶

The anti-nuclear protests at Liberal party events raised questions about the links between the rowdy demonstrators and disarmament groups.⁹⁷ Rabbi Feinberg issued a press statement in order to distance his group from the ban-the-bomb protestors:

Rowdyism is always unworthy of Canadians. During this crucial election campaign deliberate and planned interference with the right of a political party to advance its opinion in an open meeting is a denial of freedom, an attack on democracy and a detriment to the exercise of reason. The TCND is also opposed to rowdyism in any degree whatever.⁹⁸

⁹⁵ "Uproar Engulfs Pearson at Rowdy B.C. Meeting," *Globe and Mail*, April 2, 1963, 1.

⁹⁶ "Giant Pearson Meeting Cheers Sacrifice Appeal," *Globe and Mail*, April 6, 1963, 2; Pearson, *Mike*, vol. 3, ed. Munro and Inglis, 81-2.

⁹⁷ MURA CCND Box 2 Minutes, Correspondence, File 11 Correspondence, Exec Members- Harvor, Stig. "Letter from Stig Harvor to K.C. Woodsworth, April 3, 1963."

⁹⁸ NA CCND MG 28 I389 Vol 1 CCND, File 29 News Releases n.d. 1961-3, "Rabbi Abraham Feinberg, 'We Disavow Election Rowdyism,' April 3, 1963."

Feinberg denied that his group had any part in the disruption of political meetings.⁹⁹

Major-General Macklin expressed concerns about the damage “rowdies” caused to the peace movement’s respectable image. When anti-nuclear activists disrupted a debate in which both he and Harkness participated, Macklin complained to the leaders of the CCND: “I am sure they turned many honest citizens in favour of the bomb with their nasty behaviour and antics. I cannot think that anything will ruin the CCND so fast and so completely as associating with any communist group or front.”¹⁰⁰ David Lewis, a party organizer for the NDP, also spoke out against these unruly disruptions. He accepted “decent or courteous” heckling but described, “the howling down of a speaker” as “intolerable.”¹⁰¹ The Reverend J.R. Mutchmor, who continued to support nuclear arms for Canada, criticized the behaviour at political meetings saying, “Let us curb rowdyism at political meetings. ... Let us reduce our emotional outbursts and pouting.”¹⁰²

Some of the tactics of the Liberal party during the campaign also created controversy. One of its leaflets was a colouring book that poked fun at its opponents. It depicted supporters of the NDP as stick figure ban-the-bombers and academics wearing mortar boards. The negative response to the pamphlet led to its withdrawal. Judy LaMarsh, Fred Belaire, Pearson’s research consultant, and Jack Macbeth, a journalist, formed a “truth squad.” They planned to follow Diefenbaker across the country and record the many inaccuracies he made in his public statements. Liberal party organizers called off the ‘truth squad’ after its first night in action. Peter Newman reported that the

⁹⁹ “Appeals to Ban-Bombers – Don’t Silence Pearson, NDP Asks,” *Globe and Mail*, April 4, 1963, 11.

¹⁰⁰ MURA CCND Box 3 Correspondence, File 11 Correspondence Executive Member Thorson, Hon. J.T. (Hon Pres), 1961-3, “Letter from Major-General W.M.S. Macklin to Justice Thorson, n.d.”

¹⁰¹ Appeals to Ban-Bombers – Don’t Silence Pearson, NDP Asks,” *Globe and Mail*, April 4, 1963, 11.

¹⁰² “Rowdyism Sign of Immaturity, Mutchmor Says,” *Globe and Mail*, March 27, 1963, 8. Rabbi Feinberg expressed his disapproval calling Mutchmor’s recommendation “cynical, amoral” especially for someone who had “shaped concern for public morality into a passionate crusade.” “Mutchmor ‘Cynical’ on A-Arms – Rabbi,” *Toronto Daily Star*, February 26, 1963, 2.

Conservative leader laughed them out of the hall and belittled the Liberal tactic for treating the public as juveniles.¹⁰³

As the election campaign progressed, veterans joined the nation's politicians in evaluating the nuclear threat to Canada. Lieutenant-General Guy Simonds, the Chief of Staff of the Canadian Army from 1951 to 1956, argued Canada should not take warheads. He believed they would not change the balance of world power and were dangerous because there was no defence against nuclear war.¹⁰⁴ Macklin continued to insist, "There is not the slightest reason for Canada to accept nuclear arms."¹⁰⁵ General Charles Foulkes attacked Diefenbaker's nuclear policy in 1962 and alleged that he "sacrificed the integrity of North American air defence purely for political reasons." In early 1963 he supported the acquisition of nuclear arms and warned that, without them, Canada's defences were vulnerable.¹⁰⁶ The *Toronto Star* and *Globe and Mail* reversed their stands and announced that Canada should fulfill its obligations to take nuclear warheads for its defence systems. The CLC, on the other hand, maintained its position against nuclear weapons for Canada.¹⁰⁷ Close to 200 staff members of the University of British Columbia urged that the government to refuse nuclear arms in March. They argued that the balance of terror was no guarantee against war.¹⁰⁸ The student organization of the University of Montreal, led by Bernard Landry, who would go on to become the leader of Quebec's Parti Québécois and the province's prime minister, opposed nuclear arms for Canada. The

¹⁰³ Newman, *Renegade in Power*, 395.

¹⁰⁴ "Look Hard at A-Arms' - Simonds," *Toronto Daily Star*, February 8, 1963, 2; "Services Pressuring For A-Arms: General," *Globe and Mail*, February 8, 1963, 4.

¹⁰⁵ "Nuclear Arms Not Needed, Macklin Says," *Globe and Mail*, February 18, 1963, 10.

¹⁰⁶ "Canada's Arms Stand Is Termed Political," *Globe and Mail*, September 17, 1962, 4; "Canadian Nuclear Role Favored by Foulkes," *Globe and Mail*, March 1, 1963, 4.

¹⁰⁷ "Canada's Defence Policy," *Canadian Labour*, April 1963, 25.

¹⁰⁸ "191 UBC Staff Urge Refusal Of A-Weapons," *Globe and Mail*, March 11, 1963, 9.

AGEUM surveyed the student body at the university and found that three quarters opposed nuclear arms.¹⁰⁹

The *Monetary Times* rejected Pearson's nuclear stand. It forecast that the public would vote against nuclear arms in April:

Many Canadians believe that the only route for an enemy attack upon the United States is due north from over the pole.... Should such an attack come, the United States will not wait to ask the Canadian Parliament's permission to mount a defensive operation and the war will be fought in Canada. The stockpiling of nuclear warheads in Canada now will create a potential enemy target and menace more Canadian lives, many people think, than stockpiling them on United States territory, close to the Canadian border where they will be readily available for shipment north in an emergency and where the concentrations can be more easily protected against enemy attack.¹¹⁰

Nevertheless, polls confirmed that the public supported nuclear arms for Canadian forces at home and abroad throughout the election campaign. A CPRI poll showed that a majority of those sampled believed that increased military strength was the best way to prevent war. By 1963 Canadians appeared less willing to be dead rather than red. Just 2 out of 5 felt that communism must be stopped even at the risk of nuclear war.¹¹¹ Yet, polls released in March 1963 suggested that the nuclear weapons issue did not rank as Canadians' first priority. Instead, traditional bread and butter issues, in particular unemployment, rated higher. Nearly twice as many believed economic issues were more pressing than those linked to defence, war or nuclear weapons.¹¹²

¹⁰⁹ "L'AGEUM se prononce contre les armes-A," *La Presse*, March 6, 1963, 33.

¹¹⁰ "Nuclear Warheads for Canada?" *Monetary Times*, 131:3 (March 1963): 1.

¹¹¹ 58 percent believed military strength prevented war. "Canadians Favor Arms Inspection, Survey Finds," *Globe and Mail*, March 11, 1963, 5.

¹¹² CIPO, *Gallup Poll*, March 1963. "What do you feel is the greatest single problem facing Canada today?" 18 percent of the population thought that nuclear weapons, defence, the international situation and the threat of war were Canada's main worries. Canadians were most concerned about the economy. 34 percent stated the main problem at that time was unemployment, 9 percent responded that it was the economy and 4 percent voiced their concern about the financial situation and too much debt. Peyton Lyon, *Canada in World Affairs, 1961-3*, (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1968): 213.

The election on April 8 was almost too close to call and for a time it appeared that Diefenbaker would attempt to retain control of Parliament. Jean Marchand, the leader of the CNTU and a supporter of the Liberal party, urged the NDP to back Pearson if this happened. He believed this step might be necessary to prevent Diefenbaker from forming another government. His suggestion points to the limited influence of nuclear issues. The CNTU took a stand against nuclear weapons for Canada in 1961. Faced with a choice between a pro-nuclear Pearson government and another Conservative government, Marchand was willing to sacrifice the nuclear weapons issue.¹¹³ When the votes were counted, though, Canadians had elected a minority Liberal government. Lester Pearson became Canada's fourteenth prime minister. While almost eight million Canadians voted in the election, 276 000 fewer votes were cast than the previous year. Liberal candidates were elected in 129 ridings and the party received 41 percent of the popular vote. The Conservatives won 95 seats and garnered 33 percent of the popular vote. The NDP took 17 seats, the same number as in the party won in 1962, and collected 14 percent of the vote. The party did not benefit from its anti-nuclear stand. Casgrain, received approximately 4000 votes and lost to the Liberal candidate.¹¹⁴ The Social Credit party won 29 seats.¹¹⁵ The total number of votes for the twelve Communist Party of Canada candidates was just 4162 in 1963. The party's support dropped from a total of 6307 votes the previous year.¹¹⁶ During the campaign, Paul Hellyer, the Liberal member for Toronto's Trinity riding, announced that the 20 000 Canadians posted overseas were "visibly blushing in shame over their almost untenable position" without nuclear

¹¹³ "Quebec Unionist Demands NDP Back Liberals," *Globe and Mail*, April 11, 1963, 4.

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¹¹⁵ The NDP lost a seat in Cape Breton and gained a seat in Hamilton West. Newman, *Renegade in Power*, 399.

¹¹⁶ "Canada A-Arms Will Bring War, Communist Says, *Globe and Mail*, March 27, 1963, 8; Avakumovic, *Communist Party in Canada*, 241.

warheads.”¹¹⁷ The military vote confirmed his claims. Pearson obtained 70 percent of the armed forces vote, the highest percentage in any previous elections.¹¹⁸ In a campaign pamphlet the Conservatives joked about Pearson’s constantly shifting nuclear policies; it showed a cartoon version of the bow-tied Liberal leader doing the popular dance, the twist.¹¹⁹ For the majority of voters, however, his twisting on the nuclear arms issue did not influence decisions at the ballot box.

Douglas Harkness, who won re-election in Calgary North with a majority of 6000 votes, proclaimed the election results vindicated his nuclear stand. He speculated that a Conservative majority government would have been elected if Diefenbaker had taken a strong pro-nuclear position.¹²⁰ Howard Green lost his own riding in Vancouver but remained faithful to his anti-nuclear stand. He restated his conviction that nuclear arms for Canada would make disarmament more difficult.¹²¹

Many historians view the issue of nuclear weapons acquisition as a major part of the campaign. Peyton Lyon, a political scientist and a civil servant in the department of external affairs, asserted that nuclear weapons became the main topic of the election. J.L. Granatstein agreed.¹²² Diefenbaker addressed nuclear arms in almost every speech.¹²³ Yet, other analyses suggest that nuclear issues were not influential in the election of the Liberal party. Pierre Berton argued that the 1963 vote had more to do with Canada’s

¹¹⁷ “Pearson Based Nuclear Policy on New Facts,” *Globe and Mail*, March 8, 1963, 1.

¹¹⁸ J.L. Granatstein, “The Armed Forces Vote in Canadian General Elections, 1940-1968,” *Journal of Canadian Studies* 4:1 (February 1969): 14.

¹¹⁹ “Lester Pearson and Nuclear Warheads: A Riot of Indecision,” in McMahon, “The Politics of Canada’s Nuclear Policy, 1957-1963,” 326-7.

¹²⁰ “PCs Viewed as Winner If A-Arms Backed,” *Globe and Mail*, April 10, 1963, 10.

¹²¹ “Still Opposes Canada A-Arms, Green Insists,” *Globe and Mail*, April 11, 1963, 4; Thérèse Casgrain, *A Women in a Man’s World*, trans. Joyce Marshall, (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1972): 163.

¹²² J.L. Granatstein, ed, *Canadian Foreign Policy Since 1945: Middle Power or Satellite?* (Toronto: Copp Clark Pub. Co., 1973): 94.

¹²³ Lyon, *Canada in World Affairs*, 192, 195.

position in the world than its nuclear weapons policy. The voters were choosing between isolationism and committed internationalism.¹²⁴

Even dedicated nuclear disarmers admitted that the debate about nuclear arms was not the central issue in the campaign. Rabbi Feinberg complained that the issue did not receive sufficient attention. Economic questions, he declared partway into the campaign, prevented the vote from becoming a referendum on nuclear arms. The Rabbi suggested that the election results should not be considered the final opinion of Canadians on nuclear weapons: "The election was not a true and reliable estimate of the state of public feeling on the nuclear issue, because there were other issues- particularly stability and majority government."¹²⁵ "The hot air of the election campaign," he added, "is not an arena of reasonable discussion of nuclear weapons."¹²⁶ M.J. Coldwell, an active member of the CCND, admitted that the issue of nuclear arms was not fundamental in the campaign.¹²⁷

David Lewis discussed the role of the nuclear issue in the election later in the summer of 1963. He told a public debate at the Toronto Peace Centre that "few people in Toronto are even concerned with the question of nuclear war. During the election our party could not get people interested in the issue of nuclear weapons: our society is not interested in things that really matter."¹²⁸ In an interview with Pierre Berton broadcast on CTV television, Robert Thompson had described the nuclear issue as dead.¹²⁹ The *Vancouver Province* argued that the election focused on the topic of good government.¹³⁰

¹²⁴ Pierre Berton, "The Real Issues in the Election," *Maclean's*, April 6, 1963, 62.

¹²⁵ "Placard-Bearers of Various Faiths," *Globe and Mail*, April 13, 1963, 9.

¹²⁶ "Il n'y aura pas de referendum sur les armes nucléaires," *La presse*, mars 25, 1963, 9.

¹²⁷ "Le Canada n'a jamais accepté d'engagements- Coldwell," *La Presse*, mars 29, 1963, 2.

¹²⁸ Op cit, Moffatt, *History of the Canadian Peace Movement*, 43-4.

¹²⁹ "Nuclear Issue Dead, Thompson Contends," *Globe and Mail*, March 26, 1963, 8.

¹³⁰ quoted in Saywell, ed. *Canadian Annual Review*, (1963): 17.

Civil defence did not receive significant attention in this “nuclear election.”

Major-General Worthington continued to urge Canadians to take the topic more seriously. Canada could survive such an attack, he insisted, if the public invested in proper shelter. Yet, the nation still did not have enough shelter space.¹³¹ The nuclear issue for Canada had been condensed into the question of nuclear arms acquisition rather than a broader debate about nuclear war and how to ensure the survival of a majority of Canadians. Ramsay Cook concluded, “Despite the valiant, and sometimes emotional, efforts of Mr. Douglas to keep the nuclear and foreign affairs question before the electorate, none of the other parties... showed any strong desire for a prolonged debate on these issues.” He concluded that nuclear policy was the main foreign issue of the election. However, it was not discussed as a technical or a moral question. Rather the matter was viewed as a political issue with implications for Canada’s relationship with its ally and powerful neighbour, the United States.¹³²

Samuel Lubbell, an American analyst of public opinion who spent five weeks in Canada at the time of the 1963 election, studied the population’s attitudes. He concluded that Canadians favoured nuclear weapons by a wide margin. His surveys showed that 60 percent of the voters he interviewed supported nuclear arms for Canada, 24 percent opposed them and 16 percent remained undecided. Lubell found that many who cast their ballots for the Conservative party did not support Diefenbaker’s nuclear policy and believed Canadian forces should be armed with nuclear warheads. He also discovered that many of those who supported Diefenbaker were not even sure of his position or

¹³¹ “Nation Has Insufficient Shelter to Survive A-Raid- Worthington,” *Globe and Mail*, March 22, 1963, 8.

¹³² Ramsay Cook, “Foreign Policy and the Election: An Uncertain Trumpet,” *International Journal* 18:3 (summer 1963): 377, 379.

whether he had one.¹³³ Lubbell concluded that nuclear policy did not determine voter choice. He discovered that the major objection displayed by opponents of nuclear arms was the cost of the weapons, not the increased threat of a nuclear war. Peyton Lyon concluded, "This was an interesting commentary on the impact of the nuclear debate, which had revolved around the morality, effectiveness, and dangers of nuclear weapons." Lyon admitted it was difficult to assess the place of nuclear issues in the election.¹³⁴

Ken Woodsworth, a leader in the CCND, expressed his optimism about the nuclear weapons issue despite the election of the pro-nuclear Liberal Party. He reported on the executive's discussions on the future of the group:

It was the consensus of opinion that the results of the election did not reflect any clear public attitudes on the No Nuclear Arms issue. It was agreed that it might be some months before any final decision was taken by the Government, one way or another. Consequently, it was agreed that C.C.N.D. should continue to press its No Nuclear Arms policy and seek by every means to influence policy in this direction.¹³⁵

Justice Thorson, who became the president of the CCND in February, did not believe the election vindicated Pearson's nuclear policy, "The election has left undecided the issue of nuclear arms.... The new government has no clear mandate to accept nuclear weapons."¹³⁶

Thorson accused the Liberals of deceiving Canadians and distorting the issues:

Apart from the Liberal contention that the national honor of Canada demanded the acquisition of nuclear weapons in order to implement the alleged commitments of the Conservative Government, the moral aspects of the nuclear weapons issue were almost totally disregarded.

¹³³ 30 percent of the voters believed Diefenbaker was on one side of the issue, 40 percent felt he was on the other side and the remaining 30 percent thought he was still deciding on his position on nuclear arms for Canada. Lyon, *Canada in World Affairs*, 89.

¹³⁴ "Mr Pearson's Clear Course to End the Defence Muddle," *Ottawa Citizen*, March 27, 1963, in Lyon, *Canada in World Affairs*, note 27.

¹³⁵ MURA CCND Box 7 Correspondence, File 1 Memos to Branches, 1963, "Memo from Ken Woodsworth, April 26 1963."

¹³⁶ NA CCND, MG 28 I389 Vol 1 File 5 Bulletin no 16, (June 1963); "RCAF H-Bomb Plans Termed Monstrous," *Globe and Mail*, May 27, 1963, 5; NA CCND MG 28 I389 Vol 1, Canvasser Kit, "Hon. Joseph T. Thorson, "A Non-Nuclear Role for Canada, Toronto: CCND, 1963."

He refuted Pearson's argument that the issue was a political rather than a moral one.¹³⁷ A letter signed by Thorson urged CCND members to continue their efforts against nuclear arms, "We are informed by reliable sources that the government considers the question of nuclear arms is no longer a major public issue. They are aided in this appraisal by an almost complete lack of letters on this issue from Canadian voters. The issue has disappeared... It seems that Canadians have resigned themselves to nuclear arms as an almost "inevitable fact."¹³⁸ Coldwell, on the other hand, credited the CCND with making nuclear arms a topic of national debate and changing public attitudes toward the nuclear threat: "The widespread and deep concern of the Canadian people on this issue is apparent to all.... This issue has become more than a political and military question. Its deep moral implications are now clear to many Canadians, and largely as a result of CCND activities."¹³⁹ Canadian communists also argued that public opinion against nuclear weapons had grown by 1963: "The people of our country have become increasingly concerned with the danger of thermonuclear war – a concern for which they have every justification."¹⁴⁰ The election results did not confirm these evaluations.

In June the two superpowers took a first-step toward détente in response to the Cuban crisis. A "hot line" would provide direct communication between the top levels of government. It was hoped that this rapid communication could prevent escalation in a

¹³⁷ "RCAF H-Bomb Plans Termed Monstrous," *Globe and Mail*, May 27, 1963, 5.

¹³⁸ MURA CCND Box 8 CCND Correspondence, File 4 Edmonton Branch, "Letter from Hon. J.T. Thorson to Mrs. Van Stolk, August 10, 1963."

¹³⁹ MURA CCND Box 22 Publications Received, Loose, "Press Release, April 21, 1963."

¹⁴⁰ N. Clarke, "Canada and the Peace Struggle," *Canadian Tribune*, August 19, 1963, in *Questions for Today: two world systems, peaceful coexistence, national liberation, workers vs. monopoly, transition to socialism, documents and commentary on the Communist Party of Canada, 1952-1964*, Communist Party of Canada, (Toronto: Progress Books, 1964): 125.

crisis like that over the location of Soviet missiles in Cuba.¹⁴¹ In early August the United States and the Soviet Union signed a partial test ban treaty which prohibited all nuclear tests except underground explosions. The CCND expressed qualified support for the treaty and argued, "It was no time for Canada to aggravate the international scene by joining the nuclear club, and it was time to urge the governments to take further steps to reduce tension."¹⁴² Over the summer negotiations began to arrange for the transfer of nuclear arms to Canada and American and Canadian officials reached an agreement in mid-August. When parliament resumed in the fall, the NDP introduced a motion of non-confidence. The Pearson government withstood this challenge. Votes from a number of Social Credit members and the absence of some Progressive Conservatives representatives at the time of the vote were important in the Liberal victory.¹⁴³

Disarmers did not concede defeat. During an Easter march against nuclear arms, Feinberg stated, "Whatever the result of the election, I still believe large numbers of Canadian people have profound qualms about installing nuclear weapons on Canadian soil."¹⁴⁴ Kay Macpherson, the new president of the VOW, wrote a memo in which she condemned the Pearson government for its plan to obtain nuclear arms for Canada. She argued that their acquisition would reduce Canada's ability to reduce world tensions.¹⁴⁵ Thorson described the commitment of the CCND to continue its fight against nuclear arms for Canada, "In any event, we intend to urge the Liberal government to take positive and decisive action to reduce international tensions and move closer to world

¹⁴¹ E.L.M. Burns, *Defence in the Nuclear Age: An Introduction for Canadians*, (Toronto: Clarke, Irwin, 1976): 104.

¹⁴² MURA CCND Box 7, File 6 Memos, "CUCND Memo from National Secretariat and Exec and National Members, August 6, 1963, 2."

¹⁴³ Jocelyn Maynard Ghent, "Did he fall or was he pushed?" *The Kennedy Administration and the Collapse of the Diefenbaker Government*, *International History Review* 1:2 (April 1979): 270.

¹⁴⁴ "Placard Bearers of Various Faiths Meet in Silent Easter Vigil," *Globe and Mail*, April 13, 1963, 9.

¹⁴⁵ Monet Chartrand, *Les Québécoises et le mouvement pacifiste*, 92.

disarmament.¹⁴⁶ In early August the CCND urged members to protest the agreement for bringing nuclear weapons to Canada that was before cabinet. It stressed the urgent need for action; members should begin writing letters and prepare to picket outside the homes of members of parliament in case an agreement was signed. The group intended to increase its activities to ensure that if Canada took nuclear arms it would not keep them for long.¹⁴⁷ Woodsworth referred to “a major propaganda campaign being launched by the RCAF Association, using various military spokesmen to press for an early decision to introduce nuclear weapons into Canada” and urged members to work against its efforts.¹⁴⁸ The CUCND lobbied against nuclear arms for Canada in Ottawa in the fall. Members from Dalhousie University, the University of Manitoba, the University of Saskatchewan, University of British Columbia and a number of campuses in Ontario and Quebec met with the leaders of the four parties. Most members of parliament expressed their conviction that Canadians remained apathetic toward nuclear issues.¹⁴⁹ The CdnPC also protested against American nuclear weapons on Canadian soil in the nation’s capital.¹⁵⁰

The leaders of the CCND evaluated the future of their movement in mid 1963:

The four months since the election have witnessed a great falling-off in the activities of the anti-nuclear forces in the country. The majority of the people we have met were greatly discouraged at the election results, and could not decide what this meant for the peace movement in Canada; was this the end, or was it an interval, or was it in fact a new beginning?¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁶ MURA CCND Box 22 Publications Received, Loose, “Press Release, April 21, 1963.”

¹⁴⁷ MURA CCND Box 7, File 6 Memos, From National Secretary to National Executive and members, “Memo, August 6, 1963, 3.”

¹⁴⁸ MURA, CCND Box 7 Correspondence, File 1 Memos to Branches, 1963, “Draft Memo from K. Woodsworth, n.d.”

¹⁴⁹ MURA CCND Box 11, File 1 “CUCND Federal Conference Report, November 1963,” CCND Box 24 Activities, File 1 Sanity, “Sanity 1:9 (December 1963): 1.”

¹⁵⁰ MURA CCND Box 10 Correspondence with Other Canadian Organizations, File 12 Canadian Peace Congress, Peace Letter September 5, 1963; “Letter to Toronto Association of Peace from Eva Sanderson, November 1963.”

¹⁵¹ MURA CCND Box 7, File 6 Memos, From National Secretary to National Executive and members, “Memo, August 6, 1963, 2.”

Over the summer of 1963 Stan Gray, a member of McGill University's CUCND wrote a number of letters to Art Pape, the campaign chairman of the CUCND. Gray wanted to know what the group had planned in the event that the government accepted nuclear arms. Pape betrayed his impatience and outlined the obstacles the movement faced:

First I wish you would start combining some realism with your very apt sense of need for planning. You seem to think it should be possible for a few CCND and CUCND leaders to pull out of their hats all kinds of new power plays at this crucial moment. ... Don't you think it means something that so few votes were cast in a clearly anti-nuclear way? ... In other words, the first phase of a long war has clearly been LOST.¹⁵²

Opponents of nuclear arms struggled to find a direction in the aftermath of the election.

Divisions within Canada's disarmament groups grew more serious. A meeting of the TCND executive, held at the end of May, exposed the tensions between members. Woodsworth pointed out that members of the Committee of 100 viewed themselves as "radicals" and dismissed those in the TCND as "conservative and bourgeois." He alleged that the younger disarmers "tended to act rashly and desperately when they thought the cause was being lost, whereas we [the TCND] were more settled and realistic."¹⁵³ Gary Moffatt explained that the more moderate, "conservative" segment abandoned the peace campaign.¹⁵⁴ Leaders of the CCND recognized a split within the group, "A number of members of the Committee are becoming increasingly disenchanted with the government's declared policy, and these people are becoming increasingly interested in finding alternative approaches to the Cold War."¹⁵⁵

¹⁵² MURA CCND Box 9 Affiliates- CUCND, YCND, File 9 McGill CUCND, Letters to Art Pape from Stan Gray, May 27, 1963; June 4, 1963, "Letter from Pape to Gray, August 23, 1963."

¹⁵³ MURA CCND Box 22 Publications Received, Loose, "Minutes of TCND Exec. Meeting, May 29, 1963, 2."

¹⁵⁴ Moffatt, *History of the Canadian Peace Movement*, 138, 118.

¹⁵⁵ MURA CCND Box 7, File 6 Memos, From National Secretary to National Executive and members, "Memo, August 6, 1963, 3."

Representatives of the Toronto Committee for Nuclear Disarmament, the Toronto Committee of 100 and the Friends Service Committee met with James Endicott, who remained the chairman of the Canadian Peace Congress, to discuss the future of anti-nuclear activities. Endicott referred to Pearson's decision to accept nuclear arms, saying, "We have suffered a painful tactical defeat – a serious one.... The defeat can't be reversed but it can be made unpopular in the next year or two." The representatives did not reach a decision but agreed they would publicize their aims and organize a general strike across the country.¹⁵⁶ Communists in Toronto also continued to work against the acceptance of nuclear arms. A May Day rally proclaimed that Pearson did not have the support of the people for his nuclear plans.¹⁵⁷

Nuclear warheads arrived on Canadian soil, without protest from Canadians, by the end of 1963. The *Canadian Annual Review* described this event, "Their arrival, which marked the closing of the stormiest debate about defence hardware in Canadian history, occasioned no popular demonstration." *Time* concluded that "the once passionate debate over nuclear arms seemed so long ago and far away that when a U.S. C-54 bearing the first warheads slipped into North Bay on New Year's Eve, hardly anyone took notice."¹⁵⁸

Civil defence plans, given priority by Diefenbaker, declined under the new prime minister.¹⁵⁹ Clive Baxter pointed to the limited interest Canadians showed in these efforts, "If the Berlin Wall and the Cuban blockade couldn't get the Canadian public digging in, what hope is there now?" According to those in charge of the program at least

¹⁵⁶ "Ban-Bombers Seek Methods To Win Friends," *Globe and Mail*, May 24, 1963, 5.

¹⁵⁷ "PM Not Backed On Arms Issue, Communists Say," *Globe and Mail*, May 2, 1963, 41.

¹⁵⁸ "Ringing Out the Old," *Time*, (Canadian Edition) January 10, 1964, 9.

¹⁵⁹ Responsibility for civil defence and emergency measures moved from the Privy Council Office to the Department of Defence Production. Emergency Preparedness Canada – Public Information/ Resources, http://www.epc-pcc.gc.ca/publicinfo/guides_reports/history/his_chapt2.html

2500 fallout shelters had been built across the country. This number was considered to be greatly exaggerated. Even if it was not, though, less than 20 000 Canadians could have expected to find protection in the event of a nuclear attack.¹⁶⁰ The decline of the civil defence organization began in 1963 with its move from the PCO to the Department of Defence Production. The program's focus switched from wartime to peacetime disasters. In 1964 the Special Committee on Defence Report suggested that military defence should come before civilian protection: "The Committee concurs that the resources that would be required for blast protection of the population are better employed in military defence where they can contribute to the deterrent to war."¹⁶¹ The parliamentary defence committee concluded that civil defence efforts had failed, "Much of the publicity falls on deaf ears. Most of the pamphlets wind up in the wastebasket. The public is generally not interested in times of peace. These facts must be recognized." An editorial published in *Maclean's* magazine in 1964 explained that the hysteria about shelters shown during cold war crises like Berlin and Cuba had disappeared: "For most people have now realized that a fallout shelter is simply a prematurely dug grave, a hole to be buried a live in, no more effective against H-bombs than a silk umbrella against machine-gun bullets." *Maclean's* called on the government to cancel the EMO completely and put the five million dollars spent to maintain the program on other projects such as university scholarships. It concluded, "All financial considerations aside, if this civil-defense [sic] nonsense does anything, it does harm, not good, by fostering false feelings of security and by discouraging Canadians from accepting the reality that the only defense against nuclear war is to keep it from starting." The government program, it concluded, had

¹⁶⁰ Clive Baxter, "Despite apathy, civil defence thrives and expands," *Financial Post*, October 19, 1963, 51.

¹⁶¹ "Special Committee on Defence Report, Presented in the House of Commons, 1st October, 1964," *EMO National Digest*, 1964, 21.

fooled more gullible Canadians into thinking they “would be able to sit out a nuclear war in comfortable reinforced cellars, happily sipping canned water and nibbling emergency rations. This is a dangerous illusion.”¹⁶²

In 1964 the CUCND changed its name to the Student Union for Peace Action, (SUPA). Owram explained the shift, “The single-issue organization, dominated by traditions of religious concern and moralism, had evolved into a youth-based, New Left umbrella organization.”¹⁶³ The new group had less than 500 members.¹⁶⁴ The young protestors were influenced by the civil rights movement in the United States. During the summer of 1964 a handful of anti-nuclear demonstrators, who belonged to SUPA and the SCM, staged non-violent civil disobedience protests at La Macaza. The group borrowed tactics of non-violence from civil rights protestors and tried to block entrance to the base over Labour Day weekend by lying down in front of the gate. They hoped to start a non-violent revolution by breaking the law. Like American civil rights protestors, they sang “We Shall Overcome.”¹⁶⁵ Ian Gentles, the president of the CUCND, explained that opposition to the base in Quebec was stronger than in Ontario because of the province’s traditional opposition toward war and Quebec nationalism.¹⁶⁶ Jacques Larue-Langlois described the response that these demonstrations received and pointed to the unique concerns of nuclear disarmament supporters in Quebec:

¹⁶² “Let’s stop kidding ourselves about civil defense,” *Maclean’s*, November 2, 1964, 4.

¹⁶³ Doug, Owram, *Born at the Right Time: A History of the Baby Boom Generation*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997): 220.

¹⁶⁴ Moffatt, *History of the Canadian Peace Movement*, 150.

¹⁶⁵ David Lewis Stein, “The Younger Generation: Banning the bomb is no longer enough- now they want to change the world that created it,” *Maclean’s*, June 20, 1964, 1.

¹⁶⁶ The constituents of the riding in which La Macaza was located elected an anti-nuclear member of parliament. The local press, voluntary associations, trade and agricultural unions opposed the bases. Saywell, ed, *Canadian Annual Review*, (1964): 212-3. MURA CUCND-SUPA Box 7, File 17 “Ian Gentles, An Argument for Civil Disobedience at La Macaza, September 7, 1964.”

But it seemed clear to us that the enthusiasm was not there and that the Manifestants felt it was unsatisfactory and useless to demonstrate against a federal installation and towards federal authorities that had so cheaply sold part of Canada's sovereignty, not to say the whole of Canada's military sovereignty to the U.S.A., in exchange for the financial backing of political campaigns past and future. Quebecs[sic], having always been deeply concerned with peace, felt that once again they were being cheated of their right.¹⁶⁷

However, out of the original group of 18 protestors, just 3 were French Canadians.¹⁶⁸ The CUCND, which began with the goal of keeping nuclear weapons out of Canada, had been replaced by a group that "intended to change people's attitudes toward war by changing the institutions that produced those ideas." Despite his disillusionment following the election, Art Pape, became active in SUPA and worked for the peace movement full-time. He concluded, "We have to make a social revolution."¹⁶⁹

Quebec's MDN also underwent changes in the aftermath of Canada's nuclear election. It organized a demonstration at Easter in 1964 which drew a crowd of 500 protestors. However, the group quickly fell into decline. Its leaders concluded that demonstrations were no longer appropriate. They urged the proponents of nuclear disarmament to direct their efforts into other organizations.¹⁷⁰ In the summer of 1963 the VOW of Quebec joined with the Confédération des Syndicats Nationaux, the Fédération des Travailleurs du Québec, L'Union Catholique des Cultivateurs and the Mouvement pour le Désarmement Nucléaire et la Paix to oppose nuclear arms for Canada. These groups issued a joint declaration that condemned the Pearson government for acting in an

¹⁶⁷ MURA CCND Box 7, File 14 CUCND Declaration February 1963, "Address by Jacques Larue-Langlois- Mouvement pour le desarmement nucleaire et la paix CND conference in Montreal, October 25, 1963."

¹⁶⁸ David Lewis Stein, "The peaceniks go to La Macaza," *Maclean's*, August 8, 1964, 36.

¹⁶⁹ Stein, "The Younger Generation," *Maclean's*, June 20, 1964, 1.

¹⁷⁰ "La Macaza," *La Presse*, January 8, 1965, 5.

undemocratic manner. Its decision to take nuclear warheads should involve consultation and the issue should be debated in Parliament.¹⁷¹

The VOW turned to a less controversial topic in the fall of 1963 and delivered a brief on radiation hazards to the Prime Minister. However, many members of parliament expressed suspicion that the group was using this issue to gain entrance in order to address their main preoccupation, the nuclear arms issue.¹⁷² At its 1964 annual meeting, the group passed a resolution to ask the government to remove the Bomarc bases from Canada and to withdraw its civil defence publications because fallout shelters lulled the population into a false sense of security.¹⁷³ However, the group redirected its efforts from nuclear issues to oppose the war in Vietnam. Its members set up a campaign to knit clothing for Vietnamese children, protested Canadian support of the American war effort and its use of nerve gas, defoliants, pellet bombs and napalm in the conflict and supported American draft 'resisters.'¹⁷⁴ The Toronto Committee for Nuclear Disarmament sponsored a lecture by Dr. Benjamin Spock in 1964. Rabbi Feinberg and Pierre Berton attended the rally. Dr. Spock urged the crowd against teaching children an alarmist view of Communist countries. He pointed out that capitalists also annexed their neighbours and that parents should encourage their children to be active in the peace movement.¹⁷⁵ However, after a trip to Hanoi, Rabbi Feinberg's interests also shifted to the war in

¹⁷¹ NA VOW MG 28 I 218 Vol 23, File 10, "Declaration Conjointe." Montreal, le 22 juillet 1963.

¹⁷² The reception the delegation received "ranged from polite tolerance to hostility." Voice of Women, *Newsletter*, vol. 29-30 (November 1963): 4.

¹⁷³ NA MG 28 I 218 vol 7, file 24, VOW, 'Radiation – And Your Children,' 1963;" VOW, *Newsletter*, 1964, 20-1, Macpherson and Sears, "The Voice of Women," In *Women in the Canadian Mosaic*, ed. Gwen Matheson, 82-3.

¹⁷⁴ NA MG 28 I 218 VOW, Vol 7, File 10 VOW Briefs and Statements 1963, "Fallout Monitoring in Canada, Ursula Franklin, June 14, 1963."; Macpherson and Sears, "The Voice of Women," In *Women in the Canadian Mosaic*, ed. Gwen Matheson, 79-80.

¹⁷⁵ MURA CCND Box 24 Activities, File 1, *Sanity*, Clipping, "Take Unalarmist View: Spock," May 21, 1964."

Vietnam. The TCD ceased its activities in 1965 while most branches of the CCND were inactive by that year as well.¹⁷⁶

Polls showed that in 1963 15 percent of Canadians chose nuclear weapons as the greatest problem they faced. By the end of 1965, a poll on the same topic showed “no one even mentions nuclear weapons.” Economic concerns remained the primary concern of Canadians.¹⁷⁷ In the aftermath of the Cuban crisis, Pearson’s support of Canada’s alliance obligations and his discussion of power won public support. Neither the increased threat of direct Soviet attacks on Canadian targets nor the possible installation of nuclear warheads on Canadian soil moved the public to view nuclear issues as a priority. They were not stirred by Diefenbaker’s warnings that four million Canadians, one quarter of the entire population, could die in a nuclear war if Canada obtained nuclear warheads. Both leaders suffered accusations that they turned the issue into a political matter and cared more about attracting votes than war *or* peace. One side focused on the high cost of a nuclear war while the other side downplayed the peril to Canadian lives. Peyton Lyon explained that Canada’s cabinet ministers were not the only ones divided over the dual threats of the cold war: “Canadians differ widely about the seriousness of the challenges to peace and freedom; we do not even agree if the primary source of danger is Soviet imperialism or the nuclear arms race itself.”¹⁷⁸ By early 1963 polls showed that few worried about the threat. Interest in civil defence proved to be temporary. Even in the midst of the standoff over the location of Soviet missiles in Cuba nuclear disarmers pointed to the apathy of Canadians toward their survival in a nuclear

¹⁷⁶ Maurice Tugwell, *Peace with Freedom*, (Toronto: Key Porter Books, 1988): 48; Moffatt, *History of the Canadian Peace Movement*, 96-7.

¹⁷⁷ Lyon, *Canada in World Affairs, 1961-3*, note 2, 78, 213; “Unemployment Remains Canada’s Major Worry,” *Ottawa Citizen*, January 4, 1966.

¹⁷⁸ Lyon, *The Policy Question*, 43.

war.¹⁷⁹ The emergency confirmed they were fighting a losing battle. It was only a question of time before the new Canadian government obtained nuclear warheads. The *Canadian Annual Review* concluded, “Most Canadians appeared relieved that the issue had been settled and that their country was back in good standing with its major allies.”¹⁸⁰ The location of nuclear warheads of their soil did not increase their feelings of insecurity or contribute to fears about nuclear war.

¹⁷⁹ MURA CCND Box 9 Affiliates – CUCND, YCND, File 19 CUCND- OGANW publications, “October 18, 1962.”

¹⁸⁰ Saywell, ed. *Canadian Annual Review*, (1964): 213.

CONCLUSION

This thesis examines the growth and development of the nuclear debate in Canada from 1957 to 1963. After 1945 Canada's geographic position between two nuclear-armed superpowers increased the probability that its territory and population would become targets in the next war. The discussion of nuclear issues grew in the late fifties and early sixties. Prime Minister John Diefenbaker outlined the high cost of a third world war for Canada. He forecast that it could become the battlefield for a nuclear conflict and estimated that millions of Canadians could lose their lives. He took steps to strengthen Canada's defence and to provide the nation with security from both the communist and the nuclear perils. His government placed higher priority on civil defence plans. Diefenbaker reassured the population that, while the cost of an attack would be high, there were steps they could take to increase their chances of survival. Concern about the growing risk of war and the consequences of such a conflict grew beyond the Conservative government.

Politicians from other parties, civil defence planners, members of the anti-nuclear movement and a number of organizations evaluated the risk of a nuclear attack on Canada. These groups estimated the chances for survival and proposed a variety of solutions designed to reduce the insecurity of the country. This dissertation investigates the attempts of politicians, civil defence authorities and nuclear disarmers to confront the issue of nuclear war. They discussed the consequences of a nuclear war for the nation and estimated what steps could protect Canadians. They debated Canada's ties with the United States and its role in the world. They met with difficulties when they called on Canadians to act in response to these complex issues. While they urged the public to take the threat to their survival seriously, they did not succeed. Even though the nation faced

an unprecedented threat, most Canadians did not take action either in preparation for a nuclear attack or in protest against nuclear weapons.

Before 1957 the Liberal government led by Louis St. Laurent recognized the dual threat posed by communism and nuclear weapons. It took steps to defend Canada, Europe and Asia and provided the public with warnings about the high cost of a nuclear conflict. St. Laurent committed Canada to the principle of collective security. For the first time Canada joined a military alliance in peacetime, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). It contributed to the military effort to contain the spread of communism in Korea and, with the United States, increased efforts in the area of continental defence. Together the two nations built a network of radar lines across the continent to provide warning of Soviet bomber attacks. Brooke Claxton, the minister of national defence, tried to put the public at ease by informing them that the next war would be fought primarily in Europe.¹ However, the government took the threat of attack on Canada seriously enough to set up a civil defence program to protect the population.

The nuclear threat escalated with the development of thermonuclear weapons in the early fifties. Paul Martin, who as the Minister of National Health and Welfare was in charge of civil defence planning, warned Canadians that their families, homes and communities were no longer immune. They faced the threat of direct enemy attack.² When the Americans tested the new weapon in 1954 their experiments demonstrated its power. The potent radioactive fallout the explosions produced meant that peacetime proved to be as dangerous as times of war. Dr. O.M. Solandt offered a graphic account of

¹ Joseph Jockel, *No Boundaries Upstairs: Canada, the United States, and the origins of North American air defence, 1945-1958*, (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1987): 41; James Eayrs, *In Defence of Canada*. Vol. 3, *Peacemaking and Deterrence*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972): 100.

² *Civil Defence Bulletin*, December 1953, 1-2.

the devastation Canadians could expect to face if the country was involved in a thermonuclear war. The St. Laurent government, for the most part, continued to reassure the public. Lester Pearson, the Secretary of State for External Affairs, announced that only a handful would survive a thermonuclear war. However, he believed that the high costs of such a conflict ensured that neither Soviet nor American leaders would be foolish enough to start one.³ The government expressed its faith in both of its nuclear allies to conduct their nuclear tests in a responsible manner. The Liberal government strove to protect Canadians by contributing to collective security and preparing the home front for a possible attack. Canadians began to learn about the high cost of a nuclear war from politicians, civil defence officials and scientists in the mid fifties. It reassured the public that the high costs of a war offered security. The nuclear deterrent reduced the risk of war and preserved peace.

Before 1957 the nuclear debate was limited to a narrow segment of Canadians. A small group, restricted largely to the left-wing, spoke out against nuclear weapons in this period. The CCF demanded an end to nuclear tests and supported research into the effects of radiation. From the start of the nuclear age, Canadian communists warned their fellow citizens that Canada would become a nuclear battlefield and the population its victims. They believed nuclear weapons threatened Canada's security and put the lives of Canadians in jeopardy.⁴ Both the Canadian Peace Congress and the Communist Party of Canada claimed that the Soviet Union wanted peace and it was the United States that increased the threat of war. Pacifists in the Fellowship of Reconciliation also spoke out

³ "H-Bomb Bar to War, Says Pearson," *Montreal Star*, May 16, 1957, 17.

⁴ Tim Buck, *Canada: The Communist Viewpoint*, (Toronto: Progress Books, 1948): 115-116; Tim Buck, *For Peace, Progress, Socialism*, Opening Address of LPP 2nd National Convention, Toronto, June 1-5, 1946, (Toronto: Progress Books, 1946): 8.

against the nuclear arms race. They were in the minority when they condemned the use of the atomic bomb against Japan in August 1945. They continued to call for the abolition of the bomb throughout this period. Politicians from Canada's major parties condemned opponents of nuclear weapons for using the peace campaign as a technique to gain support for the Soviet Union.⁵ Criticism of nuclear weapons and warnings about the nuclear threat originated largely from those on the left wing of the political spectrum. It did not draw support from mainstream Canadian society before the late 1950s.

John Diefenbaker appealed to Canadian voters with his anti-communist message and his national vision and formed the government in 1957. He made a number of decisions that, by 1959, accelerated the nuclear debate in Canada. He committed Canadian forces to nuclear weapons systems, pledged Canadian support to disarmament and increased his government's focus on civil defence. In 1960 Diefenbaker and Pearson entered a contest over what posed the biggest threat of the cold war, communism or nuclear war. They disputed whether it would be better to be dead or red.⁶ Elected officials debated the dual threats of the cold war and attempted to cope with the difficult choices involved in providing security for the population.

By the late fifties, concerned Canadians spoke out on nuclear issues and formed anti-nuclear groups. Troubled about the risks associated with radiation from both peacetime and military sources they joined together to support education into this hazard. The nuclear disarmament movement emerged on university campuses. Academics, journalists, and religious leaders and Canadian women supported disarmament efforts. They signed letters and petitions delivered to government officials and participated in

⁵ Lester Pearson, House of Commons *Debates*, March 3, 1950, 427; May 12, 1952, 1201; George Drew, House of Commons *Debates*, May 2, 1950, 2079.

⁶ *Time*, (Canadian Edition) November 7, 1960, 15.

lobbies and marches. Prominent Canadians endorsed the nuclear disarmament cause. Disarmers quickly moved from their general concern for peace, disarmament and radiation hazards to confront the highly politicized issue of nuclear arms for Canada's armed forces at home and abroad. While this topic mobilized the efforts of Canada's anti-nuclear activists it also contributed to divisions within the movement. Anxious about their security, Canadians found it difficult to reach consensus on nuclear issues. The CCCRH decided that it would not oppose nuclear arms for Canada. It agreed to speak out against nuclear tests but its members could not agree to support a policy that was considered unpopular among the population because it might weaken Canada's defence against an aggressive enemy.⁷

The issue of the nation's participation in military alliances and its relationship with the United States also moved a segment of Canadians, dominated by journalists, religious leaders, professors, and segments of the disarmament movement, to speak out. They demanded that Canada withdraw from NATO and NORAD and abandon its plans for a nuclear defence. Neutralists alleged that Canada's close defence ties to the United States exposed the nation and its population to greater risks of nuclear annihilation.⁸ Canada's elected leaders, disarmers and organizations like unions and veterans' associations debated neutralism and evaluated whether the nation found greater security under the umbrella of these alliances or faced a larger threat because of its support of the United States and the nuclear deterrent. Canada's unions, churches, community

⁷ MURA CCND Box 8 Edmonton Branch Files, File 8 Edmonton CND Correspondence with Montreal CND, "Letter from Mary Van Stolk to Frank Scott, August 2, 1960."

⁸ J.M. Minifie, *Peacemaker or Powder-Monkey: Canada's Role in a Revolutionary World*, (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1960): 32; MURA CCND Box 9 Affiliates – CUCND, YCND, File 2, CUCND Correspondence, pamphlet, "Tim Buck, 'Neutrality Now!'" Published by the Communist Party of Canada, July 1960."

organizations, student groups, veterans' associations and women's groups all weighed in on the threat to the nation's security. By the late fifties and early sixties, politicians in all three major parties as well as members of the nuclear disarmament movement and a wide range of organizations and associations presented ideas about the risks Canada faced in the cold war. Canadian pacifists and those on the left-wing continued to speak out on nuclear topics. Their views were similar to many of those outlined by Canada's elected leaders and new disarmament movement. Communists condemned Canada's contribution to collective security, its military alliances and its plans to obtain nuclear weapons for its armed forces at home and abroad. They demanded that Canada act independently of the United States. By the late fifties Canadians had a choice between mainstream or more radical interpretations of the nuclear threat.

The nuclear debate in Canada peaked in these years as a result of a combination of domestic and external factors. The government's defence decisions added urgency to the debate. The acquisition of weapon systems designed to carry nuclear warheads meant that Canadian armed forces would be directly involved with nuclear arms for the first time. Nuclear arms acquisition became the central issue in Canada's debate over security and the nuclear threat. The issue remained unresolved from the time of Diefenbaker's decision to acquire the Bomarc in 1959 until his defeat in 1963. At first the delays could be explained by the fact that it took time to build the two missile sites. The government explained that it would initiate negotiations with the United States required for the transfer of the arms when they were needed. By the fall of 1960, however, Diefenbaker believed that public opinion did not support nuclear warheads in the hands of Canada's armed forces. In addition to the pressure put on his government by the emerging anti-nuclear movement, support for his government's nuclear policy appeared to be waning.

In the summer of 1960, the Liberal party announced it opposed nuclear arms for Canada. The CCF proclaimed that the government's position on nuclear weapons increased the threat to Canadians. *Maclean's* magazine spoke out against the Bomarc. Diefenbaker announced a shift in his government's policy in November 1960. He promised that his government would not take nuclear weapons as long as progress toward disarmament continued. J.L. Granatstein examined Diefenbaker's highs and lows as Canada's thirteenth prime minister. He explained that growing anti-nuclear sentiment was responsible for his reversal on nuclear arms:

One day he was for taking the warheads, the next for not, and the key factor in his indecisiveness seemed to be his mail. Canadians had suddenly realized that nuclear weapons were dangerous, peace groups and ordinary citizens deluged the Chief with letters and petitions.⁹

In the meantime, the debate over warheads grew within his Cabinet and the government's internal divisions over defence policy became public. While Howard Green dedicated Canada's efforts to promote disarmament and believed that a nuclear-armed Canada would threaten these hopes, Douglas Harkness disagreed. He believed that Soviet aggression posed a bigger threat to Canada's security than nuclear weapons and pushed for the immediate acquisition of nuclear arms by Canada. The members of the Diefenbaker government did not agree how best to protect Canada. The complex issues of defence in the nuclear age resulted in a confused, contradictory and indecisive policy by the government elected to provide the nation with security.

The discussion of nuclear issues also grew as a result of Canada's closer defence ties with the United States. Politicians and the public debated whether this relationship increased Canada's security or actually reduced its sovereignty. The Diefenbaker

⁹ J.L. Granatstein, "Hail to the Chief: The Incomparable Campaigner Who Squandered a Historic Majority," *Policy Options* (June-July 2003): 62.

government adopted a strong stand against communism and it challenged the actions of Nikita Khrushchev. It signed the NORAD agreement in 1957 and committed Canada to a joint effort in continental defence. Diefenbaker had a close relationship with President Eisenhower and supported the United States in its conflicts with the Soviet premier over the U2 incident and the collapse of the Paris Summit in 1960. However, this relationship changed when John F. Kennedy became the American president in November 1960. Diefenbaker's anti-Americanism began to match his anti-communism. Diefenbaker's antipathy for the new American leader compounded his indecision and delays on the nuclear arms issue. Support for the campaign against nuclear arms for Canada continued to grow. The CCCRH adopted a stand against nuclear arms because it believed that public opinion had shifted to oppose nuclear arms. It changed its name to the CCND to reflect its new focus. The *Globe and Mail*, *Toronto Star*, CNTU, the CLC and a group of researchers at Chalk River opposed nuclear arms for Canada. Opinion polls, on the other hand, consistently demonstrated that a majority of Canadians supported nuclear warheads for the armed forces both at home and abroad. Diefenbaker's antipathy for Kennedy combined with his reading of public opinion to shape his approach to the nuclear weapons issue. By 1962 Diefenbaker publicly criticized Kennedy's decision to resume nuclear tests and hesitated in his support for the American action to prevent the delivery of Soviet military goods to Cuba during the missile crisis in October.

In the period following the Second World War, Canada and the United States developed closer economic, military and cultural ties. American influence grew as Britain's control over its former colony declined. Canadian nationalism, Owsen explained, emerged beginning in the mid fifties but did not become a powerful force. He argued that in the fifties and early sixties Canadians actually wished to be more like their

prosperous American neighbours. He concluded that politicians confronted the issue of nationalism but did so reluctantly, "The question of how to preserve Canadian sovereignty in the face of Canada's powerful neighbour had been an intermittent concern since the later 1950s." Owram asserted that anti-Americanism became stronger beginning in 1963.¹⁰ The response to nuclear issues cannot be separated from an evaluation of attitudes towards Canada's growing ties with the United States.

External events also moved Canadians to discuss nuclear topics to a greater degree. Cold war tensions grew and Canadian officials recognized the real possibility that a nuclear war might be unavoidable. The public received warnings about the risk of nuclear war each time cold war tensions escalated. The government reevaluated its defence and civil defence plans. Civil defence efforts received more attention during these periods. Canada Post and department stores like Simpson's and Eaton's introduced plans and products designed to protect the public in the event of an attack at the time of the Berlin crisis. The location of Soviet offensive weapons on the island of Cuba represented a direct threat to North America. Many Canadians prepared for a nuclear conflict in late October, 1962. The nuclear weapons issue received greater attention in the aftermath of the crisis. However, the brush with war was largely responsible for the end of the nuclear debate in Canada. A survey conducted by the Canadian Peace Research Institute just after the crisis over Cuba concluded that a majority of Canadians supported the acquisition of nuclear arms.¹¹ The Prime Minister's leadership during the crisis was questioned. Not only had Canadian defence systems been unarmed but its top

¹⁰ Doug Owram, *Born at the Right Time: A History of the Baby Boom Generation*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997); 300, 170.

¹¹ John Paul and Jerome Laulicht, *In Your Opinion: leaders' and voters' attitudes on defence and disarmament*, vol 1, (Clarkson, ON: CPRI, 1963): 84.

official had been indecisive and hesitant. He did not provide security for Canadians or support Canada's main ally. Instead, he informed them that Canada's growing defence ties with the United States as well as plans to place nuclear warheads on Canadian soil might actually increase the threat to the nation. Diefenbaker continued to promise that he would never accept nuclear arms in peacetime. Instead, he worked to find a solution that would satisfy Canada's increasingly impatient ally. He first suggested that the warheads could be stored just south of the border and moved to Canada when war appeared imminent. He then proposed that the arms might be located in Canada but that a missing part, needed to make the arms operational, could be left in the United States and shipped to the Bomarc sites in an emergency.

Diefenbaker's shifting and inconsistent stand on nuclear weapons and the source of the threat to Canada's safety, ended with a complete reversal by 1963. Diefenbaker, well-known for his anti-communist rhetoric, battled with Pearson, Canada's Nobel Peace Prize winner, over the issue of security in the cold war. By 1963 the two effectively switched sides. Diefenbaker rejected nuclear weapons for the nation's armed forces as a threat to Canadian lives while Pearson based his support of the warheads on his belief that power was necessary to preserve peace.¹² Diefenbaker warned the public that the defence systems he had provided for Canada exposed the population to high risks. Pearson also did an about-face and adopted a pro-nuclear stand in early 1963. He demanded that Canada fulfill its commitment to its allies. In the aftermath of the crisis over Berlin in 1961 and Cuba in 1962 Canadians learned that Canada's defence system was ineffective and unarmed. Cold war emergencies gradually persuaded Canadians that they needed to

¹² *Time*, (Canadian Edition) November 7, 1960, 15; John G. Diefenbaker, October 22, 1960, in *The Wit and Wisdom of John Diefenbaker*, ed. John A. Munro (Edmonton: Hurtig, 1982.): 24.

support their American ally and provide a strong defence, even if it involved nuclear warheads, in order to achieve security against the Soviet Union.

Pearson insisted, throughout the 1963 election campaign, that the decision to obtain nuclear warheads for Canadian forces was neither an emotional nor a moral issue. The Liberal leader, who had not outlined the consequences of nuclear attack for Canada even when he opposed nuclear arms from August 1960 to January 1963, continued to avoid the discussion of the fate of Canadians in a nuclear conflict. Instead he stressed that it should live up to its commitments in order to ensure security in the cold war world. He talked of commitments, obligations and the need for power. He did, however, imply that Canada faced a bigger threat if the alliances to which it belonged were not strong. Its security would be undermined if it did not meet its obligations. He argued that power was necessary to insure peace. His support for a strong stand matched the approach of John Kennedy to the crisis over the location of Soviet missiles in Cuba. In the weeks after the erection of the Berlin Wall, Diefenbaker explained that his government's decision on nuclear weapons acquisition would be based solely on "national security."¹³ By early 1963, however, Diefenbaker offered graphic accounts of the fate of Canadians who would become a "burnt sacrifice" in a nuclear conflict. Diefenbaker and Pearson both suffered accusations that they used the threat for political gain. The nuclear disarmament movement, despite its divisions and its failures, appeared to have been successful in so far as it convinced the Prime Minister to reverse his stand on nuclear arms. Diefenbaker's delays and indecision on acquisition, however, appeared to have been motivated as much by sensitivity to the United States as to the growth of an anti-nuclear movement in Canada. He had no patience for anti-nuclear lobbies and denied the

¹³ "Commons to Decide Atom Arms Issue," *Montreal Star*, September 20, 1961, 1.

requests of these groups between 1959 and 1963. He was, on the other hand, intent on standing up to John Kennedy. He demonstrated his commitment to Canadian sovereignty in matters of defence by delaying on the nuclear arms issue. In his memoirs he described the nuclear arms issue in terms of anti-Americanism. It was a question of “whether Canada would continue as a sovereign state, or whether Canadian policies would be made in Canada by Canadians or by the United States.”¹⁴ The *Canadian Annual Review* concluded that the public seemed to side with Lester Pearson’s evaluation of the nuclear problem, “Most Canadians appeared relieved that the issue had been settled and that their country was back in good standing with its major allies.” By the end of the next year there were no signs that disarmament had been threatened by Canada’s decision, that the nation’s effectiveness in working for peace had been harmed or that a nuclear war was any more likely to break out. Yet, Canadians, including Pearson, “appeared unenthusiastic about their nuclear role,” the *Canadian Annual Review* concluded.¹⁵

Nuclear disarmers also struggled to define the boundaries of the nuclear debate as well as the nature of nuclear questions. Jo Davis explained the purpose of the VOW soon after its creation, “The VOW is trying to do its bit in making the world into one human family.” The group would not focus on the technical side of nuclear weapons, she explained. Helen Tucker, on the other hand, wanted the VOW to offer concrete proposals for nuclear disarmament.¹⁶ Feinberg offered a sentimental explanation for anti-nuclear activism, “[T]he common people in a democratic country, for whom nuclear war means agony or ashes, are obligated to love of life and their children to study the nuclear threat

¹⁴ Diefenbaker, *One Canada*, vol. 3, *The Tumultuous Years*, 1.

¹⁵ Saywell, ed. *Canadian Annual Review*, 1964, 213.

¹⁶ “What two Canadian groups are doing to wage peace,” *Maclean’s* November 19, 1960, 1.

and to sign up for an end to madness.”¹⁷ Thorson complained that “the moral aspects of the nuclear weapons issue were almost totally disregarded” in the 1963 election campaign. He rejected Pearson’s argument that the issue was political and not moral.¹⁸ Opponents of nuclear weapons insisted that nuclear war was immoral. Some members of the VOW believed that if they did not take a political stand on the nuclear arms issue they would be displaying “a lack of moral courage.”¹⁹ Major-General Macklin insisted that the basis of the arms issue was, in fact, military not moral or political, “The only question to be answered is whether there is any solid military reason for accepting these weapons, and the answer is that there is none.” The Cuban crisis proved that the Americans already had enough deterrent power to force the Soviets to back down.²⁰

Civil defence officials stressed that preparations for a nuclear war were a rational precaution rather than a hysterical response motivated by fear. It was an insurance policy, Diefenbaker explained in the midst of the crisis over Berlin, which any responsible government should take. He added that the acceleration of civil defence planning did not indicate a war was inevitable and should not create panic.²¹ The discussion of the nuclear threat came to focus on competing interpretations of the nature of the problem of security in the cold war. It also centred on the way in which nuclear war was portrayed. Those in charge of civil defence tried to redress criticism that their publicity efforts presented sanitized and unrealistic accounts of nuclear war. Disarmers accused them of portraying it as an extended picnic designed to lull the public into accepting preparations for a nuclear war. In 1962, the government published a new, frank pamphlet with more

¹⁷ “Nuclear Protest Signed by 700,” *Globe and Mail*, June 6, 1961, 5.

¹⁸ “RCAF H-Bomb Plans Termed Monstrous,” *Globe and Mail*, May 27, 1963, 5.

¹⁹ Ball, “History of the Voice of Women,” 480.

²⁰ Letter to the Editor, *Globe and Mail*, January 17, 1963, 6.

²¹ *Time*, (Canadian Edition) September 15, 1961, 19-20.

graphic pictures of victims of nuclear blasts.²² It is not evident that this new approach gained more support for civil defence measures. The nuclear debate focused on the definition of the problem itself. Canadians worked to establish what factors should resolve questions related to nuclear arms, civil defence and survival. In the end the emotional and moral arguments against nuclear arms lost out to the political and military points made in their favour.

While the period from 1957 to 1963 marked the high point of the debate over Canada's security, most Canadians remained indifferent to the nuclear threat. The chance of an attack on Canada increased the public's concern for its safety failed to intensify. Most Canadians did not adopt civil defence measures, join nuclear disarmament groups in large numbers or change the way they voted based on nuclear issues. Opinion polls consistently demonstrated that Canadians did not believe war was likely. They did not worry about nuclear attack. Most of those surveyed responded that, if faced with the choice, they would choose to die in a nuclear conflict rather than surrender to communists. They would rather be dead than red. A poll conducted by the Canadian Peace Research Institute revealed that most believed the cost of a nuclear war for Canada would be extremely high. Most of those surveyed believed that the greater part of the country would not survive such a conflict. They also recognized the personal consequences of an attack and believed their homes and communities would suffer greater damage than other regions in the country. Canadians did not have any illusions about their chances of survival in a nuclear war. An extremely small percentage knew what to do in the event of a nuclear attack. Almost none of those surveyed had adopted

²² Canada, Emergency Measures Organization, *Survival in Likely Target Areas*, Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1962.

any civil defence measures in their own homes.²³ Instead, Canadians consistently expressed support for a strong defence. The bulk of those polled supported the acquisition of nuclear warheads for Canadian forces.

Defence issues did not preoccupy the population as much as other matters. The economy remained the primary concern of Canadians.²⁴ Unlike the hypothetical threat of a nuclear war sometime in the future, everyone shared unease about their ability to pay their next payment toward their mortgage and feared losing their jobs and joining the growing number of unemployed. Few Canadians chose to invest hundreds or even thousands of dollars in a shelter they might not even use. Canadians remained hopeful that war would not touch their lives directly. When surveyed for their views on nuclear issues Canadians demonstrated confidence, rather than insecurity, about nuclear war.

Lotta Dempsey discussed the intersection between cold war tensions and her life:

Like most women, I see the Summit in terms of my own family, my small house and garden, my quiet street and neighbors, who are now all out retraining vines, putting in plants and painting. I cannot but believe that, wherever it is spring, and wherever there is love and beauty and decency, women are trying to do the same thing. And they are greatly afraid.²⁵

Dempsey viewed international events in terms of her own day-to-day existence. For her it was a personal issue and the chances of war had direct repercussions for her family, home and community. Most Canadians, however, did not make this link between cold war tensions and their own lives. In her 1960 novel, *The Torontonians*, Phyllis Brett Young examined the shortcomings of the domestic and material dreams of a young couple. Karen and Rick achieved the home of their dreams, an immaculate

²³ John Paul and Jerome Laulicht, *In Your Opinion: leaders' and voters' attitudes on defence and disarmament*, vol 1, (Clarkson, ON: CPRI, 1963): 84.

²⁴ Peyton Lyon, *Canada in World Affairs, 1961-3*, (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1968): note 2, 78, 213; "Unemployment Remains Canada's Major Worry," *Ottawa Citizen*, January 4, 1966.

²⁵ Lotta Dempsey, "Private Line," *Toronto Daily Star*, May 17, 1960.

lawn and a wide range of household appliances which, in the end, did not save as much time as promised. However, Karen experienced a crisis when she remained numb and unsatisfied by her material success. Young described the young couple as being consumed by their own household world rather than the concerns of the wider world. She wrote, "During that period the house was Karen's life. Everything outside of it receded, became vague and of no particular importance. The cold war was like something she had read about in a book."²⁶ Nuclear war threatened the lives of Canadians and threatened to destroy their families, homes and communities. Nevertheless, like Karen, nuclear issues remained distant from their everyday lives and nuclear war was not perceived as a personal matter.

The results of the federal elections in 1962 and 1963 reveal the limited concern about security. These campaigns took place in the midst of the debate over nuclear weapons for Canada. Canadians cast their votes as tensions between the Soviets and Americans escalated and the risk of war over Berlin and Cuba grew. Nuclear issues were not a priority in either election. The economy dominated the campaign of 1962 even as the government publicized civil defence measures and disarmers protested against the resumption of nuclear testing by the Soviets and Americans. The *Canadian Annual Review* concluded that all candidates were happy to avoid the issue. Even though the two anti-nuclear parties did not win, disarmers viewed Diefenbaker's re-election, with a minority government, as a victory. They tried to remain optimistic. They believed that the public had not given him a mandate to obtain nuclear warheads. Disarmers quickly recognized that nuclear issues would not become the subject of a referendum in the 1963 election either. Economic issues rated higher in surveys of the most important issues

²⁶ Phyllis Brett Young, *The Torontonians: a novel*, (Toronto: Longmans, 1960): 73.

facing Canada. Nuclear issues did not change voting patterns. The NDP did not benefit from its anti-nuclear position and its representation in Parliament remained the same in 1963 as in 1962. Even committed disarmament supporters found it difficult to abandon their partisan political allegiance to vote on the nuclear issue. Groups like the VOW retained their non-partisan principle and did not mobilize behind the only party with a clear-cut anti-nuclear policy. Lester Pearson and the Liberal Party only managed to form a minority government. The shift in Diefenbaker's warnings from the Soviet threat to the danger of aligning too closely with the United States did not appear to change the public's view of nuclear issues.

Groups concerned about the nuclear threat also conceded that Canadians remained unmoved by their pleas to take the risks more seriously. Civil defence boosters admitted their program received limited support from the public. Major-General Worthington believed Canadians were too complacent about their safety; they did not take civil defence measures seriously enough.²⁷ The Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire, a patriotic and patriotic women's group dedicated to supporting Canada's connection to the British Empire, backed the government's civil defence program. Its members concluded, "[T] here is still too much general public apathy as to the necessity for, and value of Civil Defence in time of peace as well as war."²⁸ During the Berlin crisis, the government's accelerated civil defence plans failed to convince Canadians to take steps to survive a nuclear war. Most Canadians did not build fallout shelters and either ignored the government's efforts or viewed them as a joke. Canadians questioned the government's ability to provide protection for the entire country of 18 million people. *Saturday Night*

²⁷ *Time*, (Canadian Edition) June 1, 1953, 48.

²⁸ "I.O.D.E. Urges Civil Defence," *Echoes*, no 217, (Christmas 1954): 24.

magazine explained the importance of the government's shelter program in an editorial: "Shelters, protective against fallout, are the keystone of our survival. They are vital. Without shelters there is no survival, come nuclear war. If Canada had shelters across the nation the bulk of the population would survive a nuclear attack and be able to carry on." The message that shelters would provide refuge from radioactive fallout, the most likely threat to Canadians, rather than a direct hit in a nuclear war did not appear to reach the public. Most seemed to believe that shelters would not work.²⁹ Diefenbaker could not understand the public's apathy toward national survival in the face of an aggressive Soviet Union.³⁰ Just a fraction of Canadian homes were equipped with fallout shelters. Civil defence exercises like Tocsin B demonstrated that preparations to warn residents of Canadian cities of an impending attack were inadequate.

Historians, participants in the nuclear disarmament movement and, even, Prime Minister Diefenbaker concluded that Canada's anti-nuclear forces became a strong lobby in the early 1960s. They have argued that the anti-nuclear lobby succeeded despite the odds it faced and gained access to Canada's leaders and changed policy. Ban-the-bombers provided a contradictory picture of Canadian attitudes to nuclear weapons. On the one hand they took credit for Diefenbaker's delays in taking nuclear arms and believed their efforts were responsible for an increased concern about survival. Helen Tucker pointed to the influence of the VOW in the 1962 election results. M.J. Coldwell believed the CCND convinced Canadians to oppose nuclear arms and pointed to the 1963 election results as proof. At the same time disarmers frequently lamented the apathy and indifference that dominated the public's response to the nuclear threat. Feinberg pointed

²⁹ *Saturday Night*, June 10, 1961, 32.

³⁰ *Time*, (Canadian Edition) November 10, 1961, 13.

out that Canadians were only concerned about survival during periods of international tensions.³¹ Norman Alcock, the founder of the CPRI, pointed to “the great apathy toward nuclear warfare by most persons.”³² Dimitri Roussopolous, the chairman of the Combined Universities Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CUCND) complained that, in the midst of the Soviet nuclear tests in late 1961, “Canada’s youth is silent.”³³ C.B. Macpherson described the attitude toward the nuclear threat in the midst of the Cuban crisis, “No very extensive survey is needed to discover that there is in Canada a fairly wide reaction of apathy.”³⁴ Following the 1963 vote, David Lewis, the federal vice president of the New Democratic Party, assessed his party’s inability to benefit from its anti-nuclear stand during the election of 1963. He explained that it had been difficult to get anyone to listen to the NDP’s message about the nuclear threat. No one seemed to want to think about nuclear war.³⁵

The nuclear disarmament movement in Canada was not a large or successful lobby. It attracted support from a small portion of the entire population and met both internal divisions and external resistance. It did not prevent the arming of Canadian forces, at home or abroad, with nuclear arms. Jo Davis explained that the VOW was “working in an extremely sensitive political area.”³⁶ Even Canada’s political parties and the members of the Diefenbaker cabinet could not reach consensus on this divisive and

³¹ MURA CCND Box 18 Activities, File 1: “3rd Annual Conference, February 26-7, 1962, ‘The Canadian Peace Movement – Its Program Today,’ Keynote Address by Rabbi Abraham Feinberg, February 26, 1962,” “Extremist Pressures Feared by Feinberg,” *Globe and Mail*, February 27, 1962, 4.

³² “VOW Raises Funds to Help Nurse,” *Globe and Mail*, June 17, 1961, 11.

³³ “CUCND Hears Chairman,” *McGill Daily*, October 30, 1961, 1.

³⁴ MURA CCND Box 9 Affiliates – CUCND, YCND, File 19 CUCND- OGANW Publications, “Professor C.B. Macpherson, ‘Between Apathy and Paranoia – The Citizen’s Nuclear Quandary,’ speech for benefit dinner of *Our Generation Against Nuclear War*, University of Toronto, October 18, 1962, 1.”

³⁵ David Lewis, *Peace Center Bulletin*, (Toronto) 1:1 (summer 1963): 3-4 in Gary Moffatt, *History of the Canadian Peace Movement until 1969*, (St. Catharines, ON: Grapevine Press, 1969): 43-4.

³⁶ Ball, “History of the Voice of Women,” 177.

controversial matter. The anti-nuclear cause failed to move Canadians to recognize the threat they faced. Thomas Socknat argued that Canada's peace movement failed every time it was put to the test in the period before 1945. It also failed during the cold war. Even though the cost of war rose for Canadians and directly threatened their families, homes and communities, the peace movement did not achieve its goals of keeping nuclear weapons out of the hands of Canadian forces.

Disarmament groups remained extremely small. They struggled to find and keep members and with so few members they faced real financial constraints. Both the VOW and the CCCRH reported membership at around 5000 individuals. There was often a divergence between the VOW's mailing list and the number of women who paid the two-dollar membership fee. Roussopoulos toured western Canada in late 1962 to assess the state of the CCND. His conclusions were not optimistic. He found that out of the 800 members in the Vancouver branch, only 60 to 80 were active. In Winnipeg, a group of 100 was run by its leader and Calgary's movement was non-existent.³⁷ By the end of 1962 the TCD had over 500 members. Yet, just 50 people attended the group's annual meeting six weeks after the emergency over Cuba.³⁸ McMahon noted that the CCND suffered severe financial difficulties in 1962.³⁹ Rabbi Feinberg pleaded with the public to contribute to his organization, which was "struggling on a financial shoe-string," rather than build a fallout shelter. In 1961, Helen Tucker reported that inadequate funding was the Voice of Women's main problem. By the following year the group's described its "near-desperate financial situation." The group survived largely on money raised from

³⁷ MURA CCND Box 9 CUCND, YCND, File 17 OGANW – Correspondence, "Report to CCND Executive Committee by Dimitrios Roussopoulos, CUCND Chairman, Canadian Tour, November 18-December 3, 1962."

³⁸ "Free Vote Urged on Acquisition of A-Weapons," *Globe and Mail*, December 7, 1962: 5.

³⁹ Patricia McMahon, "The Politics of Canada's Nuclear Policy, 1957-1963" (Ph.D. diss., University of Toronto, 1999): 271.

membership fees. It organized theatre and coffee parties, teas, auctions and bazaars. Members published cookbooks and greeting cards, canvassed communities and even donated their baby bonus cheques. While the VOW asked Toronto's city council for a grant of 10 000 dollars, it received just 1000 dollars.⁴⁰

The CUCND claimed to have a total of seven thousand members. Yet, the Toronto CUCND, its largest branch, had just two hundred members.⁴¹ Polls taken at Canada's two largest universities showed that most students did not support the group. The nuclear disarmament pins worn by students belied the real weakness of the organization.⁴² By the fall of 1963, the CUCND at Carleton University in Ottawa had just 30 members.⁴³ Doug Owrap confirmed that the CUCND's membership was never large. He argued that its significance, however, extended beyond its size. Its members, for the first time, questioned American cold war policies.⁴⁴ In 1960 Canada's main pacifist group, the Fellowship of Reconciliation, had 800 members. By 1966 that number had dropped to just over 200.⁴⁵ A number of committed Canadians joined the nuclear disarmament movement out of genuine concern about nuclear war. They devoted their time and energy to the cause and some, like Dr. Alcock and his family, made financial

⁴⁰ NA Feinberg, MG 31 F9 Vol 4 TCD, Rabbi Abraham Feinberg, "Nuclear War, Disarmament and the Bomb: A Challenge to Labour, for International Union of Electrical Radio and Machine Workers Convention, Toronto, October 28, 1960, 7-8." Voice of Women, *Newsletter*, no. 9-10, March 15, 1961, 46-47; no. 27, November 15, 1962, 31; Kay Macpherson and Meg Sears. "Voice of Women: A History," in *Women in the Canadian Mosaic*, ed. Gwen Matheson (Toronto: Peter Martin Associates, 1976): 73; "Voice of Women Asks \$10, 000," *Toronto Daily Star*, February 17, 1961, 25; "Committee Approves \$51, 000 in 19 Grants," *Toronto Daily Star*, March 3, 1961, 29.

⁴¹ MURA CUCND, Box 7, File 17 Pamphlets, "CUCND, *Is the CUCND Communist Run?* n.d."

⁴² "Students Vote on Nuclear Weapons," *McGill Daily*, October 23, 1961, 5; "Results of Varsity Nuclear Weapons Pool [sic]," *McGill Daily*, November 3, 1961, 6.

⁴³ MURA CUCND, Box 9, File 7, "Carleton CUCND *Newsletter* 2:1 (October 8, 1963)."

⁴⁴ Owrap, *Born at the Right Time*, 218.

⁴⁵ Nancy Knickerbocker, *No plaster saint: the life of Mildred Osterhout Fahrni, 1900-1992*, (Vancouver: Talonbooks, 2001): 234, 214.

sacrifices to work for peace.⁴⁶ Nevertheless, the anti-nuclear campaign never attracted widespread support.

The cause appealed to middle class, educated and socially active individuals who lived in Canada's major cities. Prominent French Canadian politicians, journalists, newspaper editors and union leaders opposed nuclear arms. Jean Marchand, Pierre Trudeau and André Laurendeau supported the anti-nuclear cause. French and English speaking members of the VOW travelled from Montreal to Ottawa for highly publicized meetings with Diefenbaker. Reports claimed that the French speaking members of the delegation shouted and demanded a government representative who could converse with them in their native tongue. Leon Balcer, the sole Cabinet member from Quebec, faced the unenviable task of discussing nuclear issues with the agitated women. Yet, the movement was dominated by those in English Canada. Thérèse Casgrain became the president of the Quebec branch and clashed with the central leadership in Toronto. The nuclear disarmament campaign in Quebec differed from that in English Canada. The issue of nationalism shaped the opposition to nuclear weapons among French Canadians. Members of the Mouvement Nucléaire Disarmement (MND) interpreted the location of a nuclear missile base in Quebec as a violation of its sovereignty by the federal government. Even as most anti-nuclear activities began to decline, dedicated opponents of nuclear arms in Quebec continued to protest outside the province's Bomarc base.

Anti-nuclear groups faced internal divisions over method and purpose, struggled to mobilize public support and encountered attacks for their idealism, or worse, their sympathy for communism. A group of United Church of Canada ministers, missionaries and lay people, including former moderators, signed a statement protesting the suggestion

⁴⁶ "Alcocks Find It Easy to Adopt New Mode of Life," *Globe and Mail*, January 16, 1962, 10.

by the editor of the church's magazine that anyone opposed to nuclear weapons was "woolly-headed" or the victim of Communist propaganda.⁴⁷ Suspicions about its motives plagued the efforts of the disarmament movement. In 1961 Maryon Pearson expressed her frustration that the word peace was synonymous with communism. By early 1962 Norman Alcock described the public's hesitation about the peace cause, "There is a vague worry caused by the word [peace] in the backs of people's minds."⁴⁸

The nuclear disarmament lobby was a moderate movement that presented its program in terms of traditional maternal or parental concern as well as religious messages. Canon John Frank, the rector of an Anglican Church in Toronto and the chairman of an anti-nuclear rally held in the city, told the crowd that he was there because of concern for his granddaughter's future.⁴⁹ The nuclear threat was a personal issue for activists like Frank. Jo Davis insisted: "It doesn't matter how we differ, in this matter of the love for our children, we are the same. Women see peace as an essential of survival not as a political issue... We are being idealistic, perhaps,... but we believe it is practical idealism."⁵⁰ The focus on family motivated both male and female disarmers. However, women expressed consistently pointed to their concern as mothers as the main reason for their peace activism. When officials at the Canadian National Exhibition banned members of the TCD from collecting signatures for their petition against nuclear arms inside the grounds some told reporters they would practice passive resistance like the sit-down protests of the CND in London's Trafalgar Square. Rabbi Feinberg "dissociated himself from any suggestion of public disobedience by "extremists." He announced that

⁴⁷ NA MG 28 I389, Vol 1 News Release, 1961-1963, "Press Release, "Woolly-headed" Churchmen in Protest," April 4, 1963.

⁴⁸ "Peace Research Drive Declared a Success," *Globe and Mail*, May 21, 1962, 5.

⁴⁹ "Rally to Protest Nuclear Tests Joined by Foes, Unsought Allies," *Globe and Mail*, May 12, 1958, 5.

⁵⁰ Ball, "History of the Voice of Women," 235-6; 202.

the TCD would collect signatures outside the gates of the CNE only.⁵¹ The man referred to as the “Red Rabbi” by proponents of nuclear arms, adopted a moderate approach to anti-nuclear protests.

Disarmament groups struggled to overcome internal divisions over programs and tactics. They also confronted external attacks from prominent Canadians like Douglas Harkness and John Keyston. The prestigious support these groups received did not secure their reputations. The nuclear debate became, in part, a contest over loyalty and the definition of the threat. Harkness placed priority on defending Canada against an aggressive enemy while disarmers focused on the risks posed by nuclear arms in the hands of Canadian forces. Despite the problems internal to anti-nuclear groups, their leaders blamed external factors. Disarmers provided Canadians with similar warnings about the nature of the nuclear threat as responsible leaders. However, their solutions differed. Disarmers stressed idealism, morality and emotion. They tended to ignore the record of the Soviet Union and the reality that nuclear weapons were the only means the United States had of meeting conventional threat of Soviets. They found it difficult to reach a consensus on either the government’s civil defence program or its plans to obtain nuclear weapons.

The political system had begun to change by the early sixties. In Quebec’s 1960 provincial election a new attitude took over. Voters believed that it was time for change and were convinced that young people, progressive ideas and the intellectual had a place in political process previously dominated by the church and Maurice Duplessis. The election of Jean Lesage and the Liberal party started the period of change known as the Quiet Revolution. Quebec moved from a more traditional, religious society to a modern,

⁵¹ “Ban-Bomb Petition Barred from CNE,” *Toronto Star*, August 17, 1961.

progressive province.⁵² The federal Liberal party also changed its approach to politics. It used television and advertising executives and focused more on image, style, and intellectual ideas. The Liberal and Conservative parties both relied on rallies and conventions by early 1961. According to Bothwell, Drummond and English, the theme of these political meetings was that “political participation was no longer for only a few.”⁵³ The process had to be open to all members of society.⁵⁴

At a time when the political system was changing and making efforts to include the people and draw them into the process, the public showed indifference. Most Canadians did not act to influence public policy and left the decision-making to elected leaders instead. The idea that the individual had no influence over political decisions was strong. The public was not unaware of the nuclear threat. Instead it appeared to demonstrate an indifference to its own role in confronting this threat. The Reverend A.C. Forrest argued that by making the nuclear weapons issue a moral one:

[Canadians] are in the ridiculous position of holding a great national debate over issues which are not clear, public discussion on technical matters on which most of us are not informed, and a political campaign over issues which should be decided not on the basis of a popular referendum, but by responsible persons elected to act in the national interest.⁵⁵

François Ricard, who studied the history of the baby-boomers in Quebec, concluded that this generation experienced a crisis of authority in both their family and social lives. The individuals who had previously been respected and obeyed were no longer considered legitimate. As a result young people in the province became more radical and agitated for

⁵² Michael D. Behiels, ed. *Quebec Since 1945*, (Toronto: Copp Clark Pitman, 1984): 1; François Ricard, *La Génération Lyrique: Essai sur la vie et l'oeuvre des premiers-nés du baby-boom*, (Montreal: Boréal, 1992): 132-3.

⁵³ Robert, Bothwell, Ian Drummond and John English, *Canada since 1945: power, politics and provincialism*, Rev ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1989): 240.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 241.

⁵⁵ “Defense: We’ve Made a False Moral Issue of Nuclear Weapons on Canadian Soil,” *The Observer*, February 15, 1963, 11.

change in social movements.⁵⁶ However, Rabbi Feinberg expressed his disapproval of Toronto's university students who thought that Elvis was more important than survival.⁵⁷

Members of the VOW defended their participation in the debate over defence issues and nuclear weapons. In a letter written to Douglas Harkness the group explained, "Only when the right to participate is fully encouraged can a peaceful and cooperative society be built."⁵⁸ Disarmament advocates were accused of acting in an irresponsible manner. Their claims about the devastation that would accompany a nuclear attack were blamed for creating fear and hysteria. Jo Davis observed that the VOW was "accused of sweeping women along on a wave of emotionalism on issues we do not fully understand."⁵⁹ Nevertheless Davis and Tucker emphasized the patriotic motives behind the VOW. They promised that the group would push women "to act as responsible citizens of a democratic society." Tucker termed the group's efforts a sign of "alert citizenship."⁶⁰ Yet, many members of the group expressed reservations about taking a position on nuclear arms for Canada. Jo Davis recalled that many did not believe they knew enough about this matter to take a stand.⁶¹ The VOW *Newsletter* published a letter received by a branch in south western Ontario from an un-named Member of Parliament. He advised the group that their actions would not help Canadians survive a nuclear war:

If we are plunged into an all-out war in the days ahead, I am quite certain that Voice of Women will have little or no effect in stopping the onslaught and complete destruction of our people. The government which you have elected is responsible for the preservation of the people of Canada.⁶²

⁵⁶ Ricard, *Génération Lyrique*, 92, 129-30.

⁵⁷ "Teen-Agers Boo, Hiss, As Rabbi Feinberg Called Liar, Pro-Red," *Globe and Mail*, October 24, 1960; "Eggheads vs. Warheads, Rabbi Asks Students Act for Disarmament," *Globe and Mail*, March 17, 1960, 9.

⁵⁸ Voice of Women, *Newsletter*, no. 12, May 15, 1961, 71.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 468.

⁶⁰ Ball, "History of the Voice of Women," 235-6; 202.

⁶¹ Ball, "The History of the Voice of Women," 144.

⁶² Voice of Women, *Newsletter*, no. 16, December 15, 1961, n.p.

The debate over who was responsible for survival in a nuclear war and the agency of ordinary people emerged in the context of the debate over nuclear arms acquisition.

Harkness, for his part, dismissed the efforts of “arm-chair strategists” or ordinary Canadians who spoke out on these matters. He believed they were not equipped with the expertise to enter this debate.⁶³ Pierre Sévigny, the deputy minister of national defence, disputed the qualifications of the average Canadian to take a stand on nuclear issues. He did not agree with Diefenbaker’s focus on his mail as a guide to public opinion. Sévigny asserted that “the grass roots understood nothing of this particular thing, and still don’t, and could not care less because these things are way beyond the comprehension of the man of the street.”⁶⁴ Diefenbaker recognized the role of elected leaders in making important decisions. He informed members of the Canadian Club that “the responsibility resting on those who have authority, as a trust of the people, knows no greater or more trying problem than this [nuclear war].”⁶⁵ Even those within the disarmament movement recognized that their lack of information left them at a disadvantage in discussions of nuclear war. The Winnipeg Committee for Disarmament considered whether it should campaign against civil defence and feared having “public attention diverted to the question, whether we are technically qualified and morally entitled to oppose devices which might save somebody.”⁶⁶ The bishops and priests of the Anglican Church of Canada refused to take a stand on the nuclear arms issue because it was an area outside of their knowledge. There was no role for the individual in this discussion, these religious

⁶³ “Harkness Terms Neutralist Canada View Unrealistic,” *Montreal Star*, February 11, 1961, 3.

⁶⁴ Stursberg, *Diefenbaker: Leadership Lost*, vol. 3. 1962-67, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1976): 25.

⁶⁵ Diefenbaker, Address to the Canadian Club of Ottawa, November 24, 1960.

⁶⁶ MURA, CCND, Box 18, File 1, Winnipeg Committee for Disarmament, “Draft on CIVIL DEFENCE.”

leaders concluded.⁶⁷ The debate over the nuclear threat expanded to include attitudes toward authority, respectability, responsibility and agency. The two sides of the debate differed in their interpretation of the role of the individual in Canadian society. Were experts needed to formulate policy or were ordinary citizens knowledgeable enough to enter the discussion?

Bothwell, English and Drummond argued that a “spirit of public action” mobilized the nuclear disarmament movement. The Voice of Women shifted from making contact with policy makers in its role as a political pressure group to planning events designed to influence public opinion.⁶⁸ Most Canadians, however, preferred to leave the decisions regarding security in the nuclear age to elected leaders. Blair Fraser, the editor of *Maclean's* magazine, refused to sponsor the first meeting of the Toronto Disarmament Committee. He explained his decision in a letter to Feinberg, “As for supporting the committee, I’m afraid I don’t agree that this is a field in which a Canadian organization of private citizens can do a useful service. Our government is already committed to disarm as an objective, has been working to that end at Geneva for a year and a half.”⁶⁹ They recognized the threat they faced but did not believe that action on their part could influence their fate. It is possible that they did not take action because they felt Diefenbaker and Pearson possessed a better understanding of the issues than nuclear disarmers. Anti-nuclear activists were labelled as naïve and unrealistic as often as they painted them as communist sympathizers. The task of providing security against the nuclear threat should be the responsibility of elected officials. Camille Mather, who

⁶⁷ “Anglicans Avoid Atom Arms Issue,” *Toronto Daily Star*, October 5, 1961, 31.

⁶⁸ Bothwell, Drummond and English, *Canada Since 1945*, 241.

⁶⁹ NA, Feinberg, MG 31 F9 Vol 3 TCD Correspondence Soliciting Sponsors, May17-September 1960, “Letter to Rabbi Feinberg from Blair Fraser, *Maclean's*, May 24, 1960.”

founded a women's radiation hazards group in Vancouver, complained about the public's detachment from the nuclear threat, "Most people don't want to think about the problem; those who do seem to believe it is too big from them to influence."⁷⁰ A report in the *Globe and Mail* studied the attitudes toward the nuclear arms issues in the several ethnic ridings in Toronto during the 1963 election. In these areas, "where many people hold strong views on the necessity of defensive measures against Communist aims," nuclear issues would appear to be important. It concluded that these voters expressed confusion rather than conviction on this issue.⁷¹ Surveys showed that the majority of those sampled would build a fallout shelter if the government paid for the structure. Most of those surveyed also supported plans for government-built public shelters. Public protection in the nuclear age seemed to be viewed as a government responsibility.

Even those in the nuclear disarmament campaign struggled to combine their lobby efforts with a deferential attitude toward the government. Bothwell, Drummond and English argued that radicalism in Canadian society was limited in the early sixties. It was a period of transition; optimism combined with uncertainty and social liberalism merged with middle-class conformism. They maintained that Canadian university students involved in the anti-nuclear cause were not anti-establishment but displayed anti-Diefenbakerism. The students did not question the fundamental goals of Canadian society.⁷² In the end, the nuclear disarmament movement confirmed the conservative reputations of Canadians. Diefenbaker lost the confidence of Canadians to provide security in the cold war by 1963. His hesitation over the Cuban crisis exposed the

⁷⁰ Frank Lowe, "20 Mothers Declare War on Fall-out: These Vancouver women believe that ordinary people can do something about the nuclear threat," *Weekend Magazine*, 10:28 (1960): 2-3.

⁷¹ The Liberal party won these ridings. "In Search of the Ethnic Vote," *Globe and Mail*, April 1, 1963, 7.

⁷² Bothwell, Drummond and English, *Canada Since 1945*, 244-6.

nation's weak defence against Soviet attack and its limited support for its American neighbours. For a nation that wanted its top leader to protect Canada from becoming the battlefield of the Third World War, Pearson appeared to be a better choice than Diefenbaker. Diefenbaker listened to his mail while Pearson listened to NATO. Unlike those influenced by the social gospel and involved in groups like the SCM, Canadians, on the whole, did not appear committed to action. Instead they passively accepted the nuclear threat, Canada's defence ties with the Americans and the shipment of nuclear warheads to Canada's forces at home and abroad. They left the problems of war and the nuclear arms race for the government to solve. Throughout the debate over the arming of Canadian forces with nuclear arms many argued that the responsibility in this area did not rest with the individual but with the government. When Canadians elected Pearson prime minister in 1963, David Lewis concluded that nuclear issues should be resolved through political channels rather than by pressure groups.⁷³ Early in the decade associated with popular democracy and the growing importance of the individual, Canadians seemed to agree that decision making should lie with elected officials rather than the people.

Canadians like to think of themselves as a pacific people who prefer peace-keeping to armed conflict. They accept their nation's limited military presence in the international arena and do not seriously question the cut-backs faced by Canada's defence forces. The history of Canada in the early cold war years challenges this view. In the fifties and sixties most Canadians seemed to support a strong defence against the Soviet Union. They responded to opinion polls with bravado and claimed they would rather die in a nuclear war than submit to communist rule. Blair Fraser, the editor of *Maclean's*

⁷³ Moffatt, *History of the Canadian Peace Movement*, 43-4.

magazine, reached similar conclusions about the gap between perception and reality. He studied the results of the Canadian Peace Research Institute's poll and concluded:

Canadians have a mental picture of themselves as the great mediators in world affairs. We see ourselves as leading the march toward peace, stalwart and loyal supporters of the United Nations, conscientious objectors to nuclear weapons, generous donors of aid to less-favoured nations, standard bearers in any movement toward disarmament and peaceful co-existence.

Instead, a majority of Canadians supported hard-line policies against the communism Soviet Union and placed priority on security through stronger defence forces. They did not trust co-existence.⁷⁴ Canadians showed strong support for the deterrent and for the United States. Don Munton, an expert on Canadian public opinion on defence issues, described the links between attitudes toward the nuclear threat and the Soviet Union:

In sum, Canadian public attitudes through the early 1960s were marked by a generally anti-Soviet, pro-Western orientation and a strong tendency to seek security through maintaining if not increasing armed strength. Proposals for arms control and disarmament, while not rejected, were distrusted by large numbers of those surveyed. American motivations and behaviour in the disarmament area were largely perceived positively and Soviet motivations and behaviour negatively.

He concluded that the public believed security could be achieved, not through a reduction of arms, but with a strong defence.⁷⁵ Howard Green's zealous campaign for disarmament on the basis of Canada's role as an honest broker in the world appeared to be unrepresentative. The moralism and idealism that shaped the approach of nuclear disarmers also appear to have been in keeping the nation's self-perception but at odds with the reality that most Canadians supported a strong defence even if it involved nuclear arms.

⁷⁴ Blair Fraser, "Our Quiet War Over Peace," *Maclean's*, January 23, 1965, 18-19, 40-41.

⁷⁵ Don Munton, "Public Opinion and the Media in Canada from Cold War to Détente to New Cold War," *International Journal* 39:1 (Winter 1983-4): 190.

The historical absence of risk to Canadians also shaped their response to the nuclear peril. The theoretical nature of World War Three combined with the fact that Canadians had remained immune to the threat of direct attack made it appear unnecessary and, perhaps even futile, to prepare to face the threat. A Toronto firm involved in the construction of shelters noted that its biggest costumers were “new Canadian immigrants from Europe, who [had] been through bombings before.”⁷⁶ The groups who took civil defence most seriously were New Canadians and Canadians who were in Europe during the war and who, like Lester Pearson and Jo Davis, had experienced the bombings of the Second World War first-hand.⁷⁷ Rabbi Feinberg, on the other hand, complained that New Canadians seemed willing to make the world a graveyard as long as communists were among the victims. Their experience of communism in Europe shaped their attitude to the nuclear threat in Canada. Tim Buck countered that many ethnic groups in Canada were more aware of the cost of a nuclear war since their relatives would be among the victims of an American nuclear attack on Eastern Europe.⁷⁸ For most Canadians, however, the threat was less immediate and more hypothetical. The population remained optimistic that nuclear war would not touch their homes, communities or families. The majority continued to view the threat to their lives as a distant threat. Civil defence planning did not work partly because the public was educated about nuclear weapons and their effects. Polls showed that they believed a nuclear war would destroy most of the country. They realized that a shelter would only be useful if the family was at home at the time of an attack. They hoped the deterrent would work but, if it failed, held little

⁷⁶ *Time*, (Canadian Edition) August 25, 1961, 7.

⁷⁷ Raymond Rogers, “Civil Defence: How Far Down?” *Saturday Night*, June 10, 1961, 39.

⁷⁸ “Rabbi and Immigrant in Heated Exchange,” *Globe and Mail*, December 1, 1961, 5; Tim Buck, *Fight for Peace*, text of report to 4th LPP Convention, (Toronto: LPP, 1951): 38.

hope they could survive. Even Prime Minister Diefenbaker, who built a shelter in his official residence, expressed relief that it was never needed. “Fortunately,” he explained, “nuclear war did not come.”⁷⁹

The debate over the nuclear threat reveals how complex and difficult the task of finding and providing security proved to be. Canadians were faced with risks of significant proportion. The nuclear threat motivated the Canadian government to take steps to protect the population in the late fifties and early sixties. It strengthened defence and civil defence efforts and warned the population of the real peril under which they lived. Concerned citizens responded to the risks of war and urged the public to recognize the nuclear threat as a personal issue. Involvement in this field proved to be challenging. The members of the Conservative government found it difficult to agree on defence policy. Within the Diefenbaker cabinet, Green, Harkness and Diefenbaker disagreed about how to provide Canadians with security. Diefenbaker and Pearson were accused of vague and shifting policies on defence. They were criticized for changing their minds and switching sides throughout the extended debate over nuclear arms. Disarmament groups encountered similar difficulties in their efforts to support peace. The CCCRH changed its mind on taking a stand against nuclear arms for Canada. The discussion of civil defence created divisions within the VOW in 1960 and the CCND in 1962. The VOW supported the CPRI but, when the CPRI decided not to oppose nuclear arms in 1962, the two groups ceased their cooperation. The VOW encountered internal divisions over the group’s methods and purpose. Many members complained that the increasingly emotional lobbies to Diefenbaker and more militant protest marches attracted negative

⁷⁹ John G. Diefenbaker, *One Canada: memoirs of the Right Honourable John G. Diefenbaker*, vol 2, Years of Achievement, 1957-1962, (Toronto: Macmillan, 1977): 296.

publicity. Groups like the Canadian Home and School Association could not decide if nuclear war was a topic they should address. They were concerned that they not well enough informed, that it was an issue for elected leaders to address and that they would be labelled a communist organization. Even the Royal Canadian Legion could not agree whether or not to support nuclear arms for Canada's armed forces. The response of Canadians involved a paradox; the public recognized the escalating threat to their lives but were not more worried about their safety. They remained hopeful that their lives would not be touched by nuclear war. The nuclear threat did not alter attitudes or challenge their routine practices.

During a meeting of the Cabinet in the summer of 1961, Howard Green expressed his views on the threat of nuclear war to Canada:

One must recognize how high the stakes were in nuclear war. It was an issue that might determine whether or not Montreal, Toronto, Hamilton, Ottawa, Vancouver and other Canadian cities might be blotted off the map. It was not just a question of losing some troops but rather one of the future of Canada and of civilization. If the present situation gave rise to a nuclear war, the United Kingdom might be blotted out entirely and most of Canada as well.⁸⁰

Canadian cities, homes and civilians faced an unprecedented danger located between combative superpowers as cold war tensions escalated from the mid-fifties to the Cuban crisis in 1962. The population did not brood about the bomb even as the nuclear threat escalated, Canada's role in the cold war grew and officials openly recognized the grave and unprecedented costs of a nuclear conflict involving Canada. Few Canadians worried about the nuclear threat even though Diefenbaker pointed to the continuing threat under which they lived. The public learned that Canada would be a target in a third world war and that the number of casualties could reach the millions. They did not adopt civil

⁸⁰ McMahon, "The Politics of Canada's Nuclear Policy, 1957-1963," 218-9.

defence measures despite reassurances that shelters could ensure their survival. They did not join nuclear disarmament protests even though activists warned them the alternative was “Agony or Ashes.” They did not support Canada’s withdrawal from its alliances regardless of the warnings that these ties made Canadians expendable in a nuclear war. Anti-nuclear groups struggled to gain public support for their campaigns against nuclear warhead acquisition. Neither the warnings about the scale of the threat nor the reassurances that survival was possible changed the apathy of the public to the risk of nuclear attack. A minority of Canadians, concerned about the threat of nuclear war, spoke out against nuclear tests, the reliance of Canada’s main ally on a nuclear defence and the decision by the Diefenbaker government to obtain nuclear arms for Canadian forces at home and abroad. Most Canadians, on the other hand, remained indifferent to the nuclear threat. Disarmament supporters and civil defence boosters offered divergent views of the chances of survival in nuclear war. Yet, they agreed that most of the population remained unmoved by the real threat to their security. Canadians, from Vancouver to Halifax, did not join in protests against nuclear war nor did they build fallout shelters in their basements or make preparations to evacuate when Soviet missiles had been launched. Even those who lived in cities designated as targets in a future nuclear war did not take action to increase their chances of survival. Public apathy may have declined during periods of increased cold war tensions but interest could not be sustained. Clive Baxter, a reporter for the *Financial Post*, questioned whether even cold war tensions moved Canadians to take civil defence seriously: “Should Ottawa go on urging Canadians to build fall-out shelters? Is this just so much wasted effort? If the

Berlin Wall and the Cuban blockade couldn't get the Canadian public digging in, what hope is there now?"⁸¹

The warnings offered by both governing parties between 1945 and 1963 failed to persuade Canadians to take steps to survive nuclear attacks, protest nuclear war or recognize that war was likely. The nuclear debate peaked during the Diefenbaker years and revealed the growing concern about safety from nuclear attack. Canadians strove to define the nature of the nuclear threat. Tradition and moderation clashed with dissent and protest. Emotion, sentiment and morality competed with rational political and military considerations in the evaluation of the threat. Canada's nuclear debate came to an end with the election of 1963. By the end of the year nuclear arms were located on Canadian soil. Pierre Berton concluded that Canadians had cast their lot with the North American continent, for better or for worse; they could not have escaped if they had wanted to.⁸² By early 1964 polls showed that few Canadians worried about nuclear issues. The brief debate about security and survival ended and Canadians appeared optimistic about their protection from nuclear attack. Between 1945 and 1963 Canadians became aware of the threat posed by nuclear weapons, radioactive fallout and the competition of the cold war but they chose not to brood about the bomb. They continued to do their dishes. It appeared that Canadians were not so pacific after all.

⁸¹ Clive Baxter, *Financial Post*, October 19, 1963, 51.

⁸² Pierre Berton, "The Real Issues in the Election," *Maclean's*, April 6, 1963, 62.

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