

The Secret War

- Camp X was located on the shores of Lake Ontario near Oshawa, but few knew of it.
- was a top secret training post for spies, secret agents, and sabotage experts and was under the direction of Canadian master spy, William “Intrepid” Stephenson
- Station M was a vital part of Camp X
- staffed by forgers, safecrackers, chemists, movie set designers, and costume experts
- Station M provided agents with false passports and money, battered suitcases, and European style toothpaste, eyeglasses, shabby suits, and underwear

Conscription Crisis of 1942

Causes:

- recruitment rates for volunteers joining the armed forces were higher in Ontario than in Quebec
- the issue of the difference between the rates of voluntary enlistment in these provinces became an issue in Parliament
- many French-Canadians supported the war effort, and denied that Quebec was not providing enough volunteers for the armed forces
- the federal government did not want to have to introduce conscription and face a serious crisis like that of World War I
- the National Resources Mobilization Act (NRMA) gave the power to conscript people for service within Canada, but not for overseas service
- by 1942, Prime Minister King was under strong pressure to begin conscripting Canadians for service overseas

Effects:

- bowing to pressure, Mackenzie King put the issue of whether or not he should be released from his no-conscription promise to the voters in a national plebiscite
- unlike a referendum, the results of a plebiscite are not binding on the government that holds it
- on April 17, 1942, Canadians in every province, but Quebec, voted “yes” to releasing King from his promise of no conscription
- rates of voluntary enlistment had dropped off by this time, causing King to consider imposing conscription
- in November 1944, King ordered the dispatching of NRMA soldiers overseas
- the first conscripts arrived in Europe in Feb. 1945, only a few months before the end of the war
- only 2463 conscripts actually reached the front lines
- opposition to conscription in Quebec was much less violent than in WWI, although mass demonstrations were held in Montreal and Quebec City
- King did not pay a serious political price for imposing conscription because his government was re-elected in 1945, and won a majority of seats in Quebec