



# Canada's Army: Waging War and Keeping the Peace

*J.L. Granatstein*

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Masterfully written and passionately argued, *Canada's Army: Waging War and Keeping the Peace* traces the full three hundred-year history of the Canadian army, from its origins in New France, through the Conquest, the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812, Confederation, militia reform, the South African War, the two world wars, the Korean War, and postwar peacekeeping and peacemaking. Covering the major conflicts in depth, and exploring battles, tactics, and weapons, J.L. Granatstein also offers a rich analysis of the political context for the battles and events that shaped our understanding of the nation's army, not least the fluctuations of Canadian defence spending and methods of raising military manpower. Granatstein pays particular homage to the foot soldier, interweaving personal anecdotes into the history.

At once a vivid and impeccably researched history, this major work by one of Canada's leading historians is also a passionate argument for military professionalism, beginning with the recognition that the soldier belongs to a self-regulating and exclusive organization quite distinct from civil society but nevertheless responsible to civil authority.

Canadian disinterest in defence was manifested in popular support for a volunteer (but always untrained) militia. It is the historical and continued opposition to a professional army, Granatstein argues, that contributed to the extensive loss of life in the First and Second World Wars. Canada has traditionally undervalued its army in times of peace, but has repeatedly committed its army to war and other military operations, expecting every citizen to be a superb soldier. And, while the army has been able to achieve in times of conflict the professionalism needed by a modern army, this has come only with time and at a high price in the lives of Canadian soldiers.

At the start of the twenty-first century, after forty years of cutbacks in budgets and personnel, the Canadian army continues in the same long tradition of unpreparedness. Pointing to the inevitable continuation of armed conflict around the world, *Canada's Army* makes a compelling case for Canada's need for professional armed forces with a simple but incontrovertible truth: "*the equation is and has always been very simple: you pay now in dollars for competent soldiers or you pay later in dollars and your sons and daughters.*"

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