



A GOOD WAR

discussion questions

- 1** The International Panel on Climate Change says that we have less than a decade to control unstoppable climate change. It's scary and we desperately need to act and yet, while there has been much hand-wringing, there have been few practical proposals offered. *A Good War* sets out one possible suite of practical solutions. Do you feel they are workable? Do you feel they go too far, or not far enough?
- 2** How do you feel about the cost of this transformation that Seth Klein proposes in the light of the amount of money that our government has spent in the course of the pandemic? Many experts feel that the costs of climate change disasters will far outweigh the cost of greening our economy. Do you agree?
- 3** Using the model of the rapid retooling of the economy in the Second World War, Klein argues that Canadians bought into the sacrifices they had to make because the government committed to broad social change after the war that would make their lives better in the long run. He argues that you cannot ask huge changes of people if you can't offer to improve their lives. Therefore social justice must be front and centre in climate-change policy. How do you think most Canadians feel about this point of view? How do you feel about it?
- 4** One of Klein's key messages is that it is not enough for governments and activists to exhort us to undertake individual changes for sustainability, that it is the government's responsibility to create policies and regulations that show us the path forward, both individually and collectively. Do you find this view a relief, or a copout from our individual responsibility?
- 5** The parallels between the strategies (and their subsequent crown corporations) of the Mackenzie King government and what Klein argues we need to do now are surprising. Are you as startled as we were by the almost one-to-one applicability of many of the wartime government's strategies? Which of them do you think would work best?
- 6** Klein goes after what he calls the "new climate denialism," something he says is practised not only by conservative governments, but by progressive ones as well, and in many ways by all of us. What do you think of his position on this? Do you think that his suggestions for "just transition" plans for fossil fuel workers could help to overcome the new climate denialism? If not, why not?
- 7** Would you like to see the Canadian government follow *A Good War's* blueprint?
- 8** Do you think the public increasingly sees climate change as an emergency?
- 9** Klein says we need to adopt a "wartime mindset" to tackle the climate crisis. What does a wartime or emergency mindset mean to you?

