

Lafèche also tracked the continued flow of Canadian aid – including food, medical supplies, and millions of items of clothing – to Greek civilians trapped in the bloody civil war between Communist and non-Communist partisans that erupted in 1946. King, like most Canadians, watched with horror as the Soviet Union's communist allies threatened Western Europe's fragile postwar democracies. "The most serious perhaps of all", the prime minister noted in March 1948, "is the situation that is developing in Palestine and on the borders of Greece. It is truly appalling how far the Russians have been permitted and have been able to get ahead in the four years since the war". Canadian diplomats agreed, and when the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) was created in 1949 to confront the Communist threat in Europe, they welcomed Greek membership in 1952. Canada and Greece had become formal allies in the fight for European democracy.



S. M. le roi de Grèce, accompagné de l'hon. Georges de Pastas, ministre de Grèce au Canada et de M. W. H. Messures, secrétaire au ministère des Affaires extérieures d'Ottawa, est ici photographié à l'hôtel Windsor. Sa Majesté a été reçue à son arrivée dimanche, par M. J.-Aldéno Raymond, président de l'hôtel Windsor et a bien voulu signer le livre d'or de l'hôtel. Peu après le roi de Grèce a rencontré le patriarche orthodoxe de Montréal qui a célébré la messe.

George Depasta,
Minister of Greece to
Canada, accompanies
King George B'
during his visit to
Canada (June 1942)

Postwar immigration also strengthened bilateral ties. Impressed by Greek heroics during the Second World War and inspired by the democratic ideals of ancient Greece, Cold War Canada welcomed a wave of Greek immigrants. In the decade between 1951 and 1961, 35,000 Greeks emigrated to Canada.⁸ They settled mainly in Toronto and Montreal, where they created lively and vibrant neighbourhoods that changed the very nature of those cities. The affable Glenn Cochrane, a long time Toronto reporter and local celebrity, recalled in his memoirs how the "newcomers brightened up streets by planting flower beds and building pergolas for their grapes; they brought music and a sense of style that was new to their new city".⁹

