



The Canadian Immigration Historical Society  
La Société Historique de l'immigration canadienne  
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## C.I.H.S. BULLETIN S.H.I.C

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### FROM THE EDITOR

Hi again. Hope this spring finds everyone in good health and good spirits! The society has lots of great things to tell you about, so I hope you enjoy this issue. If you have any suggestions for improvement or ideas for articles, please let me know.

Last week I was talking to George O'Leary, who was telling me about the time he won tickets to an Elvis Presley concert in Ottawa, including backstage passes to meet the star himself. I enjoyed hearing George's personal account of this historical event but I couldn't help but think about how truly fascinating such personal stories can be, and how easily they can be lost. George is back working with the Strategic Planning and Research Branch and since his desk is next to mine, I'm likely to hear more good stories in the months to come.

Unfortunately, I fear many of our retired members also have great stories to tell, in particular about immigration work but perhaps they're keeping too busy to record them. So please, make the time to save your remembrances. We don't want to miss out on the personal accounts of past immigration services and the people that made it work, or who were part of an immigration movement. The society will offer you support and assistance and I personally promise...we'll treasure and store your stories.

Once again, anyone out there who is interested in helping out, or in

contributing an article or two, contact me at 819-953-0721.

Carrie E. Hunter

### PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

#### Ugandan Symposium Update

We met in April with representatives of the Ishmaeli community and will be meeting with representatives of other ethnic groups this month to plan the symposium. It now looks as though the symposium will be held in Ottawa on Saturday, November 13 and you may want to mark that date on your calendar. More details will be provided in our September Bulletin.

Plans are going ahead to print Roger St. Vincent's memoir on the Ugandan movement. Roger expects to be in Canada this month and we will be finalizing printing plans with him.

#### Displaced Persons Project

We are continuing to work with EIC on defining how an event sponsored by the Society in 1994 on Displaced Persons might fit in with the Commission's plans for marking the 125th anniversary of the Immigration Service. We are contacting some of our members who were involved in this movement.

#### The Annual General Meeting

While you are marking the date for the Ugandan symposium on your calendar you might also like to mark Saturday October 16, the date of our Annual General Meeting. Once again, more details will be provided in the September Bulletin.

Al Gunn and Andy Anderson will be compiling a slate of candidates for the Board of Directors for the 1993-94 year. If you are interested in serving on the Board or would like to nominate someone, please contact Al (613-256-1033) or Andy (613-521-0355) or write to them via the Society's address.

#### June Dinner

Last June we invited the membership to join the Board for dinner at the "Place Next Door". Members brought spouses and friends for what proved to be a very pleasant evening. There was a chance to say "hello" to old friends and an opportunity for the Board to get informal feedback on how the membership would like the Society to develop. The Board has decided to repeat the dinner and an article in this issue gives information on the time and place. Please join us.

#### Membership Contributions to the Society's Historical Research

Len Goddard has sent us Chapter 9 of his memoirs and Roger St. Vincent is hard at work on his. I would like to encourage others to put their Immigration experiences on paper or tape. If a full-blown memoir is too ambitious, please send us a two or three page article on some event in which you were involved. It would be great to get contributions from officials who are still in the Service.

Have a wonderful summer!  
John Hunter

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The Society has been issued letters patent under the Canada Corporations Act, and is qualified as a registered charity under the Income Tax Act. When items in the **C.I.H.S. BULLETIN S.H.I.C.** are attributed by name or initials, the views expressed are those of the authors.

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## NEWS FROM OUR MEMBERS

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Our thanks to Mr. M Janecek of Mississauga, Ontario, who is a former Immigration Officer and Secretary of the Canadian Immigration Staff Association. Mr. Janecek has sent us some souvenir copies of the Association's minutes which contain the names of many Immigration officials well known to members of the Historical Society. These will be retained in our records for future reference. We sincerely appreciate the donation of these documents.

### ALLEN B. FOLEY

The following obituary unfortunately was not received in time to be included in our February CIHS Bulletin. Allen Foley, a member of CIHS, was a highly respected colleague and friend. He will be greatly missed by his family, his friends, and by his community.

"FOLEY, Allen N. -74, 16 D'Aubin Lane, Kentville, died January 15, 1993 in Valley Regional Hospital. Born in Halifax, he was a son of the late George and Bessie (Spriggs) Foley. He was retired from Canada Manpower and Immigration. He was a veteran of the Second World War, serving overseas from 1939-45 with the Fourth Light AA Battery Second Regiment. He was a life member and past president of Royal Canadian Legion, Kings Branch 6; present zone commander of zone 8; immediate past president of Nova Scotia Federation of Senior Citizens and Pensioners, for six years. He had served as chairman of Kentville School Board; former member of Kings County Commercial Travellers Club where he was coach of the little league baseball team. He was active in many senior citizen groups throughout Canada. He was a life president of Light AA Artillery Association and the Immigration Society. He is survived by his wife, the former Eileen Reynolds; three daughters, Alayne (Mrs. Randy

Cunningham), St. Alberta, Alberta; Madelaine, Wetaskiwin, Alta.; Maureen, Greenwood, Kings County; four sons, Peter, Kentville; Jeffrey, Greenwood; Michael, Oxford; Gerald, Didsbury, Alberta; brother, J. Wallace, Halifax; 14 grand-children. He was predeceased by six sisters, Marie, Florence, Ethel, Catherine, Margaret, Doris; brother, George.

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## WE'RE NOT THE ONLY ONES UPSET....

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(This article appeared in the Oshawa Times March 17, 1993)

### FEDERAL GOVT. HAS IRISH FIGHTING

-by Phil Raby (Oshawa Times Staff)

COURTICE- Recent actions of the Canadian government will be leaving a bitter taste in Patrick White's mouth as he honours Ireland's patron saint tonight. White, a Courtice resident, is among thousands of Canadians protesting a federal plan to build a theme park on a Quebec island filled with the bones of Irish immigrants who died attempting to escape famine and disease in their homeland.

As many as 30,000 men, women and children are thought to have died on Grosse Ile, the largest of a group of St. Lawrence Seaway Islands located about 50 km. east of Quebec City.

A federal report on the proposed park outraged Irish Canadians when it appeared last March. Prepared for Environment Canada by a private consultant, the report said Grosse Ile should be developed into a national park celebrating Canada as the "land of welcome and hope".

The mass graves filled with Irish dead rated only a few short paragraphs in the lengthy report. One part of the report even went so far as to say that the deaths on Grosse Ile "have often been overemphasized."

The government was so taken aback by the uproar over the report that it later published a 23 page supplement completely devoted to the Irish tragedy. White says he's not against the island becoming a national park, but he would like it to honour the people who never left the island, known locally as the Isle of Sorrows. "We are not opposed to it being a park, but it must be park that incorporates the theme that this is an historical site of the Irish that suffered for this land," he said.

Grosse Ile is said to be the most sacred Irish symbol of the Great Famine outside of Ireland. Turning the island into a feel-good theme park would desecrate the memory of those who died there, said White. "To us it means the same as what the concentration camps mean to Jewish people," he said. "Can you imagine wanting to turn Dachau (death camp) into an amusement park?"

In response to Canadian fears of a cholera epidemic sweeping Europe, Grosse Ile was turned into a quarantine station for immigrants entering Canada in 1832. Of the 73,000 immigrants who passed through the inspection station in 1832-33, at least 3,000 people, most of them Irish, died on the island and were buried in mass graves.

In 1846, when the potato blight first appeared in Ireland, nearly 33,000 immigrants, again mostly Irish, entered Canada through Quebec. According to British records, deemed extremely conservative by Irish groups, another 105,000 immigrants set sail for Canada in 1847 from Irish and British ports. Canadian officials estimate only 82,700 of those people actually reached this country. Many are believed to have died in the "coffin ships" used to transport the immigrants. White said the starving and sick passengers were used as human ballast for lumber ships returning to plunder the rich forests of British North America.

Many who survived the voyage were left to die on Grosse Ile because they were infected with typhus or fever. Gallant

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doctors and nurses who tried to help the sick contracted the disease and also died. "We'd like to pay homage to all the brave ministers, doctors, nurses and lay people who went there to help the people," he said. At one point the dead were said to be mounting so quickly that six men worked continuously digging large trenches for the bodies. Soil had to be transported to the island to cover the mass graves, many of which remain unmarked. White heads to Toronto next month to continue the fight at a hearing on the park to be held at the King Edward Hotel on April 9-11."

(Ed Note: We bid Mr. White success in his efforts.)

## "FROM MY BOOKSHELF"

-by George Bonavia

Reprinted with permission from George Bonavia. George distributes a monthly newsletter to ethnic media, libraries and organizations interested in ethnocultural affairs.

### TRIALS AND TRIUMPHS: THE STORY OF AFRICAN CANADIANS by Lawrence Hill - Umbrella Press, Toronto, Ont. 1992, 64 pages, \$18.95 hardcover.

This book overviews the history of Blacks in Canada for over 100 years to the present day. The and includes the major events, the people who have been leaders, as well as the significant contributions that Black people have made to Canadian society. Although directed to young people, the book covers: 1. Canada- A bit of every country; 2. Africa - A cradle of civilization; 3. Slavery in Canada; 4. African-Canadian settlers and immigrants; 5. Black churches and schools; 6. Caribbean people in Canada; and 7. Black contributions in Canada.

### A HISTORY OF THE AMISH by Steven M. Nolt - Good Books, Intercoarse, Pennsylvania, U.S.A. 1992, 318 pages, \$13.00 paperback.

The Amish, one of North America's most intriguing peoples have survived for over 300 years. This book pre-sents the deep and rich heritage of the Amish people. From their beginnings in Europe through their settlement in United States and Canada the Amish have struggled to maintain their beliefs and traditions in sometimes hostile settings. Atlantic crossings, westward migration, military conscription and compulsory school laws were just a few of the many challenges to the Amish church through the years. Caught in the currents and conflicts of national life, the Amish have remained a distinct people in North America's melting pot.

## Federal-Provincial Relations in Canadian Immigration

-by R.A. Vineberg

### PART 3

(Ed. Note: This is part three of a three-part article. At the time this article was written, Robert Vineberg was Director, Regional Policy and Program Relations, Immigration Canada (1982-1985). He is currently A/ Director General, Case Management, Immigration, NHQ. We are grateful to the Institute of Public Administration of Canada for granting us permission to reprint Mr. Vineberg's article originally published by them in July 1987 in their journal, Canadian Public Administration (Volume 30, No. 2. pp 299 - 317).

### THE ERA OF CONSULTATION

The 1976 Immigration Act is unique among the few acts which have governed the admission of aliens to Canada. For the first time the objectives of Canadian immigration policy were enunciated. The second of these objectives is "to enrich and strengthen the cultural and social fabric of Canada, taking into account the

federal and bilingual character of Canada" (section 3(b)).

In order to fulfil the objectives, section 7 specifies:

The Minister, after consultation with the provinces concerning regional demographic needs and labour market considerations and after consultation with such other persons, organizations and institutions as he deems appropriate, shall lay before Parliament...

a report specifying

(a) the number of immigrants that the Government of Canada

deems it appropriate to admit during any specified period of time; and

(b) the manner in which demographic consideration have been taken into account in determining that number.

This is the authority for the annual consultations that have taken place with the provinces since 1978 and non-governmental organizations since 1980 and for the preparation of the annual report to Parliament on immigration levels. Cooperation with the provinces was intended to be an ongoing process and section 109 expressed the government's intentions in this respect:

- (1) The Minister shall consult with the provinces respecting the measures to be undertaken to facilitate the adaptation of permanent residents to Canadian society and the pattern of immigrant settlement in Canada in relation to regional demographic requirements.
- (2) The Minister, with the approval of the Governor in Council, may enter into an agreement with any province or group of provinces for the purpose of facilitating the formulation, coordination and implementation of immigration policies and programs.

Pursuant to the new act, the first round of consultations on immigration levels took place during the spring and summer of 1978. The consultations were launched by the minister and followed up by meetings between regional federal officials and provincial officials. The annual report, tabled in November 1978, summarized the responses of the provinces, which were of a preliminary and tentative nature.<sup>1</sup>

The Atlantic provinces were, for the most part, satisfied with the levels of immigration and were inclined to leave their determination to the federal government. Nova Scotia recommended, as had the special committee, that levels should cover a three-year period. Quebec noted that it was in the midst of studies to determine appropriate levels of immigration, given its own priorities and objectives, for a minimum of five years. Ontario, on the other hand, refused to express an opinion, stating that, in its view, levels determination is a federal prerogative. This remains Ontario's position. Of the western provinces, only Saskatchewan expressed a desired range for immigration levels to that province while the other provinces responded in general terms. Nevertheless this first renewed effort of consultative planning seemed to be well received. The 1979 level was fixed at one hundred thousand.

In 1979 there was a spectacular demonstration of the limitations to planning. In the consultations of that year, the government sought provincial support for setting immigration levels over a period of three to five years, with an annual revision. The consultations exercise was cut short due to the Southeast Asian refugee crisis. On 18 July 1979 the government, having informed the provinces in advance, announced that it would accept fifty thousand Southeast Asian refugees during the remainder of 1979 and in 1980. When the annual report was tabled that November, the government noted that it "is not bound to base its determination of future immigration levels solely on an aggregation of provincial preferences."<sup>2</sup> While the government remained committed to consultation, it reserved its prerogative to determine the total levels in the national interest. The fact that Ontario, which receives over 45 per cent of immigrants to Canada, never expresses desired levels means that this can be done without aggravating provinces which do express desired levels. The three-year planning cycle

was not introduced until November 1981 when levels for the years 1982 to 1984 were announced. The three-year cycle met general approval from the provinces, as it permitted improved coordination of immigration flows and planning for infrastructure needs for new immigrants.<sup>3</sup>

The following year, 1982, the levels consultation exercise was expanded to include the Yukon and Northwest Territories. The consultations once more were preempted, to a certain extent, by events. A recession took hold in the winter of 1981-82 and it was soon clear to the government that labour market immigration from other countries which were experiencing similar difficulties would increase far beyond projected levels unless controls were imposed. These restrictions were put in place on 1 May 1982 and provided that independent immigrants (i.e. those not sponsored by relatives or not refugees) would require pre-arranged job offers approved by a Canada Employment Centre. The restriction kept the levels of selected workers within the range announced following the 1981 consultations. An aspect of the 1982 consultations was to solicit continuing approval from the provinces for this action. In the circumstances, this was forthcoming. The recession continued until late 1984 and unemployment remained high into 1985. The provinces continued to support measures to keep immigration for the labour market restrictive and provincial feedback in the consultative process focused on family immigration and refugees, together with immigration settlement. The provinces also took advantage of the consultation process to express increasingly sophisticated views on immigration - clear evidence that the federal government had succeeded in raising the general level of awareness of immigration policy issues with most provincial governments. The other aspect of federal-provincial cooperation that was born of the reviews of the 1970s is the phenomenon of federal-provincial agreements.

Following the series of comprehensive multilateral federal-provincial agreements on immigration in the decade after Confederation, there passed almost a century before any further general agreements were entered into. The agreements that were concluded related to issues of immigrant settlement rather than broader issues of immigration policy. As was noted above, section 109 of the Immigration Act highlighted the federal conviction that formal bilateral agreements with the provinces on matters relating to broad issues of immigration policy would be beneficial. The first such agreement actually predated the new Immigration Act. The federal government and Quebec had cooperated closely during the early development of the Quebec Immigration Department and the joint decision to allow Quebec immigration counsellors to work abroad was confirmed by a formal agreement to delineate the role of these officers. On 18 May 1971, Otto Lang, minister of manpower and immigration, and François Cloutier, Quebec minister of immigration, signed the first federal-provincial immigration agreement of the modern era. This agreement, known as the Lang-Cloutier Agreement was designed to:

- encourage an increase in the francophone content of the immigration movement
- encourage francophone applicants to choose to settle in Quebec, and
- authorize Quebec to attach "orientation officers" to Canadian missions abroad.

The operative section of the agreement provided that:

The regular and normal role of an officer of the Quebec Department of Immigration is to provide further information beyond that supplied by the Federal party on living and working conditions in Quebec to applicants destined to that province.

The Lang-Cloutier Agreement remained in effect for four years, during which the Quebec Immigration Service (QIS) established itself abroad and developed an expertise not available to other

provinces. The new service also found that it received many applications from francophone officers of the federal Immigration Foreign Service, thus allowing it to staff itself with experienced professionals.<sup>4</sup> This cadre of professionals felt themselves to be capable of far more than an informational role, and it was also the desire of the QIS to play a real role in immigration to Quebec. Through a series of negotiations with the federal government, Quebec was able to obtain, progressively, real authority in immigrant selection.

In 1975 the Quebec government indicated that it wished to renegotiate the Lang-Cloutier Agreement. After four years' experience, the government wished to take part in the selection process itself. The result was a new agreement, signed in October 1975 by Robert Andras, federal minister of manpower and immigration, and Jean Bienvenue, Quebec minister of immigration. Section 6 provided that:

- all immigrants destined to Quebec would be interviewed by a Quebec Immigration Service (QIS) officer;
- formal consultations would be held with the QIS officer before the federal officer took the decision in the case;
- a joint Federal-Provincial Committee would be established for

- exchange of information
- consultation on immigrant settlement
- interpretation and implementation of the agreement.

The Andras-Bienvenue Agreement provided Quebec with substantial input into final selection decisions without ceding to Quebec the ultimate authority to select immigrants.

In 1976 the Parti Québécois came to power in Quebec. After a review of the Andras-Bienvenue Agreement, it requested to negotiate a new agreement

which would give more authority to the province. In 1977 Parliament passed the new Immigration Act which authorized the minister of immigration to enter into immigration agreements with the provinces (section 109). The federal government, therefore, wished to be seen to be entering into federal-provincial immigration agreements and agreed to commence negotiations. The agreement signed by Bud Cullen, the federal minister of employment and immigration, and Jacques Couture, the Quebec minister of immigration, on 20 February 1978 was much more detailed than either of the earlier agreements and it covered most aspects of selection abroad and settlement in Quebec. It involved a clear devolution of power from the federal to the provincial government. This seems to have been the intention of the federal negotiators and it would have been in keeping with the attitude of the Trudeau government prior to the Quebec referendum. The federal government wanted to demonstrate that, in the realm of immigration, federalism could work and this meant giving Quebec a substantial say in immigration. The Quebec government, for its part, sought greater authority in all spheres related to cultural and social endeavour and especially in the area of external affairs. As a result, the goals of the two parties were compatible, though for contradictory reasons.<sup>5</sup>

In Section I(1) of the Cullen-Couture Agreement, Canada and Quebec agree to:

- i) cooperate in all areas relating to migration movements and demography; and ii) participate jointly in the selection of persons who wish to settle permanently or temporarily in Quebec.

The heart of the agreement is section III, which deals with selection. While it stipulates the general principle that selection "will be on a joint and equal basis, according to separate sets of

criteria for Canada and for Quebec", it goes on to limit the generality of this statement in Quebec's favour in the case of independent immigrants. In fact, Quebec is given an effective veto in the selection of independent immigrants by stipulating that "the landing of an independent immigrant in Quebec requires Quebec's prior agreement."

The agreement confers no authority to Quebec for the determination of eligibility of Family Class immigrants, that is close family members, sponsored by relatives in Canada. However, section V does allow the province to determine the financial capability of the sponsor to live up to his or her sponsorship obligations. Refugees are determined to be refugees by the federal government pursuant to its responsibilities under the United Nations Convention on the Status of Refugees, but their selection as immigrants is jointly carried out by Canada and Quebec. The final decision to issue a visa to all classes of immigrants is taken by the federal government following statutory procedures such as medical examinations and background checks. The agreement has also provisions relating to foreign students, persons coming into Quebec for medical treatment and temporary foreign workers. Employment and Immigration Canada and the Quebec Immigration Department have agreed to common operational directives for the implementation of the agreement. As a result, Quebec has become the only province to become involved directly in immigration selection. But it has been expensive. Quebec has immigration agents in ten locations around the world. Nevertheless, this is still a very small service in comparison to the immigration service of the department of External Affairs, which has

immigration facilities at about seventy of its missions abroad.

While Quebec was the first province in the modern era to conclude a federal-provincial immigration agreement, it is no longer alone in this area. The federal government wanted to promote the image of cooperative federalism across the country; it also did not want it to appear that Quebec was the only province with an immigration agreement. In the spirit of the new Immigration Act, the federal government had invited all provinces to enter into agreements even prior to proclamation of the act and persuaded two other provinces to sign on. On 20 February 1978 Bud Cullen, the minister of employment and immigration, and Marc Lalonde, the minister of state for federal-provincial relations, signed the Canada-Nova Scotia Immigration Agreement, and three days later they signed the Canada-Saskatchewan Immigration Agreement. Over the next year, the provinces saw that the agreements did meet growing needs and immigration agreements were also concluded with Newfoundland, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island. Each agreement is different and was negotiated to meet both federal and provincial needs while establishing mechanisms for ongoing consultation and cooperation. The agreements have spawned different procedures, directives and sub-agreements in each province, but in every case they have brought about improved communications and understanding on the part of both levels of government. All the other provincial agreements are very brief in comparison to the Quebec agreement. They avoid the detail necessary to establish a joint selection system but they do bind each party to extensive policy consultation and exchange of information as well as specifying certain categories of immigrant, such as entrepreneurs, teachers and invalids, about which provincial input is mandatory. Similarly, the mere existence of a system in six provinces has encouraged a certain degree of emulation in the federal-provincial

relations of the remaining four provinces and the two territories. The variety of methods of working within a single framework of the constitution and the Immigration Act has been described as "asymmetric federalism"<sup>6</sup> A single goal can be attained in many ways and this is provided daily within the Canadian immigration program.

After observing the experiences of those provinces with immigration agreements, Alberta entered into negotiations in 1981 but these were suspended the following year. Nevertheless, in 1983 British Columbia indicated its desire to commence negotiations and in 1984 Saskatchewan advised the minister of employment and immigration that it wished to renegotiate certain aspects of the Canada-Saskatchewan Immigration Agreement. Following the election of September 1984, the new Conservative government agreed to negotiate agreements with all three of the western provinces. Clearly the attitude of individual ministers to the role of the provinces can be a key factor in determining the priority assigned to provincial involvement. Yet the very existence of agreements and a system of consultation force the federal government to maintain close relations with the provinces in this sphere, even when relations might be deteriorating in other areas.

The first of the new agreements was signed with Alberta on 5 November 1985 and negotiations are continuing with British Columbia and Saskatchewan. It can be expected that these negotiations will be monitored closely by the other provinces and the territories and a successful conclusion to them could initiate a new round of federal-provincial agreements reflecting the experience of the last decade. While Ontario and Manitoba continue to prefer not to obtain a formal agreement, many of the same procedures developed subsequent to the other agreements are used by them. Each regional immigration office is in almost daily contact with provincial authorities obtaining provincial input

concerning either individual cases or policy issues.

#### ENDS and MEANS

As long as Canada remains an immigrant-receiving country, federal-provincial cooperation will remain an issue in the field of immigration policy. This paper has attempted to show that in the early years of Confederation the provinces actively participated in the field; however, as the Dominion government gained more experience than the provinces in immigration and in the years of the great migration at the turn of the century concentrated on peopling the federal territories of the west rather than the established provinces, the interests and activities of the provinces diminished and almost disappeared and did not revive until after the Second World War. The revival was led by the recruitment efforts of Ontario, but in the late 1960s the initiative among the provinces was assumed by Quebec. Today Quebec is still the only province with its own immigration department<sup>7</sup> but Alberta's Manpower Act has vested responsibility for immigration and demography with the Alberta minister of manpower. Seven of ten provinces have entered into comprehensive immigration agreements with the federal government and two are currently in negotiations.<sup>8</sup> Over the last decade a foundation has been laid for innovative and mostly harmonious cooperation in the field of immigration policy. The variety within the immigration program, the variety of approaches of the several provincial governments, and the fact that immigration deals with millions of unique individuals adds difficulty and challenge to policy management. Consultation and cooperation take time and effort but it seems clear that the result should be a better and more informed immigration program. In the complex society that has evolved in Canada there are now many areas of de facto concurrent jurisdiction and perhaps the experience of both levels of government in dealing with immigration can offer models for other areas of federal-provincial relations.

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## TRAVELLING CAN BE INTERESTING

(...sometimes)

-by Al Troy (17-03-93)

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Today being St. Patricks Day set me to thinking of the pleasant years (as well as of some very unpleasant ones) my family spent in Belfast, N. Ireland. Then my aging brain wandered off on a tangent to remind me that it soon would be time to write some nonsense for our next Bulletin. So here it goes...

In June of 1966 we were getting ready to return to Canada for two months of Home Leave and then take up a new posting in Liverpool, England. That in itself was a surprise as I had been advised a year previous that I could expect to be sent to Cologne, West Germany and had even made a trip there to arrange to get my children places in the British Forces school system on our arrival in the Bundesrepublik. My posting had been changed on comparatively short notice and Liverpool was to be our next destination. (Incidentally I did get a posting to Germany 12 years later.)

Our furniture and household effects were to be put in storage in Belfast and we were cautioned to take a lot more luggage with us as the housing situation was difficult in Liverpool and we could expect to spend an extended stay in a hotel. As my wife and I had a 17 year old daughter and a 14 year old son at the time, this presented a significant problem. We ended up with 19 pieces of luggage including two sets of golf clubs. We had been booked to travel on the Empress of Canada from Liverpool to Montreal and then by Canadian Pacific Railway to Saint John, N.B., where we would be met by taxi and a half ton truck to take us to my

parents home in St. Andrews, New Brunswick, where we were to spend our holidays. The C.P.R. office in Belfast had made all our travel arrangements including the overnight ferry from Belfast to Liverpool. We had been assured that we wouldn't have to touch our luggage until our arrival in Canada. Hence we were to have no problems with the rather large amount of luggage we were taking with us. Most reassuring!

I had a sneaky feeling that things were going too well and sure enough disaster struck. The British Seamans Union called an all-out strike which immediately tied up all British registered ships in British ports. Any vessel at sea was allowed to complete her journey to her home port. Of course, this strike tied up all trans-Atlantic traffic as well as the ships crossing the Irish Sea. The C.P.R. office in Belfast did some scrambling and were able to get us first class cabins on the Holland American Line SS Rotterdam out of Southampton to New York. The problem, however, would be in getting to Southampton. They sent us by train to Larne, N. Ireland, across to Stranraer, Scotland on a Norwegian ferry chartered to British Rail which was not affected by the strike; overnight sleeper train to Euston station in London; taxi across London to Victoria Station and; special boat train to the docks in Southampton. (Remember those famous 19 pieces of luggage with which we were travelling!)

We had a wonderful voyage with every need looked after, even a large bowl of fresh fruit in our teenagers' cabin each day. We arrived in New York on the morning of the sixth day and prepared to go ashore for Immigration and Customs clearance. We had reservations on the 10:30 a.m. train from Grand Central Station in New York to

Montreal, which would have allowed us to catch the 7:00 p.m. train out of Montreal Windsor Station headed for Saint John, N.B.

We went through Immigration inspection without delay and ended up in the Customs shed where we had a porter pile our luggage on a long, low table for the Customs Officers inspection. Our man had one of those "why-in-the-hell-did-I-ever-take-a-job-like-this" look about him. He handed me a clipboard notice advising what we could or couldn't bring into the U.S.A. and asked whether we had any fruit or agricultural produce with us. Naturally, I answered no. He casually pointed to one of our bags and asked that I open it for a simple spot check. I did so and there, to my horror, were three oranges right on top of everything. My dear wife had taken them from the fruit bowl just in case one of our teens might want a snack. I tried to explain that I had had no idea that the fruits were there, and my wife tried to explain she had done this without my knowledge. This cut no ice with the Customs official and he made us open, and dump, every piece of luggage including emptying the two bags of golf clubs on the floor so he could check the empty bag. By the time he was finished and we had repacked all our belongings everyone had left the shed, even the taxicabs. By the time we got to Grand Central Station our train had gone and we had to re-book and get berths for the 10:30 p.m. departure, which had been difficult enough, then try and get a hotel room for day occupancy. We got away that evening and arrived in Montreal at 6:30 a.m. the following morning, checked our luggage for the 7:00 p.m. train to Saint John and then despite, some difficulty, obtained a room for the day. We endured one of the hottest days Montreal had had that summer.

To finish off this tale of woe, we arrived in Saint John at approximately 9:30 a.m. the following morning and found no taxi to meet us, and all our friends' cars had been booked for a local funeral. After several phone calls, we were finally picked up and arrived at my parents house in mid-afternoon completely whacked out and no one speaking to any one. However, after a week or so, things got back to normal and we enjoyed our stay in New Brunswick.

We wanted to visit my grandmother and uncle in Toronto, so we packed our gear and shipped it by rail to Montreal for the Empress of Canada's return voyage and we went off to Toronto for our final week in Canada. While there, negotiations between the Railways Workers Union and the C.P.R. broke down and we were faced with another strike two days before we were to leave. We ended driving all night in my uncle's car to Montreal in order to make the 9:00 a.m. boarding. We arranged for my uncle to have breakfast on board with us and then he drove back to Toronto while we all went to bed to catch up on our sleep. We had a pleasant voyage back to the U.K.

Even though this all took place almost 27 years ago, I still remember that particular trip to and from Canada as though it were yesterday!

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## REMINDER FROM THE TREASURER

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I wish to remind all members that our fiscal and membership year ended on April 30, 1993 and that if you're not a life member, your membership dues for 1993-94 are due. In the upcoming months, we expect to publish Roger St. Vincent's book dealing with his experiences during the Ugandan Asian movement in 1972. As with our previous publications a copy of this book will be automatically sent to all members in good standing as soon as it

is received from the printers. So please make sure you don't miss receiving your copy of this delightful book, by taking the time now to check that your dues are paid up. (Your most recent membership card will show you the date to which you are paid up.) Thanks again!

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## A TREASURE IN OUR BACKYARD

-by JP Leblanc

"Lawlor's Island...where is it?", asked my daughter when I requested that she have a look at this manuscript. "What was it? How did you find out about it? How big is it? I never knew that it existed", she continued, before she took these papers in hand. She is in good company, because when we asked officials at the Department of Tourism and Culture whether they had a photo of the Island, they also asked the same questions.

A small island, on the Shearwater side of Halifax Harbour, Lawlor's occupies its two mile chunk of the harbour with an unassuming dignity. It lies equidistant between McNab's and the mainland - a stone's throw from either. "Other than for its ruins", remarked a friend who toured the site with me, "it's now a primeval forest". Its history lies buried beneath a century's worth of vegetation.

There has been much controversy about Parks Canada's proposed plans for Grosses Isle -the small island in the mouth of the St. Lawrence River where so many Irish immigrants in the mid-nineteenth century had their plans for life in the New World tragically end - and the \$16 million dollar grant to set up a National Historical Site there. Lawlor's Island use as a Quarantine Station in Halifax is no less historical.

Early owners of Lawlor's have lived variously in Halifax, elsewhere in the province and in the United States. With

Confederation, however, Lawlor's was handed over by the Government of Nova Scotia to the Dominion Government. There had been no cases of contagious disease from January to July of 1869, but on July 29, five cases of yellow fever went into isolation. HMS Eclipse was sent to Mony Island in Bedford Basin for three days. This would lead directly to the establishment of quarantine facilities on Lawlor's Island.

In 1871, after a lengthy delay in getting a clear title to Lawlor's Island, an emergency situation requiring quarantine developed. A shed was erected in less than 24 hours on Lawlor's as a temporary measure pending erection of Quarantine facilities. The seams of that shed were made water tight by covering the roof with old sails whose best days were behind them. The first burial on Lawlor's after Confederation was to follow shortly thereafter, when a seaman who had died of consumption was laid to rest. The condition of the shed, however, prevented medical officials from using the site as a full Quarantine Station.

Lawlor's, however, was not alone in the battle to keep the mainland free from disease. At least three ships would play a part in the merging medical history including The Pyramus which was used as a hospital ship before Confederation. It ended its career in 1880, but had operated since the turn of the century. Associated with Pier 2, it was manned by a crew of three, twenty-four hours a day.

McNab's and other locations were also used for the same purpose. In 1847 immigrants suffering from typhus fever had gone to Melville Island to protect the Garrison and the inhabitants. According to the NovaScotian of 30 August 1847, thirty-seven died on Melville. In April 1866, the SS England bound to New York from Liverpool had arrived in Halifax with cholera aboard. Government officials instantly sent the Pyramus for the sick passengers. The others, the ones who had not caught the



disease, were quartered in tents on McNab's Island. Doctors, priests and the Sisters of Charity tended the sick and the dying. A painting at the Mother House depicts Sisters on McNab's among the quarantined victims. Many victims of cholera were buried in lead coffins off Thrumcap.

Doctor Wickwire, the first Quarantine Doctor in the area, after Confederation, stated that Lawlor's was the "almost only place fitted for a Quarantine Station." In 1872, construction began in earnest. The permanent facility was completed in 1878, though the need for a wharf still existed.

The reception area of the permanent buildings were described as bright and well-kept; "With every care and consideration on the part of the various officials were carried out for those who pass before them," read one account of the facility. In January 1899, two ships, the Huron and Superior arrived. One of them flew "the" yellow flag - an indication of sickness on board. Following a medical inspection, space for 2000 Doukhobors had to be found. Fears of an epidemic were rampant. With space for only 1400 people, the Doukhobors put up additional facilities. Only after bureaucratic delays, was approval received from Ottawa.

Count Tolstoy told the Halifax Herald in a February 1899 interview edition about the stay on Lawlor's. "The exile was not at all to be compared with the rigors of Siberian banishment, but still three weeks spent there had been dull exceedingly."

Over the years, though the incidence of contagious diseases was becoming less frequent the matter, new visitors received close attention. In March 1938, a crew member from a ship which had entered Halifax Harbour was

diagnosed as having smallpox. Fear of an epidemic again gripped the area. Despite the facilities on Lawlor's Island having fallen into a state of advanced disrepair, the patient and a quarantine nurse were taken to Lawlor's. Doctor Hugh Collins diagnosed the disease. Reginald Smith, an orderly, developed the infectious disease. Another orderly named Leggin and two nurses (Mrs. MacDonnel and Walter Wilson) were all quarantined until May 10th.

This is the last known occasion when Lawlor's was used as a quarantine station. Once again the buildings and structures were left to rot and decay until what remained of the Lawlor's Island complex was eventually burned down. In May 1963, the Dartmouth Free Press wrote this colourful description of one of the characters who animated the island.

"Our nomination for the man of the week is not a professional, a politician or even a community leader. He is plain Jeremiah Blank, 85 year old resident of Lake Echo who has lived an ordinary life although at times an extremely interesting life and in our view, has much to teach the young and old Nova Scotians in the way of living. For thirteen years he was the steward and attendant at the Yellow Flag Station. He has nursed men, women and children through smallpox, yellow fever, measles and influenza. And he has had the dreadful and painful experience of digging the graves and burying those who had succumbed to communicable disease and died on the Island. The station doctor had this to say about Jeremiah: this man is immune to disease... he has been exposed to everything and he keeps not only healthy, but he is not carrier to his family."

Concerns over contagious diseases were not confined to smallpox and cholera. Nor did concerns over disease end with the last case to be treated on Lawlor's. In September 1957, Pier 21 was listed as a priority for the Asiatic Flu Vaccine. The Halifax Chronicle-Herald commended Doctor Sullivan for his speed in handling sixteen suspected cases of Asiatic Flu.

"While there is some difference of opinion among doctors whether the sixteen passengers taken from the liner Vulcania and isolated in the dockside immigration hospital actually are victims, so named because it began in the Orient early this year, there was unanimity in placing them in quarantine. This is all the more reason for exercising extreme caution in accepting new settlers and visitors to Canada. Nova Scotians are hopeful that Canadian Immigration doctors from coast to coast will be heartened by the action of the Halifax port medical staff and handle similar situations in similar ways. The threat demands cross Canada alertness."

Dr. Bernard Charles Sullivan served as Medical Officer-in-Charge from 1952. In January 1954, Bill March (staff writer) called his practice "the biggest practise in Halifax, (even)... though his offices are on the edge - the water's edge of town." "He and his two-man staff", Mr. March continues, "last year took care of 10,300 sick mariners and checked a total of 110,561 crew members and passengers."

Also in January 1954, a campaign to vaccinate for smallpox throughout the world was begun. Under a procedure known as radio pratique, every incoming ship would get the once over. They were to wire the medics about twelve hours before docking, stating health

conditions and requesting privilege to land.

National Health and Welfare staff kept a careful lookout for disease carrying rodents. It wasn't long before ships' captains got the message. "All ship masters make special efforts to free their vessels of rats because of the dangers of having their ship tied up in port."

Immigrants, technically, could only be deported on three medical grounds: epilepsy or mental ailments; those with loathsome and dangerous contagious diseases; and sufferers of body deformities, hearing and speech defects or heart trouble. During 1954 few were deported. Medical screening was taking place overseas by Canadian Doctors before the migrant could leave for Canada.

In 1971, Dr. Lloyd R. Hirtle of National Health and Welfare was responsible for closing the circle that was begun under Dr. Wickwire in 1869. The port medical and quarantine services were deemed no longer necessary and were closed later that year.

What's left of the Quarantine Station? The wharf is in total disrepair. The rusty water tower sleeps where it came crushing to the ground near two cisterns. A large rusty boiler of the heating or fumigation plant remains near the former quarantine building. Several other stone and concrete foundations, as well as the roads and paths, are overgrown by vegetation.

Lawlor's Island is just another example of stories waiting to be told about life and lives in the 19th and 20th centuries. The history of suffering arrivals to a new land is of continuing interest to visitors. Grosse Ile and Partridge Island near Saint John, prove that. Once those sites are interpreted, they will forever remain monuments to the peoples who made Canada vibrant. Lawlor's, McNab's and Melville are no less deserving. Though their history is

replete with sufferings, it is enriched by the contributions of those who gave themselves helping others. No other area in North America is more fertile than Halifax in its history and heritage.

(Ed Note: Our thanks to John for letting us reprint his article.)

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## SOCIAL EVENT OF THE YEAR!

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Mark your calendars... June 17th, everyone is invited to attend a dinner meeting of the Society. Again this year we'll hold it at Nates Delicatessin on Rideau Street in Ottawa, at 6:30 p.m.(cocktails) for 7:00 pm. (dinner). Please call Carrie Hunter by June 10, 1993 at (819) 953-0721 (days) or (613) 837-4685 (evenings) if you plan to attend.

Hope to see everyone there and have a safe and enjoyable summer!

**THIS CONCLUDES THE THIRTEENTH ISSUE OF THE BULLETIN. WE CONTINUE TO LOOK FORWARD TO HEARING FROM YOU WITH YOUR COMMENTS, CONTRIBUTIONS AND SUGGESTIONS.**



1. Department of Employment and Immigration, Annual Report to Parliament on Immigration Levels, (Ottawa, 1978), pp. 24-28 passim.
2. Ibid., 1979, pp. 29-30.
3. Ibid., 1981, pp. 10, 23, 49.
4. At the time Employment and Immigration had its own foreign service. It was merged into the Department of External Affairs in 1981.
5. The Cullen-Couture agreement was in fact in negotiation while the new Immigration Act was proceeding through Parliament. There were some sharp exchanges at committee stage, since some Progressive Conservative MPs were not at all convinced by the minister's assurances that he was not going to sign away federal supremacy. In the outcome, the agreement did go beyond what even the legislation drafters anticipated, with the result that there was considerable heartburn over statutory authority for some of the implementing regulations.
6. Kenneth McRoberts, "Unilateralism, Bilateralism and Multilateralism; Approaches to Canadian Federalism", in Richard Simeon ed., *Intergovernmental Relations*, Vol. 63 of the research studies of the Royal Commission on the Economic Union and Development Prospects for Canada (Toronto, 1985), pp.90,91.
7. In 1981 the department was renamed the Ministère des Communautés culturelles et de l'Immigration.
8. An element of Quebec's constitutional propositions presented to the federal government on 15 May 1985, included the proposal that "La Constitution devra compléter l'entente Cullen-Couture de 1978 en confirmant la prépondérance du Québec en matière de sélection et en élargissant cette prépondérance à l'intégration et à l'établissement des immigrants." Gouvernement du Québec, *Projet d'accord Constitutionnel* (Québec, 1985), p. 31

## MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL/SUBSCRIPTION

### CHANGE OF ADDRESS

**PLEASE NOTE THAT THE SOCIETY'S MEMBERSHIP YEAR RUNS FROM MAY 1 TO APRIL 30  
!!!**

Please enter/renew my membership in the Canadian Immigration Historical Society or note my new address:

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

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I enclose the following fee:

Corporate	-	\$1,000.00	[ <input type="checkbox"/> ]
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**PLEASE SEND THIS FORM WITH YOUR CHEQUE TO "CANADIAN IMMIGRATION HISTORICAL SOCIETY" TO:**

The Treasurer  
The Canadian Immigration Historical Society  
P.O. Box 9502, Station T  
Ottawa, Ontario K1G 3V2