



The 100th Bulletin Le 100ème Bulletin



Dear Readers,

The 100th issue of the Bulletin is a milestone for the Canadian Immigration Historical Society (CIHS), and so we decided to make it a special one. In keeping with the precedent set by Bulletin 50—which contained the best articles from previous issues—we are showcasing some of the best pieces in issues 51 to 99. These articles focus on immigration events that took place after World War II.

We are honoured to have had many excellent articles in our editions over the years. Thank you to all contributors. Our judges faced a daunting task, and unfortunately, a number of our well-loved articles could not be included. Authors writing for the Bulletin have enriched our knowledge of Canada's immigration history. They conducted deep research and mined their memories to remember lives saved or lost. They dusted off and scanned old photographs to bring life to their stories,

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and they brought new facts and faces to light. We now know more about the personal and intellectual struggles behind individual migrants' decisions and governmental programs from many perspectives. Finally, editors from Bulletins 51 through 99 shaped the articles into cohesive products for publication. I hope that such contributions will continue to inform, challenge, and inspire us in the years ahead.

A panel of judges, drawn from CIHS board members, identified the articles of exceptional merit that appear in the following pages. Judges reviewed articles from five consecutive issues and identified what they considered the best. In this process, no judge reviewed issues that included articles authored by them, nor did they consider book reviews, obituaries, or short notices. I want to thank my fellow judges: Ian Rankin, Charlene Elgee, Robert Shalka, Brian Casey, Robert Orr, Roy Christensen, Anne Arnott, Valerie de Montigny, and Diane Burrows. Gerry Maffre, Kurt Jensen, and Valerie de Montigny assisted editor Diane Burrows in preparing the final texts and selecting additional photographs for the issue.

To keep the size of this issue from becoming unwieldy, we extracted the first segment of longer articles and linked it to the full text in the original Bulletin. This editorial decision allowed us to showcase as many of the high-calibre contributions as possible within the general parameters of the Bulletin publication.

Are you a possible contributor to the CIHS Bulletin? We are always looking for suitable articles to feature in future issues. If so, or even if you are interested in Canada's immigration history, I encourage you to reach out to the CIHS at info@cihs-shic.ca to find out more about us and also to consider becoming a member.

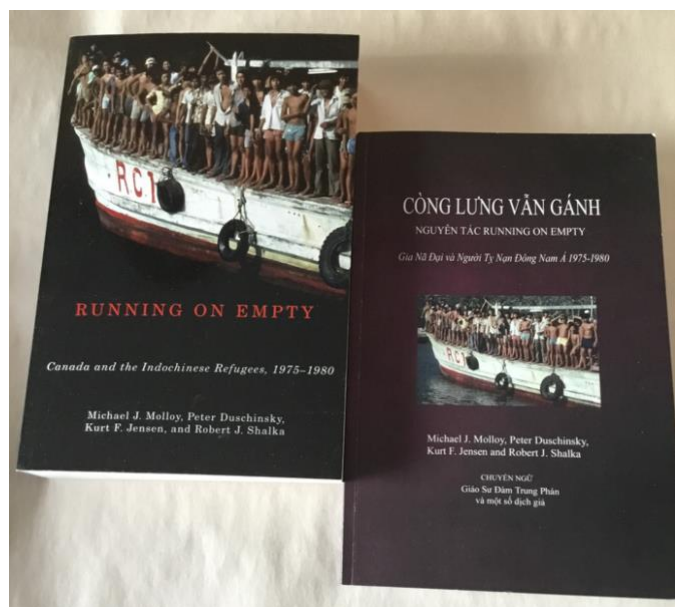
Finally, in a year that needs good news, allow me to highlight *Running on Empty: Canada and the Indochinese Refugees, 1975-1980*. It was published in April 2017, a decade after the Bulletin's 50th edition of April 2007. Four CIHS authors, with significant help from many CIHS members and other contributors, started the mammoth undertaking of researching this

book in 2014. Over the following three years, they wrote this history of Canada's Indochinese refugee movements from the primary perspective of Canadians involved in its many stages. The authors, Michael J. Molloy, Peter Duschinsky, Kurt F. Jensen, and Robert Shalka, and the main editors, the late Gail Devlin and Jo Molloy, poured a significant part of their lives and energies into drawing together and narrating the numerous accounts and memories contained therein.

While *Running on Empty* was acclaimed and appreciated, the writers and some prominent Vietnamese-Canadians found that there was still more to do: a translation to bring the history of the Canadian Indochinese refugee and humanitarian movements to a broader Vietnamese-speaking audience. Michael Molloy and others continued to work with counterparts in the Vietnamese-Canadian communities, notably Professor Phan Dam, who found and coordinated the right people to make these complicated translations, and Dr. Tri Hoang, the book's graphic designer and publisher. They and others secured funding for this venture from within the Vietnamese community. In 2020-2021, the translators finished work on the ten core history chapters, chapters on reception and long-term

integration, and the conclusion. They also added a brand-new chapter that brought together the best of *Running on Empty's* personal stories. The result is a 14-chapter book in Vietnamese, *Cồng Lưng Vẫn Gánh*, which translates into English as *Bent Back Still Carries*. This successful venture brings the *Running on Empty* narrative to an entirely new and significant readership. A labour of love, these editions will be enduring testaments to everyone involved in Canada's Indochinese refugee movements. The CIHS could not be prouder of its connection to all parties involved in this project and congratulates them heartily on this success.

Dawn Edlund
President, Canadian Immigration Historical Society
April 2022



Photograph courtesy of Michael J. Molloy

The first item in this collection informs readers about Canada's very limited immigration program in the 1950s and the various drivers for change that started to modernize it in the 1960s. We encourage readers to read the [full article](#) in Bulletin 96 (March 2021), as it explains and provides illuminating context for the various landmark developments in the country's immigration program, and hence its immigrant flows, in the 1960s through to the late 1980s. Raphael Girard joined the Department of Citizenship and Immigration in 1963 and for many years thereafter worked on immigration and refugee issues as well as abroad in immigration offices.

Effects of Postwar Immigration Selection Policy on Ethnocultural Diversity in Canada

Raphael Girard



In Canada's 2016 census data, 7,674,585 people identified themselves as members of a visible minority group. They represented 22.3 percent of the total population. Of these visible minorities, almost 70 percent were born outside the country and came to live in Canada as immigrants.

Contrast this with what prevailed when I joined the Department of Citizenship and Immigration in 1963. Results of the 1961 census show that only 1.33 percent of the non-aboriginal population in Canada consisted of members of visible minority groups. People of British origin dominated, while those coming from continental Europe were close behind.

No one disputes the fact that the most important contributor to the growth in ethnocultural diversity in Canada has been and remains the immigration program. My intention is to demonstrate how the transformation of the face of Canada was a direct result of the way in which the immigration program was managed, rather than of a deliberate choice by governments. Surprisingly there was very little legislation and even fewer parliamentary debates behind these dramatic shifts. Two key changes in immigration regulations created the legal framework, which was followed by vigorous implementation by public servants within the immigration program. This combination was the primary driver that created the Canada we see today, which will continue to become more diverse into the future. This is a situation where the plumbing (program delivery) was at least equal to, if not more important than, the policy.

In the years after the Second World War, immigration policy was controversial. Within the federal cabinet, the immigration portfolio was thought to be the graveyard of ministerial ambitions. Between 1910 and 1978 there was only one significant legislative change, and yet by 1978 the wheels had been already been set in motion to transform the ethnocultural composition of Canadian society. The questions are: how did that happen, and who was responsible?

During my 34 years in the immigration program, the last 10 of which were in senior management, bureaucrats had a remarkably free hand in shaping how and where immigration services were dispensed to the world at large. In most cases, rather than directing the department, ministers looked to it for guidance in dealing with the enormous pressures flowing from the immigration program and its multiple facets. There were exceptions: Robert Andras, Lloyd Axworthy, Flora MacDonald, Barbara MacDougall, and Sergio Marchi; but by and large ministers looked to the department for advice rather than imposing their vision on it.

I joined the immigration department in September 1963 shortly after graduating from the University of British Columbia. I left as assistant deputy minister of Operations in August 1997 to accept an appointment as ambassador to Yugoslavia. That period coincided with the program's transformation. I do not pretend that I had a major influence on the changes that made Canada a much more diverse and tolerant society than the one I grew up in, but I influenced some of the improvements that were made in policy and program delivery, and I was certainly a witness to the rest.

The numbers tell the story. In 1963, immigration to Canada was still primarily European—a pattern that began in colonial times and continued into the immediate postwar years when much of western Europe was in ruins from the effects of World War II.

Statistics for that year show that Canada welcomed 74,586 immigrants, and the top five source countries were Great Britain, the United States, Italy, Germany, and Portugal. Statistics for 1997, in contrast, show a transformation in sources and ethnic composition. The top five source countries were China, India, Taiwan, Sri Lanka, and the Philippines in a movement in excess of 216,000 immigrants.

European migration, which had accounted for more than 80 percent of the immigration flow in 1963, was reduced to 17 percent by 1997, while Asia, Africa, and the Middle East accounted for almost 68.5 percent—an almost complete inversion of the immediate postwar pattern.

How did this transformation happen? While there was waning interest in immigration to Canada among Europeans once the postwar economic miracle took root in Europe by the early 1970s, it was not just a matter of replacing Europeans with more numerous candidates from elsewhere. There were many other factors.

When I joined the federal government in 1963, immigrant selection was governed by the *Immigration Act* of 1952, which had been authored by Jack Pickersgill. It delegated authority to the government to decide, more or less at its discretion, who could be admitted for permanent residence. There were no classes of immigrants mentioned in that Act. The basic test for a person to be accepted as an immigrant was the ability to establish successfully. The 1952 Act did little to change the direction implicit in the *Immigration Act* of 1910, but it did provide a ministerial override on decisions by immigration officers to circumscribe concerns about their arbitrary decision making.

The regulations that followed the 1952 Act preserved preference for British subjects from the old Commonwealth and for citizens of countries in continental Europe. Curiously, it also included Egypt, Israel, Lebanon, and Turkey among preferred sources. Pickersgill was the minister behind Prime Minister Mackenzie King's speeches that supported the need for immigration but insisted that it should not change the character of the country. Application forms and landing records from that era still contained references to the holder's religion and ethnicity, although by 1963, these were no longer formal selection factors.

The 1952 Act also maintained a number of longstanding clauses that, by the time I started my career in immigration, were already considered anachronisms by my peers and more experienced colleagues. The prohibited classes barred homosexuals (who were lumped in with pimps and prostitutes); it excluded people who were public charges or unable to settle in Canada, and it prohibited the entry of people labeled as idiots, imbeciles, and morons. Immigrant selection could be arbitrarily denied to individuals based on their inability to adapt to Canada's climate or culture, which was seen as shorthand for a colour bar. Similarly, immigration could be denied based on the individual's habits with regard to the ownership of property, which excluded communal religious groups such as Hutterites and Doukhobors. The Act proudly proclaimed that decisions taken under the *Immigration Act* were not reviewable by any court.

Through the 1950s, Canada opened more widely to the world as it industrialized and developed a national identity. Canada became an active player in the United Nations system and a leader in the Commonwealth. The election of the Progressive Conservatives in 1957 provided an impetus for human rights reform, both domestically and in its immigration policy. The proclamation of the Canadian Bill of Rights in 1960 made it virtually impossible to continue to pursue an immigration policy consisting of preferred sources selected on the basis of race and ethnicity.

Initial Conservative government attempts to bring about an ambitious program of reform of the *Immigration Act* ran into difficulty almost immediately. In 1957, thanks to the Hungarian revolt and Suez debacle, more than 250,000 immigrants came to Canada, the second largest number since the turn of the century. With the economy in recession and poorly skilled people from Southern Europe outpacing British immigration year after year, the federal government felt pressure from Ontario to slow things down. A planned change to limit sponsorship rights to curb unskilled migration was shelved rather quickly after a bitter and well-organized backlash by Italian and other southern Mediterranean communities in southwest Ontario. Instead, the government resorted to less transparent administrative restraints while it searched for a means to increase the skill requirements for new immigrants.

The first woman appointed to the Diefenbaker Cabinet, Ellen Fairclough, was named Minister of Citizenship and Immigration and counseled to avoid parliamentary debate on immigration reform. She settled instead for a change in the immigration regulations in 1962. For the first time, anyone, anywhere in the world could qualify to immigrate to Canada if they could prove they had the skills and the means to establish successfully without assistance from government or family. I regard this as less an attempt to universalize access to Canada and broaden the number of source countries than an attempt to inject more skill content into the immigration flow to curb the flow of unskilled southern Europeans.

Even after 1962, the opportunity for many who would like to immigrate to Canada remained largely theoretical. Entire regions had no access to selection because everyone who wanted to settle in this country had to apply for and receive an immigrant visa before travelling to Canada. There was a mandatory personal interview with a visa officer as well as medical and other tests. The network of visa offices was biased toward the old policy and there were no plans in the works to change it substantially. Fully 23 of the 30 visa offices Canada operated abroad were in Europe, while there were only two in Asia, two in the Middle East, and one in Africa. Americans could simply present themselves at any border station.

The 1962 regulations also perpetuated some of the discriminatory provisions of the 1952 regulations. All Canadians had the right to sponsor immediate family living abroad, but only Canadians from Europe and the four Eastern Mediterranean

countries named above could sponsor extended family members. The 1962 regulations also retained the miniscule quotas on total immigration from the Indian subcontinent.

The watershed for fundamental change came in 1966–1967. The reform package was preceded by a government policy paper (known as a “White Paper”). Both emphasized matching immigration to skill shortages and did not set out to make the immigration movement more diverse. The problem they sought to rectify was the continuing large-scale intake of sponsored immigrants with skills that did not correspond to labour market shortages. There was no public policy review or parliamentary debate, but the process did elicit a fair amount of reaction, mainly from the ethnic communities that complained about the measures in the same way they had objected to the proposed restraints on extended family migration proposed in 1957.

Ed. Note: this article continues on [page 3](#), Bulletin 96, March 2021.

IMMIGRATION SELECTION SYSTEM (SHOWING MAXIMUM UNITS)		
	Nominated	Independent
A. EDUCATION & TRAINING	20	20
B. PERSONAL ASSESSMENT	15	15
C. OCCUPATIONAL DEMAND (IF "0" OCCUPATIONAL DEMAND, THE APPLICATION IS REFUSED UNLESS THE APPLICANT HAS "ARRANGED EMPLOYMENT" OR A "DESIGNATED OCCUPATION")	15	15
D. OCCUPATIONAL SKILL	10	10
E. AGE	10	10
F. ARRANGED EMPLOYMENT OR DESIGNATED OCCUPATION		10
G. LANGUAGE ENGLISH.....5 FRENCH.....5		10
H. RELATIVE		5
I. AREA DEMAND		5
* APPROVED APPLICATION BY RELATIVE IN CANADA	15 to 30	
TOTALS REDUCE BY 10 UNITS WHERE THERE IS NO ARRANGED EMP. OR DESIGNATED OCCUPATION	85 to 100	100
Nominator is Permanent Resident		
Nominator is Canadian Citizen		
SON OR DAUGHTER 21 OR OVER	30	25
MARRIED SON OR DAUGHTER UNDER 21	30	25
BROTHER OR SISTER	30	25
PARENTS OR GRANDPARENTS UNDER 60	30	25
UNMARRIED NEPHEW OR NIECE UNDER 21	30	25
NEPHEW OR NIECE 21 OR OVER	20	15
MARRIED NEPHEW OR NIECE UNDER 21	20	15
UNCLE, AUNT, GRANDSON OR GRANDDAUGHTER	20	15

PREPARED BY: DIRECTIVES SECTION
PROGRAMS & PROCEDURES BRANCH
NOVEMBER - 1974

DECISIVE FACTORS ON PAPER SCREENING--NOMINATED & INDEPENDENT CASES						
Units of Assessment at Paper Screening 40 OR LESS	Occupational Demand N/A	Valid Offer of Employment N/A	Designated Occupation N/A	Result on Paper Screening FAIL	Priority	
41 OR MORE	0	NO	NO	FAIL	N/A	
41 OR MORE	0	YES	NO	PASS	2(a)	
41 OR MORE	0	NO	YES	PASS	2(b)	
41 OR MORE	1 TO 15	YES	NO	PASS	2(a)	
41 OR MORE	1 TO 15	NO	YES	PASS	2(b)	
41 OR MORE	1 TO 15	YES	YES	PASS	2(a)	
41 OR MORE	1 TO 7	NO	NO	PASS	4	
41 OR MORE	8 TO 15	NO	NO	PASS	2(c)	
GLOBAL PRIORITY SYSTEM:						
PRIORITY 1	Sponsored Dependents		PRIORITY 2			
PRIORITY 3	Entrepreneurs		Independent Applicants, Nominated Relatives and Refugees			
PRIORITY 4	All others on a "first-come first-served" basis		(a) Destined to arranged employment (b) Destined to designated occupation (c) Occupational Demand is 8 to 15			

REFUGEES MAY, IN CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES, BE DEALT WITH IN ADVANCE OF PRIORITY CASES

Information reference card for visa officers, prepared by Canada's immigration department, showing the grid for Canada's "points system". Published in November 1974 (notated at the bottom of the first image). Fortunately, both sides of the card were retained and scanned! (Images courtesy: Michael J. Molloy)

The following excerpt from [Bulletin 70](#) (May 2014) looks at how a number of Ismaelis being persecuted in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (Zaire) were given refuge in Canada and discusses Canada's Oppressed Minority policy. All references are available in the original article. The author has corrected two statistics in the first three paragraphs that appeared in the original article.

Ismailis in Zaire

Michael Molloy

Anyone with a passing knowledge of Canadian immigration history is aware that in 1972, our country offered resettlement to approximately 6,000 Indo-Asians being expelled from Uganda by President Idi Amin. The resettlement operation was documented in detail by Roger Saint Vincent, who led the Canadian team in Uganda, in his memoir *Seven Crested Cranes*.

Those who came to Canada at that time included Ismaili Muslims, Goans, Sikhs, Hindus, and members of a half-dozen or so smaller religious communities. As the immigration process did not record people's religions, hard figures on the number from each community are not available. The Canadian team was instructed to accept people who qualified under the point system and then to concentrate on those who had no obvious place to go. Unlike other communities that had opted for British status, the Ismaili and Goan communities had taken out Ugandan citizenship. With the expulsion, their citizenship was tantamount to statelessness, and as a result many were accepted by Canada.

What is not so well known is that, in the next three years, Canada accepted more than 2,000 Ugandan Asians, mainly people who had been evacuated by the UNHCR to refugee camps in Europe. At the same time, Canada accepted as immigrants thousands of Asians from Kenya, Tanzania, and Zambia who were moving on under the pressure of "Africanization" in those countries. That seemed to be the whole story. But not quite.

A year or so ago, my colleague Robert Shalka mentioned that, as a young officer in training, he was given some files to review, one of which contained correspondence between then-Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau and the spiritual leader of the Ismaili community, His Highness the Aga Khan.

The correspondence indicated that the President of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (now known as Zaire), Sese Seko Mobutu, had taken a leaf from Idi Amin's book and was putting pressure on non-indigenous business people, including members of Zaire's small francophone Ismaili community. As most of them operated businesses in small towns, would it be possible, the Aga Khan apparently asked, for them to immigrate to Canada and set up shop in small towns in Quebec?

This is the kind of forgotten immigration incident our society likes to investigate. The first question that came to mind was: Would immigration statistics provide any clues? We asked our friends in CIC's Research and Evaluation unit about landings of people whose "Country of Last Permanent Residence" between 1972 and 1977 was Zaire. The results were surprising: 1972–12; **1973–52; 1974–1,275; 1975–360; 1976–70; 1977–32.**

Obviously something was happening from 1973 to 1976, although the numbers don't tell us who exactly was coming to Canada from Zaire during that period. If the pressure was on all small non-native businesses, it could have included Lebanese and Europeans as well as Ismailis. But clearly something was motivating people normally resident in Zaire to move to Canada.

Immigration from Zaire in the 1970s was handled by the Paris Manpower and Immigration office, and the management team in Paris in 1973 was led by Gilles Durocher (one of Canada's first university-educated foreign service officers—see our lead article by Nestor Gayowsky) and his newly arrived deputy, Anton Jurkovich. As Gilles and Anton are now retired and living in Montreal, we asked them what they recalled. Quite a lot as it turned out.

* . * . * . * . *

From Gilles Durocher: Anton, who has a beautiful memory, may be able to help you better and more with policy issues. Notwithstanding, I surely remember vividly having spent a few weeks in Kinshasa, Zaire, where I became sick while processing mainly Ismaili refugees. They were business/shop owners who had been working and living in Zaire for many years and who were told by decree that their business or shop was being nationalized and that, if they wanted to recuperate some money out of it, they had to, *as a good father would do*, instruct the newly designated Zairian owner to run *his new* business or shop. Mobutu issued the decree.

I did spend a few hectic weeks in Kinshasa to process these refugees, possibly in the neighborhood of 50? But my souvenirs are to the effect that relatively few refugees went to Canada, because the decree was soon rescinded as it was creating such havoc in the business community, as one may imagine.

I do not have more memories of this movement, except to say that I was much impressed by the high moral quality of these refugees, and I felt that, if they emigrated to Canada, they would soon become first class, well integrated immigrants with the halo of their Ismaili community.

* . * . * . * . *

From Anton Jurkovich : Je vois que tu es toujours aussi impliqué dans le maintien de la mémoire collective de l'histoire de l'immigration. Que ferons-nous sans toi ?

Your e-mail takes us back 40 years ago—to the last century! But I can vividly recall the events around this movement. I have not seen any correspondence on the subject between Prime Minister Trudeau and the Aga Khan, but I have no doubt that there was a clear political commitment on the part of the prime minister as they were friends. An additional indication was the pressure from HQ on the Paris staff to be on the ground without delay. At the time, as the senior officer and number two of the immigration section, I was the one designated to go to Kinshasa. However, as I did not have the proper immunization, there was to be a delay of four weeks before I could make it. This proved too long for Ottawa, and Gilles, who had the proper shots, ended up going in my place. Naturally, I have always regretted this lost opportunity.

Gilles spent some six weeks assessing the situation and interviewing candidates. There was no obvious rush on the part of Ismailis in Kinshasa, and I suspect they were hedging their bets. Events proved that they were right, as Mobutu changed his mind not long after. Nevertheless, there continued to be a steady trickle of applicants from the Ismaili community. A number who were selected and went to Canada eventually returned to their businesses in Zaire, having established some roots in Canada. This was most evident in the early 1990s, when I was back in Paris as head of the immigration and consular programs.

At that time, Zaire launched a new “nationalisation” program, and a number of Ismailis were again the target. However, by then they were Canadian citizens, mostly from the first wave of the 1970s. We were tasked in Paris to organize an evacuation of these citizens. The consular officer in Paris, then under my supervision, a fellow by the name of Lapointe, was sent to Kinshasa to organize the evacuation. The evacuees then transited through Paris, where paperwork was completed, and they were sent on their way to Canada.

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It is well established that Prime Minister Trudeau and the Aga Khan were friends. We know they were in contact during the early stages of the Ugandan expulsions (August to November 1972). The Aga Khan and his deputy for East Africa, Sir Eboo Pirbhai, visited Canada in late September 1972. CIHS recently discovered notes from a meeting on 28 September 1972, of the Aga Khan, Sir Eboo Pirbhai, and very senior officials in Manpower and Immigration, the Privy Council Office, and the departments of Finance and External Affairs. The notes indicate that the visitors were to dine with the prime minister that evening. While the legal frame-work at the time did not permit the government to cut a particular deal for Ugandan Ismailis as Ismailis, they could, and did, instruct the Canadian Kampala team to be receptive to anyone who was stateless or the holder of Ugandan citizenship—a status that was being routinely and arbitrarily terminated by the Ugandan authorities.

Ed. Note: this article continues on page 8 of Bulletin 70 (May 2014).



His Highness the Aga Khan and Begum Salima Aga Khan with Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau in Ottawa. (Photo Special Silver Jubilee Souvenir, 25 Years in Pictures, Islamic Publications, London)

The decision by the Department of Citizenship and Immigration to recruit university-educated foreign service officers in the late 1950s would change the immigration foreign service for evermore. The training was long and complex and demanded a certain standard be attained but resulted in better-prepared officers. The description in this article of how the work was done in those days is particularly interesting. The original article is from [Bulletin 70](#) (May 2014).

The Early Days of the Immigration Foreign Service

Nestor Gayowsky, with help from David Bullock

The second group of university graduates selected for Immigration's foreign service assembled for the first time on 3 June 1957 in the Woods Building (now Confederation Park). We had passed the foreign service examination and the subsequent board interviews held across the country and overseas. Our initial pay was \$350 a month, raised a year later to \$380. We felt rich.

Included in this group were Bill Grant, David Bullock, Elsa Amadio, Bill Marchak, Sam Kula, Pierre Bernier, Pierre Vachon, Gonzague Rivard, Ed Wieck, Otto Thiessen, Adair Banerd, Marcel Bedard, and Jean Frenette. The first group (including Gilles Durocher and Jim Turnbull) had started their training earlier in the year. The larger, third group (including Pierrette Picotte and Jacques Denault) started the month after.

Deputy Minister Laval Fortier welcomed our group personally. He said our presence reflected his wishes for a change in the approach our visa officers were taking in selecting immigrants. He made us feel we were part of a new departmental and foreign service elite. (Over a long period, we learned that other foreign service departments did not share his enthusiasm.)

The first two weeks were devoted to lectures by Citizenship and Immigration staff about their work. The next two weeks, we studied the *Immigration Act and Regulations*, which left most of us in a daze.

Our training plans were interrupted, however, by the aftermath of the 1956 Hungarian uprising. After a quick test of our knowledge of the Act and Regulations, Elsa Amadio, David Bullock, Pierre Vachon, and I were sent to the immigration office at 175 Bedford Road in Toronto. The rest of our group was dispatched to other immigration offices to help with the refugee workload.

In Toronto, working with interpreters, we were assigned to issue food vouchers and support payments. Such support was premised on the refugees making efforts to settle and find work. Afterwards some of us were transferred to Placement to find jobs for them. Many Canadian employers were very willing to provide Hungarians with jobs. Temporary housing was also provided to them: the Toronto office did a commendable job refurbishing the former Home for Delinquent Young Females situated at 17 West Lodge Ave.

Once the pressure of settling the refugees lessened, we returned to our comprehensive training program. Familiarity with the *Immigration Act and Regulations* and knowledge of their implementation in the field rounded out the training. Then we proceeded to learn about the clearing of passengers at airports, land border points, and seaports.

In those years, most people arriving from overseas travelled by ship, a less expensive option than air. In early September 1957, Bill Grant, David Bullock, and I were sent to the city of Québec to learn how to process immigrants arriving by ship. Our first ship, the SS *Hibernia*, produced some excitement. A supposed British crime boss was on board. As the ship docked, the quay filled with reporters. After a two-stage processing, he was refused entry and jailed locally because the department had no detention quarters. He returned to Britain on the same ship, as required by the *Immigration Act* at that time.

Our next "real" ship clearance occurred when we were ferried from Québec to Lévis and then took a train north to Pointe-au-Père, which is located at the mouth of the St. Lawrence River. The next morning, we were awakened by a sorrowful foghorn and greeted by heavy fog. After breakfast, we proceeded to the pilot boat station and rode out on the fog-bound river to rendezvous with *The Empress of Scotland*.

Two events occurred that remain with me to this day. The first was the emergence of a “whale” of a ship out of the dense fog—what a sight! The next was our transfer to the ship. We had to walk the proverbial gangplank between the ship and the pilot boat, on a 12-inch-wide board without a railing. The two vessels pressed against each other to maintain contact while the water between them rushed by at great speed and considerable noise. Each of us wondered if we would make it. Carrying my briefcases in one hand and with a deep breath, I lurched across, grabbing the hand of a seaman at the other end. We all made it. There were three more ships after that.

The purpose of meeting the ships was to allow them to make a quick turn-about once they reached port. The trip from Pointe-au-Père to the city of Québec took approximately seven hours, during which immigrants were processed and “landed”. When the processing ended and the totals of the ship’s passenger manifests and the immigration cards agreed, the assembled immigration officers joyously shouted “bingo”.

Those of us in Quebec worked at reception counters, handling inquiries; in admissions, dealing with sponsorship applications; or in investigations involving illegal immigrants, stowaways, or follow-up on delinquent assisted passage accounts. We also spent some days at the Lacolle highway crossing point and worked on the passenger clearance of railway travellers between New York City and Montréal.

In January 1958, the entire group returned to Ottawa for interviews to determine our readiness for posting overseas. There was cause to worry. Following the interviews, two of our group were discharged. One of them was a good friend who possessed the sharpest of minds and a sharper wit unappreciated in a bureaucratic environment. A few were sent on their cross-Canada tours, while others (me included) were assigned further training. For me, it meant another four months in Ottawa and two in the province of Quebec.

Ed. Note: this article continues at the bottom of page 2, [Bulletin 70](#) (May 2014)

The following article, from [Bulletin 54](#) (October 2008) is a first-hand account of setting up and running a small refugee resettlement movement from the Sudan in a time of civil strife and unstable government while putting in place the machinery for cooperation between Western governments and the UNHCR.

The Ethiopian Refugee Movement of the Early 1980s from Sudan to Canada

Peter Duschinsky

The Ethiopian refugee movement from Sudan to Canada started in early 1983. As the immigration program manager in Cairo, Egypt, responsible for Canada's immigration program in Sudan, I was charged with establishing and maintaining the program.

At the time, there were some 600,000 Ethiopian refugees in Sudan, escapees from the authoritarian Marxist regime of Mengistu Hailemariam and the various civil conflicts between several ethnically and politically based liberation movements inside Ethiopia. Most of the refugees were housed near Gedaref in eastern Sudan, close to the Ethiopian border and around the Red Sea port city of Port Sudan in camps set up by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) under the authority of the Sudanese government. There was also a smaller concentration of refugees living in the streets of Khartoum, the Sudanese capital.

All the religious and ethnic groups of Ethiopia were found among the refugees, including Christians, Muslims, and Jews, Amhara, Tigrinya, Somali, and Oromo, as well as other smaller ethnicities. Most refugees were young peasants, tribesmen, and nomads, with limited or non-existent educational backgrounds; often they were members of large broken families, with some family members in Sudan, other family members still in Ethiopia, still others in some Middle-Eastern or Western country, usually with no legal status.

Canada was third on the ground in establishing an Ethiopian refugee program out of Sudan. The U.S.A. already had a small program in place when we arrived, and Israel had a tiny clandestine operation to smuggle the Ethiopian Jews, the “Falashas”, from Sudan to Israel. (Later, the Israeli operation became quite important, moving thousands of people.) There were also small, intermittent efforts on the part of some European countries to help individual Ethiopian refugees to get to Europe, usually people urgently needing political asylum or medical treatment. We started out with a small target of 50 refugees that eventually grew to an annual target of 300. Our policy directive from Ottawa was to “select those refugees who really required Canada’s assistance”.

At first, the logistical and administrative difficulties of establishing a refugee movement from Sudan at a distance—however small that movement was to be at the outset—appeared extreme. Sudan had a radical Islamic government that barely tolerated the presence of Ethiopian refugees. The country's transportation infrastructure was very primitive, and Sudanese governance structures were ill-organized and weak, especially outside the capital.

At the outset, we needed to establish contact with UN and international agencies present on the ground. The UNHCR had a small branch office in Khartoum and tiny, one-person sub-branch offices in Gedaref and Port Sudan. When I first arrived in Khartoum, the UNHCR had one legal officer and one protection officer, but no resettlement officer. Later, a UNHCR resettlement officer position was established. However, during the time we were active in Sudan two UNHCR resettlement officers had to be medically evacuated: the first had a mental breakdown and seriously injured a refugee; the second contracted a difficult-to-treat strain of malaria. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) had a one-person branch operation in Khartoum. As our efforts took shape, it became obvious that only by relying on existing meagre UNHCR and IOM resources could we hope to establish a functioning refugee program.

My first meetings with UNHCR Khartoum were not promising. UNHCR officials stated that a tiny refugee movement to Canada would take up too much of the UN organization's inadequate resources in Sudan, would create unreasonable hopes among the refugee population, and would thereby worsen the already chaotic conditions in the camps. It would also cream off the educated elements among the refugees but leave behind in the camps large families, often headed by under-educated single mothers. My reply was that Canada's goal was to select those refugees who required Canada's assistance and that we would rely on UNHCR's experience in the field in helping us to determine who those refugees were. I emphasized that we would in no way undermine UNHCR efforts to assist refugees in the camps but that we were there to help to the maximum with those efforts. UNHCR officials replied that if this was the case, there were some refugees in the camps who had been politically active in Ethiopia against the Mengistu dictatorship and who feared for their lives at the hands of agents of the Ethiopian [regime] clandestinely active in the camps. Would we be able to consider their cases rapidly and move them rapidly, if this was required for their safety? I stated that we were there to attempt to work out a modus operandi to move difficult cases rapidly. I further stated that although we were not in a position to promise anything, we were prepared to move those who met Canada's requirements and who needed our urgent assistance.

Looking back at the movement as a whole, I would estimate that about 10 percent of our movement consisted of refugees who were in danger in Sudan and had to be moved as rapidly as possible.

Our meetings with IOM's Khartoum branch operation were much less difficult. UNHCR Khartoum, evidently working in close cooperation with IOM Khartoum, had forewarned IOM of our goals and requirements, and IOM's representative in Khartoum, a highly experienced field professional, showed herself ready to help with all the logistical aspects of enabling refugees to move to Canada. This included obtaining travel documents, arranging for transportation, and arranging and monitoring medical examinations under our oversight. These tasks were, in fact, considerably more complex than may appear at first sight. Travel document issuance and permission for international travel were under the control of Sudanese government authorities. Depending on a range of circumstances, this entailed engaging in constant delicate negotiations with senior Sudanese officialdom, which appeared to change its basic requirements on a monthly basis. As an example of the complexities involved, it should be noted that even though the refugees received UN refugee travel documents, the issuance of these documents remained under the control of the Sudanese government's refugee office, rather than the Khartoum UNHCR office. As well, the Sudanese government strictly controlled all international flights leaving Khartoum; on more than one occasion, refugee flights that had been arranged ahead of time were delayed by the government for no apparent reason.

Following these meetings and further meetings with the British embassy in Khartoum as well as with senior Sudanese officials, we were able to work out procedures that enabled us rapidly to select our initial target of 50 refugees and then to increase it relatively rapidly, first doubling it and then gradually over a two-year period, increasing it to 300 government-sponsored refugees per year. The program depended on close permanent coordination with the two international agencies in Khartoum, often relying, especially in delicate cases, on the communications facilities of the British embassy in Khartoum.

At all times, the basic principles of our program were to select refugees who met Canada's refugee eligibility and admissibility requirements and who were in immediate danger and needed to leave Sudan quickly. By definition, most of the refugees falling within these two groups were relatively well-educated male refugees. This left the large mass of ill-educated refugees, often in family groups headed by single women, outside the scope of our program. However, right from the outset, several Canadian humanitarian and religious groups were interested in sponsoring some of the more difficult-to-settle refugee cases. We had a series of meetings both in Cairo and in Khartoum with representatives of interested Canadian groups, outlining to them the possibilities and practical modalities of privately sponsoring refugee

families. Subsequently, through group and private refugee sponsorships, we were able to move a number of otherwise difficult-to-accept family groups. This helped to ensure that our movement was not overly weighted with better-educated Ethiopian males. I would estimate that at the peak of the movement, we were issuing visas to and moving about 40 to 50 refugees per year—most of them members of large families—sponsored by private Canadian groups, mainly Canadian churches.

From this distance in time, it is hard to imagine the logistical difficulties of running a refugee movement in Sudan in the early 1980s. There were no scheduled flights between Khartoum, Gedaref, and Port Sudan, so we had to rely on flights arranged by various international agencies like the UNHCR and UN Development Programme as well as private companies doing business within Sudan. At one point, my flight to Port Sudan on a single-engine Cessna had a minor crash with me and two other passengers on board; fortunately, there were no injuries. In Gedaref, there were no hotel facilities, so we had to arrange lodgings in homes of UN officials. At another time, lodging arrangements fell through, so I stayed in an African “guest house” in a room that could not be locked, with an outdoor biffy, and an outdoor fire as cooking facilities. Often, we had to interview refugees who feared for their lives in “strange” locations in Khartoum. Still, we managed to do our scheduled interviews as required; managed to help a number of refugees in difficult circumstances; and managed to cooperate in an effective manner with Canadian sponsoring organizations. A number of the families we accepted and moved to Canada were admissible only with the help of these organizations.

In all, despite the difficulties, I recall my participation in the Ethiopian refugee movement from Sudan as one of the highlights of my career.

Sheena Trimble first approached CIHS while doing her doctoral research on women and the Canadian immigration service. We facilitated several connections and are pleased to note that she successfully defended her doctoral thesis at the Université d'Angers in France. In two 2015 Bulletin articles, written in French (Bulletins [74/August](#) and [75/December](#)), Dr. Trimble discusses the challenges facing women and their growing presence and impact in the Canadian immigration domestic and foreign services from 1950 to 1967. Her two-part article draws on her thesis "Femmes et politiques d'immigration canadiennes (1945-1967) : au-delà des assignations du genre ?" This is a condensed and translated version. All references are available in the original.

Femmes agentes du service extérieur (1957-1967), Partie 1 et Partie II

Sheena Trimble

In [part one](#), Trimble examined the limited openings for women in immigration officer positions. This situation shifted somewhat under the ministry of Ellen Fairclough, the first female federal minister of Citizenship and Immigration. Nevertheless, the culture of the immigration service was not yet ready to go very far. There were strong biases for hiring men with military backgrounds and against crediting academic credentials. This combination penalized growing numbers of female applicants with university degrees, particularly so in the overseas arm of the department. But for 1957 recruit Elsa Amadio, “The pioneers of the fifties realized that they belonged to a tradition that placed women in a subordinate position to men. They worked hard to be given the opportunity to acquire the different roles to which they aspired”.

A formal shift began in 1957 when the immigration department, External Affairs, and Industry Canada jointly recruited men and women as foreign service officers (FSO). Few female officers were hired—five in the first two annual recruitments.



Sheena Trimble, le jour de sa soutenance.

In [part two](#), Trimble examined the impact that these early female recruits could have on policy and program matters. While the immigration department wanted its FSOs to be on equal footing with Foreign Affairs and Trade FSOs, civil service and job realities often conspired against them. Marriage usually led to the end of an FSO career—as it then did in many other fields of endeavour. Women were usually posted to countries with easier living conditions (i.e., western Europe) and fewer challenges in program delivery, so a lack of diverse experiences minimized their promotion opportunities.

Trimble touches on the recruitment exercise of 1967 as important for the acceptance of women in the immigration foreign service: 25 percent of the new FSOs were women. Some, interviewed by Trimble, attribute this jump to the department's realization that their female predecessors were highly competent, and to the greater value being placed on higher university education in the late 1960s.

Several of those early female recruits whom Trimble interviewed spoke about their relations with colleagues as being generally good. Some still felt that the more senior managers were hesitant if not outrightly averse to supporting them. A sense of support from other and more advanced women was hard to come by. With so few women in the service, it was not always easy to get a posting where a senior female officer could serve as a role model.

Misogyny did persist, often manifesting itself in a bureaucratic refusal to try to accommodate posting preferences of women so that they could carry on a normal married life. This reluctance led some early female recruits to leave the service. These attitudes, other challenges, and departures meant there were few with the seniority and experience that could lead to higher leadership positions with influence on policy and program decisions, according to Trimble.

In conclusion, Trimble writes :

Dans un environnement et à une époque où les femmes sont marginalisées hiérarchiquement et géographiquement, avoir une influence sur les politiques d'immigration de l'intérieur du ministère n'est pas nécessairement plus aisé que de l'extérieur. Leur outil d'influence le plus accessible est le pouvoir discrétionnaire qu'elles peuvent mobiliser dans l'attribution d'une dizaine de points selon les « qualités personnelles » des candidats à l'immigration. Néanmoins, comme agentes du service extérieur, elles deviennent également des agentes de changement qui, en croissant en nombre et en expérience, accroissent leur influence. Comme l'explique Elsa Amadio, elles deviennent également plus exigeantes dans leurs attentes : « The more demanding women of the 1960s who wanted and actively sought equal treatment with their male colleagues represented the transition generation that brought in the feminist movement and the leap forward of the 1970s onward ». Elle précise néanmoins que le saut en avant ne mène pas nécessairement à l'égalité, même de nos jours.



Viggi Ring



Liz Boyce



Joyce Cavanagh-
Wood



Elsa Amadio



Une partie des ASE recrutés en 1967. G à d : Robert Romano, Margaret Jones, Joyce Cavanagh, Gordon Whitehead, George Morton, Donald Cameron, Eleanor Stadenyk (Collection personnelle de Maria Beaulne)

The article excerpted below is taken from [Bulletin 82](#) (September 2017) and narrates how Jacques Beaulne became Canada's first immigration program manager at the Embassy of Canada in Moscow, U.S.S.R., and what transpired once he was in place. This bilingual article offers a fascinating personal insight into Canada-Soviet diplomacy of the mid-1970s regarding the movement of Soviet (and Canadian) citizens. The complete article also offers a compelling glimpse into aspects of the Beaulnes' lives during those years.

Moskva, the Genesis of an Immigration Office

Jacques Beaulne

Good News

It was sometime in April 1974, two years after my arrival in Milan, Italy, that the telephone rang in my office at the Canadian consulate general. The call was from Ottawa Headquarters Personnel. The conversation went roughly this way: "... your file shows that some time ago you indicated an interest in being posted to Moscow. Are you still willing to go there?" I was astonished at the offer, but quite pleased. True, I had recorded an interest in a Moscow posting, having studied basic Russian at university, but I was realistic enough to recognize that Canada had no Immigration office there and that it would be some time, if ever, before thought could be given to selecting immigrants in the Soviet Union.

It was explained to me, however, that, after a long period of negotiating between Immigration and External Affairs, the latter was prepared to allow one of our officers into the workers' paradise. "If you want the job, get yourself back here by the end of August. We are signing you up for a 10-month semi-immersion Russian language course at the Canadian Forces Foreign Language School". Overnight my Milan posting was cut in half. No more Italian lessons!

Mauvaise Nouvelle

Les cours de russe allaient bien, ma réinstallation à Ottawa aussi. Je ne pouvais pas demander mieux. Mais moins d'un mois après le début des cours, ce fut le coup de tonnerre. On me convoqua à la Centrale pour m'annoncer que l'ambassadeur Robert Ford à Moscou avait changé d'idée. C'était totalement prématuré, selon lui, d'avoir un agent d'immigration dans son ambassade. Il n'en était plus question et, de toute façon, il avait déjà choisi l'agent qu'il voulait à la place prévue pour un agent d'immigration. Une fois le choc digéré, je me suis mis en tête de convaincre, avec succès, le Service du Personnel de me laisser continuer et compléter le cours, quitte à passer les deux prochaines années à convaincre les Affaires Extérieures et surtout l'ambassadeur Ford que l'affectation d'un agent du service des visas en U.R.S.S. était souhaitable.

Once I had completed the course, I was assigned a deputy director job in the European division at HQ while the powers-that-be continued to lobby External Affairs. In the autumn of 1976, word came that I would be seconded to the consular division early in the new year in preparation for the 1977 posting rotation. Ambassador Ford had given his formal agreement to the two-year posting—but he wanted me there no later than early June! A compressed on-the-job consular course, posting briefings, and a short refresher course in Russian kept me busy for most of that winter and spring until the move.

Bonjour Moscou

L'arrivée de ma famille et moi à Moscou en tant que Conseiller et Consul fut excellente. Pas seulement avons-nous été chaleureusement accueillis par l'ambassadeur, mais aucune remarque pénétrante de sa part ne fit surface pour me rappeler que j'étais un intrus, imposé par Ottawa, dans un sanctuaire longtemps chassé gardée pour « ses » agents. De toute façon j'étais là comme agent des Affaires extérieures et non comme agent d'immigration, me rappela-t-il. Pour faire contraste avec l'accueil, j'avais bien été prévenu que la pièce qui me servirait de bureau n'allait pas m'impressionner. Effectivement, il s'agissait d'un recoin à peine assez grand pour pouvoir y entrer, grâce aux bureau et classeur qui occupaient 95 pour cent de ce cabanon, situé à même le « salon rouge », genre de grande chambre de réception remontant, comme le restant de la chancellerie, à la période prérévolutionnaire. Mon poste de travail n'était pas dans la zone sécuritaire de la mission ce qui pouvait rendre mal commode certain éléments de mon travail. Par contre cela facilitait le rapport avec mon personnel de soutien canadien ainsi que nos employés locaux.



Bolshoi Theatre decorated for October Revolution Day (National Day)

The Closet

The de facto closet, while warm and cozy, was not user friendly. My Canadian secretary and Canadian consular clerks were located in the visa registry, a long way down the hall. My two locally engaged staff, who were not allowed in the visa registry, were in a third room closer to the “red room”. As in all missions, any classified documents were to be left in the secure part of the embassy. When such material arrived, we would be called by the Canadian registry or cipher clerk “to come and read such” correspondence, which would of course be filed in the main secure registry.

Case Files

As I was not officially in Moscow as an Immigration officer, immigration files as such, namely applications for permanent residence, were handled out of Vienna's immigration office and were simply known as “family reunification” cases. Without exception all such cases were sponsored by close relatives in Canada. There were no independent applications in the system for the simple reason that Soviet authorities did not allow non-sponsored cases out of the country. The only exception to the Soviet practice of not letting able-bodied citizens emigrate was the movement of Soviet Jews to Israel, providing they first renounced their Soviet citizenship. Ironically, the U.S.S.R. had no diplomatic relations with Israel but would allow their Jewish citizens who had not worked in “sensitive” positions to emigrate there. The Netherlands embassy, which looked after Israeli affairs on instruction from Jerusalem, issued the Israeli visas. Occasionally, the Dutch consul would discreetly inform me that he suspected such and such a person intended to apply at the Canadian embassy in Vienna while transiting Austria, rather than proceeding to Israel.

Cas Consulaires

Du côté consulaire (tel que traditionnellement connu dans le service extérieur du Canada—c'est à dire, l'assistance aux Canadiens), il y avait aussi suffisamment de pain sur la planche pour me garder occupé. Un Canadien en détresse en U.R.S.S. pouvait rarement s'en sortir sans l'intervention de l'ambassade. Les cas que nous avons vécus étaient souvent complexes—hospitalisation, exportation illégale d'objets d'art, décès, emprisonnement, double nationaux incapables d'obtenir un permis de sortie et, bien sûr, passeports perdus. Contrairement aux demandes de visa, le travail consulaire nous demandait souvent d'improviser à la dernière minute à cause d'événements imprévus.

Visitor Visas

The bulk of visa applications were called “official” visitor visa applications. They were all submitted by the Foreign Ministry on behalf of Soviet sport teams, of all levels and disciplines, and their entourage, as well as on behalf of Soviet business persons. The entourage would sometimes contain applicants who were turned down by screening authorities in Ottawa who determined that their presence in Canada was not in our best interest. The refusals rarely caused flack—as if they had been expected! Groups travelling under the care of Soviet tourism agencies such as Sputnik and Intourist constituted the heavy summer work-loads, as did diplomatic visa applications. Any visitor visa, whether private or official, had to wait until Ottawa had completed the necessary screening.

In terms of volume, private visitors came next. They usually consisted of elderly persons sponsored for a short visit by a relative in Canada. Refusals on our part were not frequent because we knew that the Soviets would keep an immediate family member behind in the U.S.S.R. to ensure the person's return. Furthermore, our file would always include the host's approved-by-the-CIC visitor sponsorship letter. Sometimes we would see travel refusals by the Soviet passport authority. The most common reason: the host in Canada had deserted the Red Army at the end of World War II. Next common reason: the host in Canada did not return to the U.S.S.R. after he was allowed to visit Canada.

Not Everyone Gets to Enter the Mission

One interesting aspect of being assigned to the Soviet Union was getting used to the sight of every visitor to our embassy being stopped and interrogated by the armed militiaman (Interior Ministry police) at the pill-box by the front door of the embassy. Countless were turned away because "they had no official business with us".

Le Service d'immigration est instauré

C'est à l'été 1978 que la CEIC et le Ministère des Affaires Extérieures se sont enfin mis d'accord pour établir de façon officielle la présence d'un bureau d'immigration au sein de l'ambassade à Moscou. Même si mon détachement au MAE prit fin, et que les dossiers d'immigrants ainsi que les budgets appropriés furent transférés de Vienne, à vrai dire rien ne changea dans mes fonctions. Les dossiers d'immigrants, tous parrainés par un proche parrain au Canada, consistaient d'un minuscule 70 cas environ, mais tous compliqués. C'était la fameuse « liste de réunification de famille de l'U.R.S.S. ».



Diplomatic corps viewing the military parade in Red Square on National Day

La « Liste »

Cette liste, depuis des décennies était le mépris du Ministère des Affaires étrangères de l'U.R.S.S. (le MID). Chaque année l'ambassadeur Ford, (et je n'ai jamais trop compris si son excellence jouissait de cette tâche annuelle ou non) accompagné de son consul, se présentait au MID et remettait au sous-ministre responsable pour le Canada la liste des candidats pour qui notre gouvernement intervenait pour raisons humanitaires. Ces personnes, longtemps séparées de leurs proches, avaient pour la plupart subi un refus de départ pour causes inacceptables par le Canada. Comme pour les visiteurs déboutés ci-haut mentionnés, on nous donnait des explications insensibles et brutales, répétées année après année, qui se rapportaient au départ « inadmissible » du garant au Canada, de désertion qui remontait à la Deuxième guerre, ou le non-retour du garant après un voyage à l'étranger. Ou bien, le candidat avait acquis dans son travail des connaissances « sensibles » qui, de l'étranger, pourraient nuire au bien-être de l'U.R.S.S. Il pourrait s'agir d'un garant conjoint ou d'un enfant adulte, par exemple, d'un musicien ou d'un sportif qui aurait demandé asile au Canada. Le refus était ferme, comme l'était le Rideau de Fer. Et ce rituel, qui recommençait chaque année depuis des décennies, allait se poursuivre encore jusqu'à l'implosion de l'U.R.S.S.

Ed. note: This article continues on page 14 of Bulletin 82 (September 2017)



The article below, which first appeared in Bulletin 77 (June 2016), and has been updated by the authors for this issue, describes a recently completed research project examining immigration policies and trends that affected physicians' immigration to Canada in the post-World War II decades. Sasha Mullally is Professor of History at the University of New Brunswick. David Wright is Professor of History at McGill University. The authors have recently published Foreign Practices: Immigrant Doctors and the History of Canadian Medicare. The authors thanked the CIHS in the book's acknowledgments. All references are available in the original article.

Doctors on the Move: Physician Migration and Canadian Immigration History

Sasha Mullally and David Wright

In 2015, at the height of the European and Middle East refugee crisis, the Canadian government fast-tracked the acceptance of 25,000 Syrian refugees. In what was no doubt a signal event of the new Liberal government, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau waited at Toronto's Pearson airport to personally welcome the first planeload of refugees to the country. What was less reported is that on the plane the exhausted passengers were asked to wait temporarily before they disembarked, while political attachés shepherded an ideal representative for the inevitable photo-op. Many political leaders in the United States, in the throes of campaigning for the American primaries, had framed the Syrian refugees as potential perpetrators, rather than victims, of terror. As a consequence, the advisors to the new prime minister were eager to provide the most reassuring face to this wave of new Canadians. The selection was Vanig Garabedian, an obstetrician-gynaecologist, his wife Anjilik Jaghlassian, and their three daughters. "Welcome home," Trudeau enthused, as he picked out parkas for the foreign-trained doctor and his tired but photogenic family.



Dr Vanig Garabedian and family arrive at Pearson airport, 2015. Getty images. Reprinted with permission.

It may have gone unnoticed by all but a very few historians, but the scene was strikingly reminiscent of one that occurred in 1972, when the civil servants of another prime minister named Trudeau organized a similar photo-op, attempting to assuage rising popular anxiety over the wave of immigrants flooding into the country. In that instance, the Department of Manpower and Immigration organized a media event to celebrate the "10-millionth immigrant". How a civil servant could have possibly identified the *actual* 10-millionth immigrant was beyond anyone's ken, but it seemed reasonable that someone, sometime



Dr. Richard Swinson and family arrive in Canada, 1972. Personal collection. Reprinted with permission.

during the calendar year 1972, would approximate the 10-millionth documented immigrant to Canada since Confederation. Civil servants were keen to put a positive face on the new era of immigration that had witnessed tens of thousands of immigrants from non-traditional countries. Out of a short list of several candidates, the bureaucrats selected a doctor, this time British-trained psychiatrist Richard Swinson, who landed first in Montreal airport with his wife Carolyn and three children before being escorted to Ottawa to be welcomed in person by Immigration Minister Bryce Mackasey. They were dubbed the "ideal family", and their arrival was covered by several national newspapers as well as *Time* (Canada) magazine. When it comes to immigration reporting, the arrival of physicians evidently makes for good copy.

This conjuncture of immigration, public policy and medical practice appears less curious and coincidental when put into a broader historical context. Health-care practitioners have been at the heart of several debates over immigration in the post-World War II era. Indeed 1972, the very year the 10-millionth immigrant arrived, was also the year that the World Health Organization estimated that no fewer than 140,000 doctors were practising in a country other than the one in which they had been trained. This transnational migration of physicians was particularly pronounced in the English-speaking world, where

doctors trained in Commonwealth countries, such as India, were migrating *en masse* to Britain, Canada, and the United States. Canada occupied an unusual position, being in the top ten "receiving" countries as well as the top ten "donor" countries (losing scores of doctors every year to the United States). And although there were hundreds of doctors moving from poorer to richer countries—a phenomenon dubbed then (as now) a "brain drain"—the flow of physicians was more complicated than such a unidirectional cliché would suggest. Hundreds of doctors were also migrating between and among industrialized jurisdictions, such as the many British-born and British-trained doctors who moved to Canada in the 1950s and 1960s.

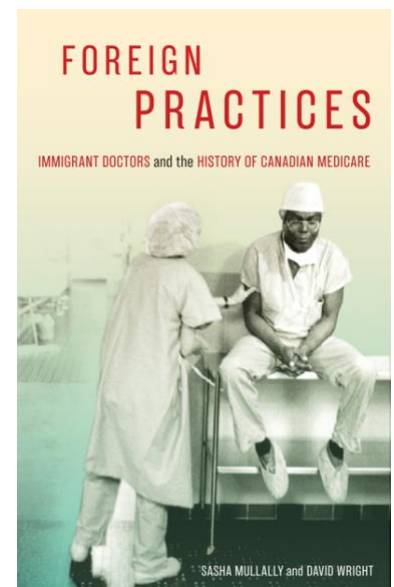
Our multi-year project, funded principally by the Canada Research Chairs program, sought to understand the transnational migration of physicians in the second half of the twentieth century, looking from Canada outwards to the world. It was our contention that the history of foreign-trained doctors has been under-researched and under-appreciated both in the history of Canadian medicine and, more particularly, in the history of Medicare. The struggle of Tommy Douglas and his Cooperative Commonwealth Federation (CCF) government to establish free hospitalization (and later medical services) in Saskatchewan is a deeply important historical narrative, reaching almost mythical status in this country. It is not a coincidence that Douglas was voted the “Greatest Canadian of All Time” in a CBC poll some 10 years ago. But Douglas was only the best-known actor in a much larger story. If one goes back to the 1960s, many of the original proponents of universal health insurance acknowledged that Medicare would have utterly collapsed if it were not for the influx of foreign-trained doctors and nurses. Indeed, were it not for the mass importation of mostly British physicians by Samuel Wolfe during the infamous 1962 Saskatchewan Doctors’ Strike, the Medicare dream would have died at the moment of its inception.

In the history of immigration to Canada, medically-trained migrants formed an important vanguard in the transformation from a “race-based” system of immigration to one that was judged, theoretically at least, on “merit”. As Karen Flynn has documented in her excellent study of the immigration of nurses to Britain and Canada, Caribbean nurses were permitted into Canada under the “exceptional merit clause” of the 1952 *Immigration Act* at a time when Black applicants were largely denied entry. Similarly, the first generation of post-war South Asian immigrants to Canada and the United States most often included doctors (or engineers) desperately needed for the evolution and implementation of the post-war welfare state. This situation was reflected throughout the English-speaking world, as foreign-trained medical practitioners migrated from Cape Town to Canberra and from Lahore to Lancashire, for a multitude of professional, personal, and political reasons.

In our new book—*Foreign Practices*—we reassess the waves of foreign-trained doctors and their impact on health services in their adopted communities. We drew on many wonderful and rich primary sources. First, since licensed medical practitioners in Canada must be reported to provincial colleges of physicians and surgeons, a printed annual volume of all physicians for the country exists for the post-war years (the annual list became available in digitized form in the 1990s). In these census-like enumerations of medical practitioners that were compiled by the Canadian Medical Association, the place of medical practice and of undergraduate education is included, as well as the first year of licensure, providing an imperfect proxy for nation of origin and time of arrival. Annual reports of the Department of Citizenship and Immigration also append a table of the nation of origin of new immigrants as well as their “intended occupation” (“physicians and surgeons” being one category). In addition to this, provincial medical associations published their own estimates of the in-flow of doctors to (and out-flow from) the country, often warning that the domestic supply of doctors was insufficient over the longer term and that medical school capacity needed to be urgently expanded.

We supplemented these quantitative sources with rich oral testimonies. The Royal Commission on Health Services (Hall Commission), which toured the country from 1961 to 1964, published transcripts of participants decrying the “doctor shortage” in many parts of the country. The witness evidence is compelling. Local hospital administrators and medical chiefs made it clear that the principal impediment to the establishment of universal health insurance in Canada was the insufficient supply and, equally important, geographical distribution of doctors and nurses. Individual Canadians appeared before the Commissioners to tell their stories about the absence of qualified medical practitioners in their home towns. These sources were supplemented by oral histories of the foreign-trained doctors themselves. Oral history provided us with detailed life histories that, when aggregated, revealed important themes in the migration of highly skilled migrants. We determined fairly early on that there were significant differences between various national groups. For example, the reason for the migration of British-born doctors differed fundamentally from that of South African doctors under Apartheid, or Indian doctors in post-Partition India, or Ugandan-Asian doctors expelled by Idi Amin in 1972. There were over 100 source countries from whence these doctors came. As a consequence, in the book we focussed on eight countries-of-origin that were of particular interest: Pakistan, Britain, South Africa, Haiti, the United States, Taiwan, Czechoslovakia and Egypt. We also explored clusters of foreign-trained doctors by geography, such as the importance of foreign-trained doctors in company or industry towns, such as Sydney, Nova Scotia, and Thompson, Manitoba.

All medical historians appreciate that the transnational migration of health human resources has a history longer than the last third of the 20th century. Canada has received foreign-born doctors (often decommissioned army and navy surgeons) since the earliest generations arrived in New France. And in the 19th century, the immigration of medical practitioners with



Foreign Practices front cover. Reprinted with permission, McGill-Queen's University Press

foreign credentials posed a central challenge to the organization, registration and self-governance of the Canadian medical profession. In our new book we are particularly interested, however, in the contemporary period of 1957–1984. The first date is the year the *Hospital Insurance and Diagnostic Services Act* was passed, inaugurating federal co-funding of provincial acute-care hospitals. The period includes the implementation of provincial health insurance in Saskatchewan, the aforementioned Saskatchewan Doctors' Strike, the Hall Commission, the introduction of the points system in immigration, and the *Medical Care Act*, which would ultimately, with provincial enabling legislation, usher in universal health insurance (Medicare) for the whole country. The 1984 *Health Care Act*, the end-point of our study, is widely seen as the legislative completion of Medicare in Canada. It also signalled a new era, when the “open door” policy for doctors had ended, and after which it became extremely difficult for foreign-trained doctors to become licensed in this country. Throughout our book, we have combined immigration history with the history of Medicare, shedding new light on this important era in Canadian history and a hitherto neglected aspect of multicultural Canada.

The next article is by Craig Goodes, former director of the war crimes program at the former Citizenship and Immigration Canada. It was first published in Bulletin 60, (January 2011). It gives a clear overview of measures that Canada put in place, following the publication of the Deschênes Commission report in December 1986, to identify and remove World War II and modern war criminals from this country (and indeed bar them from entering).

Canada's War Crimes Program

Craig Goodes

Introduction

Canada's historical response to the multitude of global conflicts, and the atrocities committed in the midst of those conflicts, has taken many different forms. In keeping with its commitment to multilateralism, Canada has actively supported efforts in the international community to create legal and institutional frameworks to combat war crimes (a term used here to include genocide and crimes against humanity—not just violations of the rules of war). These efforts have included the creation of several *ad hoc* tribunals to seek justice for victims of atrocities in such places as the Former Yugoslavia, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, and Cambodia. The momentum behind these *ad hoc* efforts eventually led to the passage, with significant Canadian involvement, of the Statute of the International Criminal Court in July 1998.

Closer to home, the Government of Canada has sought, through a variety of legislative, policy, and program responses, to ensure that Canada will not be a safe haven for war criminals. Canada's prosperity and our reputation as a lawful, peaceful society has traditionally acted as a magnet for immigrants and refugees; unfortunately, these same qualities may also attract those who have committed serious human rights offences and who seek to put their past crimes behind them and start over elsewhere. We ask a lot of our front-line colleagues, in visa offices and at ports of entry, in requiring them to detect such persons, who can be very adept at concealing their backgrounds. Over time, various support mechanisms—a solid legislative and regulatory framework, analytical and research support, training and technology—have been put in place to help reduce the vulnerability of our officers, and of Canadian society.

History

A detailed history of the war crimes program is beyond the scope of this article, but more information can be found in various annual reports and program evaluations available on the websites of CIC, CBSA, and the Department of Justice. For our purposes, a brief summary will help illustrate the complexity of this program and set the context for the many challenges it presents to practitioners in several government departments.

In 1987, the Commission of Inquiry on War Criminals (the Deschênes Commission) produced a list of 883 persons suspected of committing war crimes during the Second World War. In response, the Government created the War Crimes Section of the Department of Justice and extended the mandate of the RCMP Special Investigative Unit, originally created to assist Justice Deschênes. Between 1987 and 1992, four prosecutions were pursued. In 1994, when the Supreme Court of Canada upheld the acquittal of Imre Finta, the Government determined that prosecution under the *Criminal Code* would no longer be the preferred course of action; rather, revocation of citizenship under the *Citizenship Act* and deportation under the *Immigration Act* would be pursued. To date, over 1,800 investigations have been opened into allegations of war crimes from the Second World War era; this is more than twice as many as contemplated by the Deschênes Commission.

In the late 1980s, as Canada and other Western democracies experienced increased refugee claimant flows, there was a growing realization that within these movements were relatively small, but nonetheless worrisome, numbers of persons who were perpetrators, not victims, of serious human rights violations. Various amendments to the *Immigration Act and Regulations* were pursued over a number of years to render inadmissible to Canada persons involved in war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide, and to deny them the benefits of refugee protection under the Geneva

Convention as well as the various humanitarian reviews available to failed refugee claimants in Canada. In 1993, Canada introduced a unique legislative provision—the "designated regimes" clause—which rendered inadmissible to Canada senior officials of governments designated by the minister by reason of their engagement in war crimes, terrorism or gross human rights violations. To date, nine such regimes have been designated by the minister.

To respond to the increased demands created by these legislative initiatives and by the increased targeting of Canada by alleged war criminals, CIC established a War Crimes Section in 1996. The original section was composed of three staff. In 1998, Cabinet approved new funding—\$46.8 million over three years—for CIC, DOJ, and the RCMP, to establish a collaborative model for Canada's efforts to combat the presence of war criminals on our territory. An Interdepartmental Operations Group was set up to direct and coordinate an integrated approach. CIC's share of the funding was devoted to a variety of pressing requirements: an increase in staffing to 16 in the Headquarters Unit, as well as dedicated resources for domestic regions and visa offices; development of IT infrastructure to support enhanced analysis and research; creation of a war crimes intelligence unit to enhance access to and utilization of classified information in support of casework; and development of procedural guidelines and training programs to support decision-makers in the field.

In December 2003, the Government created the Canada Border Services Agency; this had major implications for CIC and the war crimes program. CIC's enforcement and intelligence mandate was at that time assigned to CBSA, followed in October 2004 by its port-of-entry inspection responsibilities. While the creation of CBSA introduced a new and significant player in the integrated program, CIC nevertheless retained key responsibilities, with its ongoing mandate for visa-issuance, the granting of status in Canada under the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act*, and revocation of citizenship.

Over time, the need to ensure an integrated approach to the war crimes issue has required change within the Interdepartmental Operations Group (IOG). With a steering committee of senior managers created to guide strategy, the IOG has evolved into the Policy Coordination and Operations Group, which guides day-to-day operations and case-strategies. With four key pieces of legislation in play—the *Crimes Against Humanity and War Crimes Act*, the *Extradition Act*, the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act*, and the *Citizenship Act*—it is critically important that decisions as to the most appropriate course of action to take in any given case are carefully considered and endorsed by all program partners. In this way, the partners support each other in seeking outcomes which best reflect the interests of Canada, our international obligations, and the need for the victims of these horrible acts to see justice done.

Results

Involvement in the commission of war crimes is, regrettably, a truly global phenomenon. At any given time, several dozen countries are represented in the modern war crimes caseload. Cases described in annual reports over the years have included members of the military (Argentina, Colombia, Croatia, Burundi, Bosnia-Herzegovina), judiciary (Iran), paramilitary groups (Nigeria, El Salvador), senior police (Zimbabwe, Haiti, Former Yugoslavia, Guatemala) and government officials (Rwanda, Democratic Republic of Congo).

Since the commitment of significant resources to the war crimes program in 1998, more than 4,000 persons suspected of involvement or complicity in the commission of war crimes, crimes against humanity, or genocide, have been refused admission to Canada. During this period, government intervention at hearings before the Immigration and Refugee Board has resulted in more than 600 persons being excluded from the benefits of Convention Refugee protection in Canada. In total, almost 500 alleged war criminals have been removed from Canada. By international standards, this is an extraordinary record.

At the same time, efforts to pursue revocation of citizenship for Second World War cases continue unabated. Revocation is now being initiated for modern-day cases and can be expected to be pursued more often in the future. To those who suggest that Canada's approach to war crimes cases is too heavily weighted towards immigration solutions (i.e., deportation) which do not adequately address concerns regarding impunity, it is worth noting that, having learned from our unhappy experience with the prosecution of Second World War cases under the *Criminal Code*, Canada is also now actively pursuing prosecution as an option under the *Crimes Against Humanity and War Crimes Act*.

Conclusion

Those of us who have worked on Canada's war crimes program have difficulty in viewing it objectively; nobody who comes close to the program is left unmoved. The program has earned Canada a strong reputation internationally, as evidenced by the many countries which send officials here to learn how to establish or enhance their own programs on the Canadian model.

The debate about the efficacy of various solutions will no doubt continue. Priorities and preferred approaches may evolve over time, but the goal remains the same: to make this world a smaller, more unpleasant place for those who inflict suffering on their fellow human beings.

In the fall of 2000, at an armchair discussion hosted by the Canadian Centre for Management Development, Madame Justice Louise Arbour spoke of her admiration for her former staff at the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia in The Hague. She said that she was impressed by how hard they worked every day "to place themselves on the right side of history". One could equally suggest that over the past several years, many dedicated public servants in Canada have also worked hard to put themselves, their colleagues, and their fellow Canadians on the right side of history.

This next article encapsulates and summarizes six instalments in Bulletins 91–96, a group effort by CIHS board members that explained in depth the evolution of Canada's network of visa offices overseas and where and when they operated. A compilation of facts and statistics covering 50 years of immigration service overseas and drawing on the memories of serving officers, this detailed work fills in gaps in other sources of information, making it the definitive version. Changes in office locations and resources are concrete reflections of government policies, national fiscal circumstances, global crises, and the opportunities offered by increasing automation.

Canadian Visa Offices: 50 Years of Service

Raphael Girard, Gerry Maffre, Diane Burrows, Robert Shalka, Anne Arnott, and Peter Duschinsky

Published over six bulletins, this series documents the global locations of visa offices and the countries they serviced, drawing on both the Global Affairs Canada online publication *Canadian Representatives Abroad* and the collective memory of the above-named retired immigration officers. This instalment summarizes the locations and operating dates of all 112 offices. These 50 years are, of course, but a small part of Canada's immigration program, which stretches back to the first office in Britain in 1869. Some contrary information on visa office locations and operational dates appears in Professor Freda Hawkins's 1972 book, *Canada and Immigration: Public Policy and Public Concern*. Differences are highlighted in the table. The fact that this listing ends in 2000 by no means signifies that all the offices closed. Many continued into the new millennium, presenting a possible research project for another time. Decade-by-decade narratives and more detailed listings about these offices can be found in numbers 91 through 96 of the CIHS Bulletin.

Over the half-century analysed here, the network of offices expanded to an ever-growing number of countries, and this growth in migrant source countries contributed to the diversity of Canada. Diversification was a consequence of the adoption of a universal and non-discriminatory immigration policy in the mid-1960s and efforts to provide more equitable levels of service. It has led to a wider variety of contributions to the country. For example, the winner of the 2020 Giller Prize for literature, Souvankham Thammavongsa, came to Canada through the Indochinese refugee movement as a young Laotian refugee whose family was sponsored by a group of concerned Canadians.



Immigration promotion in the U.K., 1961. (photo credit: CIHS)

No system perfectly ensures equitable service for similar applicants in different countries; however, Immigration has continuously adjusted the visa network in an effort to provide an acceptable level of service globally despite geo-political realities, shifting patterns of legal and irregular migration, departmental reorganization, and government resource pressures.

These changes were particularly marked in the 1970s, when large regional offices were closed or reduced in order to shift officers and resources to new, smaller offices in more countries. By so doing, the department introduced a better level of service for applicants who hitherto had had to await itinerant service visits by visa officers. In the very early 1970s, the department established two regional overseas offices (London, Geneva) and one in Ottawa to coordinate visa operations, but the experiment didn't take hold and was abandoned not long into the decade.

Between 1950 and 2000, legislation and policies changed. The federal-provincial character of the program became more evident. Changing technology had its impact too: means of communication evolved from the weekly diplomatic pouch, and telegrams for the most urgent matters, to telexes, then faxes and, finally, email. Processes and forms for assessing and tracking applications changed as well. And where visa officers would once have travelled by train or ship to assignments, by the end of the century, they travelled mostly by airplane.

The immigration system and individuals who provided this service in overseas offices—and in Canada too—have dealt with millions of people in a great variety of situations: reuniting families; approving people with skills needed in Canada; providing a route to safety for refugees; and approving visas for tourists, international students, and temporary workers. Officers and locally engaged personnel at our embassies, consulates, and other offices have responded to humanitarian crises and worked through the good and bad times in the cities and countries of their assignments to deliver Canada's commitments in the immigration and refugee programs and continue to do so.

Ed. Note: endnotes from the original article are on page 15 of [Bulletin 96](#) (March 2021).

Chernobyl [Chornobyl] was a major nuclear catastrophe. Hector Cowan, an immigration officer and consul, presents a portrait of the danger and challenge of finding and persuading Canadians near this site to return to Canada immediately to avoid nuclear contamination. The full article was published in [Bulletin 63](#) of February 2012.

Chernobyl: 1986-2011 25 Years On

Hector Cowan

From 1981 until 1992, Canadian visa officers were employees of the Department of External Affairs and International Trade. As members of the so-called Social Affairs Stream, we had responsibility for immigrant and visitor visa processing, but we also took on other “social” areas, including consular duties.

As consular officers we handled any and all problems facing Canadian citizens outside Canada, and it was in this capacity that in April of 1986, I suddenly found myself called upon to deal with the situation of the Canadian citizens who were in Kiev [Kyiv] when the Chernobyl nuclear accident occurred.

At the time I was on posting with the Canadian embassy in Moscow. My family and I had been there only since July of 1985, but then as now, few Canadian diplomats stayed more than two years, or three at the most. My diplomatic title was Counsellor and Consul, and that meant that I dealt with visas and any problems Canadian citizens might have inside the Soviet Union. In those days there were very few private visitors from the U.S.S.R. to Canada, since few people were allowed out, and even fewer immigrants. I recall that in my first year there, 1985-86, I issued only 67 immigrant visas: This was with a staff of three Canadians, myself and two assistants, and two Russian employees. (At present a staff of more than 50 people cover those same jobs.) Most of my work, therefore, was in dealing with problems Canadians in the U.S.S.R. had: anything from helping to straighten out tangled Intourist reservations to occasionally repatriating the remains of a Canadian who died there.

In any case, my responsibility for Canadians was what put me at the forefront when the Chernobyl story broke.

As it happened, I was still on leave with my family on Saturday, 26 April 1986, the day the Chernobyl nuclear plant exploded. In fact, we were leaving Paris for Moscow via Helsinki on that date. We were supposed to fly to Helsinki and transfer directly to the Finnair flight to Moscow, but because of a Finnish air traffic controllers' strike, we were diverted to the western Finnish town of Turku where we stayed overnight before we could carry on to Moscow the next day. With Sunday afternoon to kill in Turku, we wandered around the town seeing the sights. It was a beautiful day, with a clear blue sky and the temperature somewhere around 10 °C—warm enough that many Finns were out sunbathing shirtless in the parks among the piles of rapidly melting snow. We learned later that the radiation level in Turku that day was around 1000 times the normal level...

That night we flew into Moscow still blithely unaware of the nuclear accident that had happened already more than 24 hours earlier. I was up early to go to work on Monday, 28 April, and that morning I heard the first hint that something was up when I listened to the BBC news on shortwave (which, by the way, was not too easy because the Soviets were still routinely jamming it). At that point nothing was very clear, but some automatic warning devices had been activated on a Swedish nuclear plant, where they initially thought the problem was with them! (These alarms were designed to detect any possible contamination on workers leaving the Swedish plant and were very sensitive.) Arriving at work I started to confer with my colleagues, who, it turned out, knew even less than I did. However, over the course of the morning we began to piece together a picture of what was going on. Not everyone in the diplomatic community learned as quickly as we did; my Irish colleague called me at about 11:00 to ask what was happening. It seems he had just had a call from an Irish newspaper which wanted to know how the Irish embassy was handling “the situation”. Not having a clue what situation the newspaper was referring to, he quickly claimed he had a bad line and said he would call back—then called me to see if I knew what was going on.

Once we had some idea of the nature of the accident, we immediately began calling Canadians we knew in the vicinity. Most of these were students at the university in Kiev. We managed to talk to one or two that same morning, but they knew nothing at that time. Remember that the Soviets did not publicly acknowledge the severity of the situation until several days later. As time went by, however, it became clearer and clearer that there was a major problem. The Canadians we were talking to were also becoming more nervous, but at the same time, most did not want to believe that there was any danger: On the one hand their Soviet hosts were assuring them that there was no problem, or at most a minor one; and on the other, many were inclined to believe that the Western news was American propaganda against the Soviet Union.

Nevertheless, we (the embassy and the responsible divisions of External Affairs in Ottawa) recognised that we had to try to assist any Canadians in the region to leave if they wanted to. Even the few details of the accident that were beginning to leak out of the Soviet Union, together with measurements from outside the country, were making it clear by this time that there had been a massive release of radiation.

By Tuesday, 29 April, the Ambassador (Vernon Turner) decided that I should go to Kiev as soon as possible to try to help the Canadians there to leave. In those days, we could not travel more than 40 km from the centre of Moscow without permission from the Soviet foreign ministry, so Ambassador Turner immediately began to ask our Soviet hosts to allow me to travel to Kiev. Permission was not initially granted, so I started looking for ways to travel anyway, but Soviet controls were such that I was not successful in boarding the train which left from Kievski Vokzal, the train station which was very near my apartment. This was Tuesday night, and as I walked around the train station, I began to notice that there was a small knot of people who seemed to be strolling in the same direction I was. This was the first sign I could detect of the Soviet surveillance effort apparently put in place around me; I would later see some of the same people watching over me in Kiev.

The next day, 30 April, our embassy again tried to get permission for me to travel to Kiev, but had no reply until late in the evening when suddenly the foreign ministry called my ambassador to say that I could travel that same evening. I went immediately to the airport and managed to get on a flight leaving around midnight. The flight was full, and I was almost the last to board, finding myself in the middle seat of three in one of the last rows in the aircraft (a Tupolev 154). We arrived in Kiev at about 1:30 in the morning, and after some struggles with the Soviet payphone system in order to call the Ambassador to confirm I had reached Kiev, I took a taxi directly to the university residence where I was to meet one of the Canadian students we had been talking to. I stayed there for what was left of the night, and early the next day I went to a hotel in the centre of the city where it seemed that I was expected, even though I had not made a reservation.

At this time there were about 17 Canadian students in Kiev, and I immediately set up a meeting with the group of them at the hotel, relying on the one or two to whom we had been speaking to round up the rest. At the meeting I explained what we knew about the accident, including the fact that it appeared to be the worst nuclear accident in world history, and that it was all happening about 100 kilometres from the room we were in. I stressed that we, the Canadian Government, believed that there was reason for serious concern. Somewhat to my surprise, my briefing was met with a certain degree of muted suspicion. Why, some of the group asked, if it was so dangerous to be in Kiev, was I there? To this I could only answer that I was doing my job and that I certainly did not intend to stay any longer than I had to.

By way of comparison, I was contacted by the Canadian leader of a group of some 24 Canadian tourists who had just flown in from Budapest and had somehow learned of the accident and the fact that I was in town to assist Canadians. I explained what we knew by then, more or less in the same terms I had used with the students. The person said thank you very much and that he would look into changing their itinerary; when I contacted his hotel later the same day I discovered that the entire group had already flown out to the West. So it would seem that different parts of the Canadian population had different attitudes to the whole episode.

The students continued to hesitate, and in the end it took me seven days to get them rounded up (all but one, who decided to stay) and on the train to Moscow. The Soviet authorities in Kiev, for all that it appeared that I was under constant surveillance from the security "organs", were relatively helpful, and even got me seats on the train for all of my group at a time when ordinary Soviet citizens were trying to leave for other parts of the Soviet Union in their tens of thousands, with a huge proportion of young children among them. My Canadian charges and I managed to travel uneventfully back to Moscow on the train, where we were met by a considerable press contingent.

Ed. Note: This article continues on page 8 of [Bulletin 63](#).

Bulletin 88 (March 2018) included Raphael Girard's extensive article on the evolution of Canada's refugee determination legislation, policies, structures, and key moments from the early post-WWII years. That refugee issues are a continuing priority makes Girard's text an important contribution to the history of Canada's response to refugees writ large. This is a condensed version of the original.

Asylum Policy in Canada

Raphael Girard

In this 2018 article, Raphael Girard traced Canada's response to refugee matters from the early 1950s, when Canadian representatives played a watershed role in drafting the eventual 1951 UN Geneva Convention on Refugee Status. While Canada was long reluctant to accede to all the terms of the Convention, it committed to non-refoulement. This commitment became law in the 1967 Act creating the Immigration Appeals Board.

Girard continued his discussion of Canadian refugee matters pointing to the many critical moments and developments:

- the responses around the globe to post-war needs of refugees and crises like Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and Ugandan Asians;
- Canada's 1968 accession to the UN Convention followed by several years of refugee determination by an *ad-hoc* committee;
- an early 1970s' reliance on visitor visa impositions to control flows of refugee claimants;
- the 1976 *Immigration Act* provisions against refoulement (rather than in the Act that created the Immigration Appeal Board) and formalization of the Refugee Status Advisory Committee;
- the Edward Ratushny refugee policy review that occurred during a period of growing claimant numbers and backlogs in hearings with no automatic right to residence for accepted claimants;
- Rabbi Gunther Plaut's study and, most crucially, the Supreme Court decision in *Singh vs Minister of Employment and Immigration* requiring an oral hearing for all claimants;
- Girard's lead of a task force mandated to draft legislation responding to *Singh* to provide for oral hearings and ensure non-refoulement—all in a context of continuously growing numbers of claimants often from "safe third countries" or countries with strong democratic institutions;
- the task force's work leading to Bill C-55, proposing a screen for ineligibility and the "safe third country" provision;
- the 1986 and 1987 arrivals of Tamil and Sikh refugee claimants on Canada's Atlantic coast; and
- the eventual passage of Bills C-55 and C-84 on 1 January 1989 prompted by a claimant backlog of some 125,000 people—that was cleared by a special program to allow the new Immigration and Refugee Board to start fresh.

By way of epilogue, Girard concedes:

...that the dedication and hard work of the task force was only partially successful. It did bring in a fair system, but resilience and efficiency were not achieved. Bill C55 certainly improved the transparency and function of the process for refugee determination by establishing the Immigration and Refugee Board in law, independent of the Immigration department. Equally important, it gave persons found to be refugees by the IRB the right to apply for permanent residence without having to leave Canada. Although the "safe third country" provisions had been adopted into law, the Cabinet failed to follow through with a regulation creating a list of countries to which claimants could be returned without referral to the IRB, thereby giving almost all claimants unrestricted access to the IRB. Minister of Immigration Barbara MacDougall announced in December 1988 that no countries would be designated as safe and in so doing ended any possibility that Canada could have an efficient refugee determination process that focused on refugees truly in need of protection.

In failing to agree on a list of countries to which claimants could be returned without a hearing of their claims, the Cabinet discarded the primary defence the system had against overload. It would therefore only be a matter of time before the new system, like the one it replaced, would bog down under an excessive caseload. In the 30 years following the introduction of the new system, this has been a regular occurrence. Delays and backlogs have continued not only at the IRB but in other parts of the refugee determination process, where several thousand failed claimants subject to removal remain at large. This has happened despite several adjustments and amendments to the process, including a modified "safe third country" mechanism that has not lived up to expectations because it inexplicably exempts claimants who enter Canada illegally (not at land ports of entry) from the U.S. With the current backlog at the IRB now in excess of 65,000 claims and no let-up in the cross-border flow of claimants, Canada has a significant movement of self-selected immigrants on its hands in addition to a growing number of refugee claimants who come to Canada by choice rather than because of a need for protection. The current

situation is the same as it was in the mid 1980s, and the range of solutions available to deal with the issues is not much different. Another thing that has not changed is the attitude of Canadians, who remain opposed to unmanaged immigration. Sooner or later the government will have to deal with this issue once again.

This excerpt from Holly Edwards's article from Bulletin 90 (September 2019) is a great overview of the kinds of pressure on the department and government when, as Holly puts it, "hell breaks loose", and how creative and innovative public servants can be to deliver on the government's priorities, both overseas and in Canada. It is a snapshot of "operational readiness" efforts. All original references are available in the [original article](#).

In Memory of Rwanda 25 Years Ago

Holly Edwards

Holly Edwards was an immigration foreign service officer from 1981 to her retirement in 2012. Much of her career was spent on refugee policy and processing. She was posted to Belgrade, Cairo, Boston, Damascus, Vienna, and Brussels. While in Ottawa, among other assignments, she was Director of Africa Middle East Operations in what was then the International Service of the Department of Citizenship and Immigration. She held this position during the genocide in Rwanda in 1994.

At the time of the genocide in Rwanda, I headed up a small team at Immigration headquarters responsible for that part of the world. This article is an attempt to set down what we in headquarters and immigration officers in the field faced and what we did during that time. Those immigration foreign service officers who went to Rwanda on area trips prior to the genocide and to Burundi just as the genocide in Rwanda was beginning, were, without a doubt, heroic, but I was not there to witness the full nature of their challenges, and they will have to tell those stories.

I was Director of Africa Middle East Operations in Immigration headquarters and thousands of miles away when the genocide began. I had arrived back in headquarters in late August 1993, after being immigration program manager in the Damascus office, which then was one of our bigger visa offices, encompassing work from Lebanon, Syria, Iran, Iraq, and Jordan. As an immigration director, I regularly attended meetings of the directors for the Africa Middle East region at the Department of Foreign Affairs under Assistant Deputy Minister Marc Perron, with whom I had worked while in Cairo in 1985-1986. From 1993 to 1994, every week that I attended the meeting there was a crisis somewhere in Africa or the Middle East; I recall we had to pull the immigration officer out of Algeria, because security there deteriorated so badly.

I had never been a director at headquarters. My boss, Konrad Sigurdson, was usually out of the office working full time on integrating Immigration into the new Department of Public Security that had been announced in June 1993. Thank goodness Wayne Hammond, who had been the Director of Africa Middle East Operations at one time, was both working on the same floor and nice enough to provide advice. Hugues Mathieu, Francine Galarneau, I, and our secretary made up the entire team. Hugues covered mostly the Middle East. He had lots of experience and was always very calm. When the genocide began, Hugues deftly handled "everything else" whenever necessary. Francine worked on Africa. She was new to working in geographic operations at headquarters, but it was an inspired choice to assign her to work with our visa offices in Africa, as she had lived there and understood a great deal about the area, whereas, though I had lived in Egypt, the only "African" country I had visited was the Sudan.

As it became clear a genocide was taking place, my team did its utmost to respond to requests for assistance. We trusted that the officers abroad were careful. In emergency situations generally it is possible that "really bad guys" get in but we at HQ and our partners dealt with such situations when necessary. Perhaps more than anything, we tried to manage expectations of what the Department of Immigration could actually do in this very challenging situation.

The Rwandan Genocide and Government of Canada's Response

The United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR) was established in 1993 to assist in the implementation of the [Arusha Accords](#) meant to end the Rwandan Civil War between the two main ethnic groups. The Hutu dominated the Rwandan government, and they were opposed by the Tutsi-dominated Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF), at the time based in Uganda.

The genocide began in April 1994. On 6 April, the plane of Rwandan President Juvénal Habyarimana was shot down. All aboard, including Habyarimana and Burundian President Cyprien Ntaryamira were killed. It was never conclusively established who was responsible, but within an hour, Hutu extremist groups began slaughtering other Rwandans who were either ethnic Tutsi or moderate Hutus. Among the first victims were the moderate Hutu Prime Minister Agathe Uwilingiyimana and 10 Belgian soldiers with UNAMIR. The killing rapidly spread across Rwanda. At the same time, the Rwandan Patriotic Front began advancing out of Uganda against the predominantly Hutu army.

An undated copy of a situation report ("sit rep") which I kept, outlined the situation.

Up to now, more than 300,000 Rwandan nationals have fled Rwanda and reached neighbouring countries such as Tanzania, Uganda, Zaire and Burundi. The immediate needs facing the refugees are safety, food, shelter and medical care.

On April 13, some representatives of the Rwandan community in Canada and two members of the Centre international des Droits de la personne et du Développement démocratique (CIDPPD) met with Minister André Ouellet to discuss the position to be adopted by Canada regarding the Rwandan crisis. The Rwandan community is mainly formed by Tutsis and their support for the RPF is widely known. On the subject of immigration, the community insisted that family reunification with their relatives fleeing atrocities be favoured by our office in Nairobi and that no Rwandan nationals responsible for human rights abuse be admitted to Canada. Special emphasis was also put on the admission of Rwandan human rights activists to Canada. In that sense, the help provided by Canada to M., the Rwandan human rights activist who has been issued a Minister's Permit through our office in Brussels, was appreciated by the community.

The first phase of the international effort was to address the immediate needs of the hundreds of thousands of Rwandan refugees. Through CIDA, Canada has provided 2 million dollars to the International Committee of the Red Cross for food aid and one million dollars in emergency funds.

Our office in Nairobi was processing about 60 immigration cases involving Rwandan nationals before the tragic events and a senior officer was sent to Bujumbura, Burundi, to facilitate the processing of those applications the week following the crisis in Rwanda. The officer issued Minister's Permits to several orphans adopted by Canadian citizens and to a refugee. As more Rwandan nationals have reached Burundi in the last two weeks, the officer was sent again to Bujumbura between May 3 and May 6 to meet with applicants. Our objective is to facilitate the admission of people who have connections to Canada and who have no link with either of the warring factions. Further trips to Burundi would depend on whether the office is able to reach applicants, whether there is a sufficient number of new sponsorships and last but not least, whether our officer can continue to travel safely to Burundi.

Since the UNHCR has not requested resettlement outside of Africa, no initiative has yet been taken to have a special program for Rwandan refugees. Our office in Nairobi continues to accept Rwandan refugees under its allocation for African refugees. The Ministère des Affaires internationales, des communautés culturelles et de l'immigration du Québec is prepared to accept about 100 refugees from Rwanda. In cooperation with our office in Nairobi, the Service de l'Immigration du Québec in Brussels will be processing these expeditiously.

So far, only the Kenyan authorities have requested our help in dealing with Rwandan nationals. A group of 165 refugees had fled their country and were stranded at the Nairobi airport. Canada was the first country to offer to help, though the Americans and the Australians have now come on board. As of today, 47 refugees from this group have been selected by Canada.

Twenty-five nuns and postulates who work with the Canadian group "Soeurs du Bon Pasteur" and most recently 27 working with the "Communauté du Bon-Conseil" are expected to be evacuated from Kigali to Nairobi, where they will receive Minister's Permits to travel to Canada. These individuals seek temporary asylum only, until such time as the situation in Rwanda stabilizes. In the meantime, they will be housed respectively in Quebec City and Chicoutimi by the religious communities to which they belong.

As is usually the case when "hell breaks loose" in a country, the Department of Foreign Affairs issued a consular instruction for Canadians to leave Rwanda. Québécois priests and nuns had been very active in Rwanda for many years, in particular, the Sisters of Notre-Dame du Bon Conseil from Chicoutimi since 1976, and the Sisters of Bon Pasteur from Quebec City since the 1960s. In 1988 the Sisters of Bon Pasteur established the Centre Umushumba Mwiza ("Bon Pasteur" in Kinyarwanda, an official language of Rwanda). By the time of the genocide, 60 women were participating in its social reintegration program. Seven of the Canadian sisters of Bon Pasteur were repatriated to Canada in April. Eight Canadian sisters of Notre-Dame du Bon Conseil left for Canada the same month.

When they left, the sisters of Notre-Dame du Bon Conseil brought with them four Rwandan orphans who had been or were in the process of being adopted by families in Quebec. Canadian families had been adopting Rwandan orphans since 1991. Forty-two Rwandan children were adopted before the genocide. Of the four babies the sisters brought out with them in April 1994, one did not have all the required papers. The sisters stopped in Burundi, where the Belgian embassy helped them contact the Canadian High Commission in Nairobi. They then continued to Nairobi. Someone from the High Commission went to the sisters' hotel in Nairobi, checked that they were all right, and provided them with the documents required for all the children to enter Canada (probably Minister's permits). Bob Romano, who was Acting Immigration Program Manager in Nairobi at the time, recalls that:

We had no idea when Canadians or persons of interest would be arriving at the airport, so we organized a 24-hour airport watch which included everyone at the Mission, including a number of local staff. When groups arrived at the airport, we bused them to a hotel. There they were met by a welcoming committee of spouses who arranged for them to get fed, clothed if necessary, and held hands, hugged and listened to their stories—some of which, as you can imagine, were horrific. Later, the spouses all got a special award from Foreign Affairs for their efforts.

The sisters managed to take a total of six orphans out of Rwanda over the period of the genocide. One Canadian sister was unable to leave in April 1994 as she was too far away from Kigali and could not get to the capital. She left Rwanda in June and brought another adopted child with her. The last adopted child, who arrived in Canada in late August or early September 1994, had been with some Rwandan sisters and priests who had escaped to the forest when the genocide began.

Ed. Note: this article continues on page 3 of [Bulletin 90](#) (September 2019).

This brief selection from [Bulletin 62](#) (September 2011) explores the evolving practice of determining applicants' immigration admissibility from a security perspective in the post-World War II and Cold War eras. This was when Canada resumed accepting large numbers of immigrants, some of whom had problematic pasts. References are available in the original article.

Stage B: Canadian Immigration Security Screening, 1946-1952

Kurt F. Jensen

Immigrants to Canada during the early part of the twentieth century were subject to exclusion for many reasons, including race, religion, criminality, and ideological views. Selection of immigrants was largely discretionary, although immigration officers received guidance on who should be accepted. Of the many reasons for refusing admission, protection of the realm did not figure largely in the criteria during the early years and probably had little impact on Canada before the postwar period. Protection of national security was not an explicit immigration selection criterion, although the *Immigration Act* 1923 did contain a series of excluded persons, comprising those who advocated the violent overthrow of governments, spies, treasonous persons, as well as various criminal and medical categories. Communists and socialists were also excluded but only when identified as such. Most immigrants to Canada during the early part of the twentieth century were uncomplicated people, often agriculturalist with little formal education and with little cause for posing security concerns.

While statutory exclusion categories existed, it is the recollection of Maurice Mitchell, a renowned immigration officer who, as a child, often accompanied his father to his office when the latter was a Canadian immigration officer in Danzig in the 1920s, that immigration examinations were minimal and never focused on security issues.

All this changed with the establishment of the Security Panel by the Canadian government on 24 June 1946. The defection of Igor Gouzenko, a Russian cipher clerk, who revealed extensive Soviet espionage in Canada and allied nations, changed the attitude towards security matters. The decision to establish the Security Panel was taken at a Cabinet meeting on 17 May, which accorded it an advisory role and placed it under the auspices of the Privy Council Office.

The Security Panel consisted of representatives of the three military services, External Affairs, the RCMP and the Defence Research Board, under the chairmanship of the Privy Council. Other departments could attend when matters affecting them were discussed. The template for the Security Panel was a modified version of what was used by the United Kingdom.

One of the first initiatives to be looked at by the Security Panel was security screening. The security screening established by the Security Panel fell into two categories: vetting of public servants and screening of persons seeking admission to

Canada. Among the questions confronting the panel at its inaugural meeting was that of “passport control,” meaning the security screening of applicants for immigration to Canada. This initiative sought to impose objective procedures for identifying persons who could pose a threat to Canada, rather than relying on intuitive assessments by overworked immigration officers untrained for this purpose.

Although the Security Panel was established in the context of the emerging Cold War, security vetting of immigrants was initially directed at prohibiting the entry of persons with a “subversive background”, particularly those with past “membership in Fascist, Nazi, or similar organizations”.

The Security Panel recommended to Cabinet in the fall of 1946 that amendments to the *Immigration Act* include authority for enhanced security screening of immigrants. A specific provision was sought whereby the Minister (for Immigration) could, by certificate, accept or reject anyone on security grounds. A public highlighting of the security screening requirement in proposed new immigration legislation, however, was perceived as a complication to the passage of the legislation. At this stage, security screening seems to have been envisaged as being conducted by immigration officers. Cabinet rejected the proposed legislative recommendation with instructions to solve the matter “by other means”, suggesting discomfort with the articulation of full details of immigration selection criteria and with security vetting falling to the responsibility of immigration officers.

The *Immigration Act* of the time, in Section 38, prohibited the admission of defined categories of immigrants in broad terms, but no instrument existed in 1946 for determining conclusively whether a person was a member of a prohibited class. Decisions could be arbitrary and subjective and relied exclusively on departmental administrative action.

Immigration selection officers had no training in determining what might constitute grounds for exclusion on national security grounds. Nor were instruments in place for learning such matters. The Department of Mines and Resources, which was responsible for immigration matters and already overworked, had no resources with which to assume responsibility for new immigration selection criteria. Thought was given by the Security Panel to have British “Passport Control” (i.e., the British Secret Intelligence Service—SIS) assume the task, if willing, on a temporary basis, although the Security Panel made a recommendation on 19 August that a permanent solution should require involvement of the RCMP in security examinations.

The first RCMP Security Service member assigned to Visa Control duties was sent to London on 25 October 1946. The officer was Staff Sergeant W.W. Hinton, whose responsibility was to check names provided by the Immigration Branch in Ottawa with the SIS and British Special Branch and any other resources which became available. Names were to be marked “not clear for security” or “clear for security,” as appropriate, following record checks. The factors rendering a person undesirable would be provided to Hinton through “verbal instructions”. This is significant and clearly shows unease with the manner in which security checking would be imposed. Although the RCMP Security Service assumed vetting responsibility, it is clear that their contribution rested largely with querying British records, having no real intelligence resources of their own with which to make a contribution.

Ed. Note: The complete article is available on page 1 of [Bulletin 62](#) of September 2011.

This first-hand account of the aftermath of the infamous events of 11 September 2001 (9/11 in New York City) illustrates how a visa office must respond to such singular and horrible circumstances. The original article has been condensed for this edition of the Bulletin. The full article is available on page 6 of [Bulletin 92](#) (March 2020).

New York Visa Officers Remember 9/11

Anne Arnott, Jean-Pierre Cliche, Randy Orr, Bob Romano, and Susan Lopez

Out of a clear blue sky at 8:46 am on Tuesday, 11 September 2001, the first of four hijacked commercial airliners flew directly into the north tower of the World Trade Center in lower Manhattan—and the United States changed, perhaps forever.

The Canadian consulate general in New York (CNGNY) had a very busy immigration program in 2001. The consulate general was located at Avenue of the Americas and 50th Street, some 70 blocks north of the World Trade Center. Our visa office was in the concourse level (a basement by any other name). We had four Canada-based officers (Anne Arnott, immigration program manager; Bob Romano, head of the immigrant unit and second in command; Randy Orr, head of the visitor unit; and Jean-Pierre Cliche, immigration control officer) and 25 locally engaged staff, including four designated immigration officers with decision-making authority. We were supported at immigration headquarters by Susan Lopez and other colleagues.

On that morning, Anne and Bob were in her office with the door closed, discussing a human resources issue. Someone knocked on the door and said "Turn on the television!" When they did, they saw that one tower of the World Trade Center was in flames. Bob went upstairs and returned to say that he had seen smoke and heard a huge bang—the second plane hitting the south tower.

As usual, the visa office had a waiting room full of applicants for temporary resident visas and some who had come for scheduled immigration interviews, and none of us knew what was going on. When the first plane hit, we assumed that it was just a terrible, but not abnormal, disaster. When the second plane hit 15 minutes later, everyone knew that something more was happening. We all went into a shocked, automatic mode. No one screamed or sobbed. Randy spoke to the people in the waiting room and gave them the option of coming back another day, but everyone chose to stay. We processed the temporary resident visa applications in the same way we had always done. We all just got on with our jobs with our emotions of horror, disbelief, and fear firmly held in check.

That day was full of meetings for the entire consulate general, with the organization of rotas to keep the office open around the clock and answer telephone calls from Canadians desperately looking for their friends and family. All staff continued to be completely calm, despite the fact that our office in the Rockefeller Center complex could easily have been another terrorist target.

After the second plane hit, we were advised by the Consul General that city officials had told everyone to stay where they were because no one knew whether other acts of terrorism were planned. Anne telephoned headquarters to let them know that we were unharmed and that we would be lending staff to consular operations. Our staff were understandably anxious about the fate of friends and relatives. The telephones worked only intermittently, and while some had cellphones, they were not as ubiquitous as they are now. As the day wore on and no further attacks occurred in New York, the restriction to remain in the building was lifted and staff started to leave the office. Some returned to our office when they found they could not easily get home: the trains and ferries which normally took people off the island had been stopped, and car traffic was not allowed into or out of Manhattan. Many people walked across the bridges to get to the other boroughs where they lived. Later we learned that a record number of running shoes had been sold that day.

CNGNY was unusually well resourced to deal with this tragedy. Consul General Michael Phillips had experience managing major catastrophes. He had participated in Canada's response in Ireland when a terrorist bomb exploded aboard an Air India flight in Irish airspace in June 1985, killing everyone on board, many of whom were Canadian.

Mr. Phillips wanted to show that our office was giving as much support as possible to Canadians during this crisis. He kept the consulate general open all night in case Canadians came looking for help. Jean-Pierre was one of the employees on duty one such night, but no one came. Jean-Pierre remembers Mr. Phillips saying that the Canadian government had been criticized during the aftermath of the Air India downing and he was anxious to show that the office was providing all assistance possible. This 24-hour operation lasted only two or three nights, as it became apparent that there was no need for it.

"Normal" business at CNGNY resumed on Friday, 14 September, following two days of city-mandated closure, and our waiting room was again full of people seeking temporary resident visas for Canada. Immediately following the attacks, Canada re-imposed the temporary resident visa requirement for citizens of Saudi Arabia, but otherwise visa processing remained essentially unchanged in the short term. There were some special requests from U.S. resident diplomats seeking to attend an urgently called international meeting in Canada.

Although the city was generally shut down on 12 and 13 September, everyone charged with the consular response was at work. When the office reopened, new tasks were assigned and the immigration section lent two Canada-based officers and several locally engaged staff to assist consular colleagues. Bob and Jean-Pierre continued to work with the mission's consular team, helping Canadian citizens and residents try to locate missing family and friends who might have been in or around the World Trade Center at the time of the attacks. Bob became CNGNY's liaison officer with the family centre which the city set up and was given a list of Canadians to try to locate. One of the people Bob was asked to locate was Mark Mulroney, son of former Canadian Prime Minister Brian Mulroney, who was working as an investment banker in the city. By the time Bob called, Mark Mulroney had already got in touch with his parents. Bob continued to help Canadians for some time after the crisis. He received personal items belonging to missing individuals that might have contained their DNA, such as toothbrushes and hairbrushes, and he took them to the family centre to see if the DNA matched remains found in the ruins. He also assisted family members of the deceased to arrange for death certificates and other documents.

One of our colleagues in Ottawa, Kate O'Brien, had been posted to Nairobi when the 1998 terrorist attack against the U.S. embassy took place. She called Anne very early on to say that we should insist on having a visit from the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) staff. Anne met with the Consul General, who agreed and tasked her with coordinating this. An EAP staff member spent a number of days in New York with members of both missions (CNGNY and Canada's permanent mission to the United Nations, which were not co-located), to allow everyone to talk about how this tragedy had affected them and their families. We were very fortunate because no one from either mission lost anyone close.

Canadian Prime Minister Jean Chrétien and the leaders of the other parties decided to visit New York City shortly after the tragedy to meet with Canadians and city officials. Jean-Pierre became the mission's liaison with the Prime Minister's Office. Because of his organizational skills and bilingualism, Jean-Pierre was assigned, along with others, to accompany Prime Minister Chrétien and the Opposition leaders on 29 September when they came to New York. The whole convoy took a boat on the Hudson River from a pier somewhere in midtown to go to ground zero. Jean-Pierre remembers clearly that smoke was still coming from the smoldering debris, two and half weeks after the catastrophe. Many workers were present on the site, and a heavy chemical and burned-plastic smell hung in the air. The whole scene was quite eerie. Later that day, the Prime Minister met with the families of the Canadian victims at the consulate general. It was a touching event, free from politics and media. We noticed that afterwards the Prime Minister was not allowed to walk from the consulate general to a nearby reception but had to go by car.

Immigration Minister Elinor Caplan had been travelling outside Canada on business on the day of the attacks, and it took her a couple of days to get back to Canada. When she did, she personally called Anne to say she had worried about us and asked how we were all doing.

There were a number of changes after the attacks, some more long-lasting than others. Security at the consulate general was higher, and clients had to pass through a metal detector before moving into the immigration waiting room. Anthrax attacks started only a week after 9/11. Since the anthrax spores were enclosed in mail, this had a huge impact on our immigration section because we received so much mail. The consulate general had to retrofit the mail room to give it negative pressure. Luckily, we never had to find out if the precautions actually worked.

Before the attacks, U.S. immigration offices were understaffed and had to focus on only the most important issues and cases. After the attacks, the U.S. government quickly created the Department of Homeland Security, moving immigration under this enforcement umbrella agency and giving it new resources and a new focus as Immigration and Customs Enforcement. Canada responded by creating the Public Safety umbrella organization, and in 2003, the Canada Border Service Agency, which took the enforcement and intelligence side of our immigration service. Immediately after 9/11, our consular colleagues began to receive calls from the FBI and other American enforcement units to verify the status in Canada of people in whom they had an interest; if the individuals were not Canadian citizens, Jean-Pierre in our section got the call.

Everything and everyone were under suspicion after 9/11, and we seemed to go from one crisis to another. We never made it back to "normal".

As a final article in this commemorative issue, we wanted to include this piece about the relatively recent arrival of newcomers to Canada—Syrian refugees who came to Canada in 2015 and 2016. This article originally appeared in [Bulletin 80](#) (March 2017). Laura Kollenberg describes her direct involvement in the initial settlement in Ottawa in 2016 of some of the 25,000 Syrians admitted to Canada. As a nurse practitioner, she carried out her settlement work in a particular way which merits re-telling in this special Bulletin edition.

Caring Communities for Our Newest Refugees

Laura Kollenberg

Prior to August 2015, I didn't pay a lot of attention to stories of violence coming out of Syria. All my life I have heard stories of war in the Middle East. How was this any different?

The photo of little [Alan Kurdi](#), his body washed up on shore, changed that for me.... Certainly, Alan wasn't the only person to die trying to leave Syria. Thousands have. But it was his photo that caught the attention of the world. The Canadian government announced that we would accept 25,000 refugees by the end of 2016.

Whenever refugees arrive in Canada, they are provided with a provincial health card and interim federal health program (IFHP) benefits. The program covers the cost of prescription drugs, some dental work, basic eye care, and various other

health costs for the first year. In Ontario, the coverage is very similar to what is included for someone in Ontario Works. Although refugees can theoretically receive health care at any public clinic, there are often barriers such as providers not accepting IFHP or the need for translation. Community health centres in Ontario have a proud history of caring for refugees. It was apparent that we would be facing a huge number of new arrivals at our clinics. Everyone wanted to help, but how? When? Where? There was a risk of well-meaning people and agencies tripping over each other.

In Ottawa, a group called Refugee 613 was formed to help coordinate assistance to Syrian arrivals. We were expecting at least 10 times the usual number of newcomers, and our various community agencies were concerned about workload, duplication of services, and gaps in what was available. Many hours went into the planning, in spite of not knowing when people would arrive. The group included:

- the six Ottawa community health centres and Bruyère Academic Family Health Team;
- Ottawa Public Health;
- the Champlain Local Health Integration Network;
- settlement agencies (Catholic Centre for Immigration, Jewish Family Services, Ottawa Community Immigration Services Organization);
- the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario;
- Hospital Emergency Preparedness Committee of Ottawa, and
- private sponsorship groups.



Play Group at Clinic

The Syrians began arriving in Ottawa around Christmas 2016. The usual shelters were very quickly filled, and entire floors of hotels were booked to accommodate them. There were many large families and lots of small children. The Ottawa Newcomer Clinic, a program of Somerset West Community Health Centre, was planning to provide the initial medical assessments required by the federal government, as well as episodic and primary care. Existing staff were overwhelmed by the number of potential clients. The first weekend the hotels hosted Syrian refugees, there were several 911 calls and visits to local emergency departments for what we would consider minor illnesses, such as gastritis and eye infections. ER staff were understandably upset that no provisions had been made for after-hours care. Very quickly the settlement workers became exhausted and sick themselves.

My supervisor asked the nurse practitioners if we would be willing to hold a walk-in clinic on the weekends in January. Our first clinic was held in a hotel meeting room with one nurse practitioner, a translator, and a bag of emergency supplies. Nine people were seen. The next day, I arrived to find 30 people waiting and no translator. I called my supervisor at home to ask her to rescue me and to bring essentials—Gravol, Tylenol, and Gatorade. A desk clerk was pressed to help with translation until an interpreter could arrive. Our makeshift clinic had a number of flaws, not the least of which was a complete lack of privacy. We soon rented a suite with a sitting room and separate bedroom, which we cleaned and stocked with supplies. We filled the bar refrigerator with juice and oral rehydration solution, the chests of drawers with condoms, thermometers, medication samples, and bandages. Nurse practitioners from two clinics provided walk-in care five days a week and were on call on weekends. Around the city, other community health centres provided similar care to refugees in hotels. Public health provided vaccinations and dental care.

I noticed from my first day that the refugees had very little to do. The children, unable to play outside in extraordinarily cold weather, amused themselves as kids do—by playing with the elevator, spreading brochures all over the halls, and tormenting staff at the front desk. Child and youth services staff from my clinic soon started a play group two days a week in the lunchroom, and the school board provided teachers for school-readiness classes.

I also noted a need among the women. Allowed only one small bag per family in transit, they did not have sanitary supplies. They were not comfortable going out to shop for these items, and it was not appropriate for the men in their families to do so. Add to this the complications of finding a store in downtown Ottawa in the middle of winter, not speaking English, or understanding the currency! I was given permission to start a crowd-funding campaign and, with the help of friends and family, packed kits of sanitary pads, Tylenol, chamomile tea, and women's health information. These were very popular.

There were some great highs—hugs and smiles from people delighted to arrive in a new country after years of uncertainty, and babies born soon after arrival. There were also some profound lows. We Canadians were shocked at the degree of childhood disability, so easily prevented with good health care during pregnancy and birth. We learned a number of new things, like appropriate screening for people from various parts of the Middle East. We learned to ask if people who had transited through Jordan had been in contact with camels, screening for a virus these animals carry. We learned that chamomile tea cures many ills. Many of the care providers picked up new germs from the refugees and had some sick time. I broke a rib from coughing, and a co-worker ended up in hospital herself.

It was often difficult to get a precise health history. Many people who had not been raised in a city and hadn't received a formal education had very low health literacy and had problems explaining their symptoms. Often we were pressed to prescribe antibiotics. If one person had an appointment, a large family group would arrive and demand treatment at the same time. Accustomed to a very disease-oriented model of health care, they did not understand many of the preventative care measures we offer, such as pap tests and colorectal cancer screening.

During these few months, Ottawa received about 1,500 refugees, primarily government-sponsored. All of the refugees were out of the hotel and into housing by the end of March 2016, though it was a real challenge for settlement workers to find houses big enough for families of eight and ten. The newcomer clinic could not possibly do all the initial medical assessments in a timely manner, so clinics were arranged at other community health centres. These days were busy, chaotic and tiring, but incredibly interesting and rewarding.

In September, six to nine months after the newcomers arrived, I started to notice that a number of them showed signs of depression and anxiety. These symptoms take time to manifest themselves and are often difficult to detect during the chaotic time of resettlement and the so-called honeymoon phase after arrival. We've expected for some time to see cases of post-traumatic shock disorder. But these discouragements are balanced by the happy smiles of the children in my office, rushing to the book basket to show off their new English skills.

Our staff and the Refugee 613 group have kept track of our many challenges and successes. We hope to apply what we have learned when the next large group of newcomers arrives at our doorstep. Until then, I am happy to continue working with my new neighbours.

CIHS thanks its corporate members - IRCC and Pier 21 - for their significant support as well as its life and annual members. All these contributions allow us to pursue our objectives and activities.

The Canadian Immigration Historical Society (www.CIHS-SHIC.ca) is a non-profit corporation registered as a charitable organization under the Income Tax Act.	The society's goals are: - to support, encourage and promote research into the history of Canadian immigration and to foster the collection and dissemination of that history; and - to stimulate interest in and further the appreciation and understanding of the influence of immigration on Canada's development and position in the world.	President – Dawn Edlund; Vice-President – Anne Arnott; Treasurer – Raph Girard; Secretary – Robert Orr; Editor – Diane Burrows; Past-President – Michael Molloy Members at large - Brian Casey, Donald Cochrane, Charlene Elgee, Kurt Jensen, Gerry Maffre (Communications), Ian Rankin, and Robert Shalka Member emeritus - J.B. "Joe" Bissett IRCC Representative - Vacant Webmaster: Winnerjit Rathor
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