



My Immigration Control Officer Assignment: Warsaw, March 1993 to August 1996

Thomas A. Tass

After leaving Citizenship and Immigration Canada, the author's career for the following 25 years focused on work with intergovernmental organizations, such as the European Union, the International Organization for Migration, the International Centre for Migration Policy Development, and as advisor to allied government agencies in Europe, Asia, the Middle East and Central America.

When I look back at my time as the immigration control officer (ICO) in Central Europe from March 1993 to August 1996, it is as if two Austrian bookends support a series of short stories that, considering today's current events, are not only curious but strangely familiar.

On 17 March 1993, my family and I arrived in Vienna on our way to Warsaw, where I was to take up the newly minted position of ICO at the Canadian embassy. It was an inauspicious start to my posting: we immediately became unintentional tourists because the government of Poland delayed the issuance of our diplomatic visas. After two weeks, the visas were issued and we flew to Warsaw. The Polish border guards at what is now known as the Warsaw Chopin Airport were very attentive while they processed our entry, foreshadowing my relationship with them in the first months of my assignment.

We soon learned that our expected accommodations, necessarily rented through the Polish government diplomatic agency, were no more. So began three months of stays in the Marriott Hotel and short-term accommodations until we finally got a representative home—or staff quarter (SQ)—through the diplomatic agency. I realized that the official environment in early 1993 was still very much administered by a civil service functioning in the 50-year-old managerial style of the Soviet era. Ironically, this knowledge presented advantages later as I established a working relationship with senior officials.

“Our” Warsaw SQ was a large edifice, officially registered as a historical building. Designed and built in the 1930s in Art Nouveau style by a Polish architect, it was one of the few buildings in our neighborhood that had not been destroyed during World War II. A curator at the National Museum told me that the house had been inhabited by various “characters” during and after the war. The building's exterior could not be altered because of its historical designation, but its interior was a hodgepodge of rooms, staircases, and hallways that defied logic. The basement consisted of a series of small, interconnected whitewashed concrete rooms that were windowless and resembled jail cells. We rarely went down there, and our dog and cat never did. It was interesting that I never had to tell the taxi drivers how to get to where I lived, as every one of them knew exactly where it was.

Contents

TITLE	AUTHORS	PAGE
My Immigration Control Officer Assignment: Warsaw, March 1993 to August 1996	Thomas A. Tass	1
Donations to IRCC	Gerry Maffre	5
Working at Immigration Headquarters in the 1970s	Doug Dunnington	6
CIC Selected Deputy Minister's Lifetime Achievement Award Winners, Part 1		8
CIHS Presentation to Senator Mobina Jaffer, 14 February 2023		11
Renewal of cihs-shic.ca	Gerry Maffre	12
We Have Changed our Mailing Address		12
In Memoriam		12

Hurdles

When we arrived in Warsaw, my primary challenge was to establish an official working relationship with relevant authorities in each of the countries to which I was accredited. In addition to Poland, I was accredited to Ukraine, Czech Republic (now known also as Czechia), Hungary, Romania, Croatia, Yugoslavia, Slovakia, Bulgaria, Moldova, and Slovenia. Except for Yugoslavia, all the countries were former Warsaw Pact states that were just beginning to exercise their full independence and sovereignty.

Identifying and making official contact with government officials responsible for border security and management was particularly difficult. The incumbents and positions changed constantly as the post-socialist structures were replaced. They shared much in terms of how they got things done administratively but were very suspicious of the others' policies and ulterior motives, particularly as they related to third parties, such as Canada.

Another significant hurdle was to introduce the Canadian immigration control program and, by extension, me, to the Central and Eastern European community. The ICO concept was new and had no historical precedent.

A basic challenge was how to communicate effectively with the various government entities. While I had a personal assistant at the embassy in Warsaw, this was not the case when I travelled to the ten other countries. At that time, neither English nor French was widely spoken as a second language within the administrative bodies. For historical reasons, they used instead Russian and German, and it was basic German acquired during my posting in Austria that proved most useful.

Linking up with senior officials of national airlines that, in many instances, were primary stakeholders in operations at airports, was somewhat less onerous. They were the most cooperative group. Most of them realized that the preponderant European carriers were moving in and siphoning off their passengers with better aircraft and better service. Operational personnel at these national carriers saw strategic opportunities for future careers with these more profitable airlines.

It was also the time when a plethora of intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) established themselves in the region. They filled various political, economic, and educational needs that had sprung up as a result of changes since 1990. The IGOs ranged from the International Organization for Migration (IOM) to the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE), known today as the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE). The burgeoning NGO community helped me by providing insights on the rapidly evolving social and economic situation in the region and with introductions to some of the players. The Open Society program, Freedom House, and Radio Free Europe come to mind 30 years later as some of my points of contact.

Adjusting to a Rapidly Shifting Environment

The greatest challenge was how to make the ICO program relevant to Canada's interests. The program was primarily designed to mitigate irregular migration to Canada at the choke points at hub airports in Western Europe and Southeast Asia. The focus was on screening travelers whose documentation might be suspect. This operational policy had little relevance in the region for which I was responsible. None of the airports in my area was a hub airport and their traffic volumes were very low when compared to London, Frankfurt, Paris, or Rome. Only LOT Polish Airline had scheduled flights to Canada out of Warsaw, and Malev Hungarian Airlines ran seasonal charters out of Budapest. The passengers were overwhelmingly nationals from Poland and Hungary, and Canadian tourists. Fraudulent travel documents were as rare as the number of third-country nationals who travelled through the airports in the region. Moreover, airport security and border police still engaged in thorough exit control procedures—a hold-over practice from the socialist times that provided a very effective deterrent against fraud.

What was evident in those halcyon days of open borders was the exponential growth of travelers with dubious travel purposes and backgrounds. The relaxed land border policies designed in response to a pent-up demand for travel freedom were quickly seized on as opportunities by various criminal sectors. Trafficking women, and smuggling drugs, artwork, expensive automobiles, gold, and military materials were an open secret. Well-connected former government officials blended with known criminal entities and looked at ways to extend their influence and activities in Western Europe and then beyond, into Canada.

Innovation

How best to observe, collect, analyze, and relay this information to Ottawa with limited resources? One such effort was the creation of the innocuous-sounding series of workshops called "The 3C Program".

The Communication, Consultation, and Cooperation "workshop" program was designed to attract airline, border service, diplomatic, and non-governmental organizations from the 11 countries to which I was accredited as regional ICO. It was

approved by immigration headquarters as a cost-effective initiative since my travel budget limited my ability to visit all the countries in my region on a scheduled basis. It was also necessary to get the approval of the Canadian heads of mission in Prague and Budapest. Once they approved the proof of concept, their support was outstanding.

The workshops focused on operational problems that could be solved through the shared experiences of others in attendance. The workshops became annual events and were held in Prague, Budapest, and Warsaw. The program's success was underscored by the attendance of senior airline security personnel, border police officials, consular officials (some no doubt intelligence officers), and IGO representatives from the Inter-Governmental Consultations on Migration, Asylum and Refugees (IGC), IOM, and Interpol. That was enough to ensure that they were also attended by our RCMP liaison officer from Germany. More importantly, the workshops established a reliable contact network for my work within the region.

Product and Value

Information derived from these events and the goodwill created were extraordinarily valuable. Corridor talks with certain participants made for strategic value-added analysis/situation (sitrep) reports. The key issues at the time, outside of migration control but linked to it, were the movement and activities of organized crime figures, sex trafficking, and the smuggling or sale of fissionable materials, such as nuclear waste or isotopes that came out of abandoned Soviet-era military bases. It was a hallmark program that even got the attention of *The New York Times*. Ray Bonner, the Pulitzer Prize winning author, tracked me down in order to write a front-page report in the 14 June 1995 edition, entitled *Illegal Migrants' Road West Crosses Old East Bloc*. Publication occurred shortly before the 3C Program meeting in Warsaw that focused on airlines in the region.

We created a special banner for the events, which proved to be quite popular. In the region, such banners were ubiquitous swag or souvenir items. All the 3C meeting participants and official visitors to my office in Warsaw were given a banner. I remember visiting the offices of some senior border police authorities and seeing the banner prominently displayed.

More Challenges in the Post-Soviet Border Control Environment

During my assignment, Poland and Ukraine were the two countries whose border guards functioned operationally and administratively just as they did during the Soviet era. The embassy security detail regularly swept our SQ for listening devices and regularly found them. For the first year, despite having diplomatic passes to the airport and an ID card from the border guards to get past the guard post at their HQ, I was examined intensively.

On my first official visit to Kyiv, after receiving my credentials from the Foreign Ministry, I went to introduce myself to the border guards at their HQ. The introductions were made through an interpreter, and after a few minutes, the meeting was abruptly halted by the general of the border guards. He and his entourage got up, left the room, and closed the door; the interpreter was visibly shaken. He said, "It looks like you are going to be arrested". After 10 minutes, which felt more like an hour, the general and his subordinates returned and sat down. He looked at me sternly and asked me why I was in Ukraine and did I know a certain official (that he named) from the United States embassy in Vienna. I replied that I knew the person in question rather well, and that in fact, I had been speaking to him just before coming to Ukraine.

"What does that fellow do when he's in Ukraine?" the general asked. After about a minute into my response, the general stood up and said, "Well, then, you are among friends." Suddenly, without warning, a group of officers bearing trays of food and beverages entered the room. Small glasses were filled, and the general offered a toast to the future cooperation between Canada and Ukraine! After that, my area visits to Ukraine were well-coordinated with all the authorities.

Some years later, while working on a European Union project, I met the same general at an official meeting in Budapest. It was a friendly re-encounter, and he laughingly reminded me of our initial meeting and how much the world had changed since then. I have always believed that our modest and transparent efforts contributed to that change.

The Bosnian War and the Balkans

The Government of Yugoslavia supported Croatian and Bosnian Serbs in the wars from 1992 to 1995. The country was under economic and political sanctions endorsed by Canada. War and sanctions resulted in economic ruin, which forced thousands of its citizens to emigrate from the country. I was able to report on this emigration movement at Hungary's southern border. The Hungarian border guards provided significant logistical support to my office during those visits.

Logistical Challenges

Warsaw airport had only two direct flights to countries that were in my portfolio. To get to the other regional capitals, I had to transit through Vienna. To squeeze the most out of these trips, while I was in Vienna, I took the opportunity to meet with

colleagues from the United States, the United Kingdom, and the United Nations who had work interests akin to mine in the region.

Colouring Outside the Lines

Thirty years ago, my engagement with three countries in my area was outside the original scope of the ICO program, but it proved useful in developing a positive relationship with them. They were: Czechia, for its worker migrant management experiment; Slovenia, for its rapid establishment as an independent state; and Moldova, for its border challenges due to Transnistria.

The Slovak and Czech republics went their separate ways on 1 January 1993, a few months before my arrival in Warsaw. My visits to Prague were by air from Warsaw on Delta Airlines. Why Delta airlines? It was a historical holdover agreement from World War II on airline rights. Often, the beautiful tri-engine Boeing 727-200 flew half-empty. Each time I arrived in Prague, I was met by the local leaders of a young and innovative border police service that wanted to show how good it was at its job.

It was my Czech police colleagues who brought to my attention the large number of Chinese nationals who were establishing themselves in some of the poorer regions of the country. The movement was large and legal. *The New York Times* in June 1995 reported that "...Chinese restaurants that have sprung up in Eastern European capitals provide a cover. They (the Czech authorities) provide the immigrants with work permits, which get them into the country." The reporting, while accurate, did not allude to how these facts became known.

Ray Bonner attended one of our workshop meetings, invited by our Czech hosts. In the following article he wrote for *The New York Times*, he related that one Chinese restaurant in Prague employed more than 800 people. "Even more remarkable was the fact that the restaurant had only eight tables," he wrote, quoting my observation. It was true that 800 work permits were issued to the same firm by the Czechia government. Once it became evident that a visa loophole was being exploited, the program was halted. So we indirectly helped another country to plug a dubious migration movement.

In June 1991, Slovenia became the first republic to split from Yugoslavia, becoming an independent sovereign state. It embarked on a very ambitious border management program that was for all intents and purposes a clone of Germany's Bundesgrenzschutz (BGS), the German Federal Border Guard. My visits to Ljubljana were always very cordial, but my hosts always wanted to know how Canada dealt operationally with our border with the United States and the universality of our approach to the selection of immigrants. With their near-universal adaption of German operational and policy standards, irregular migration to and through Slovenia was almost nonexistent.

Canada had no physical presence in Moldova; our embassy in Bucharest, Romania was responsible for bilateral relations with it. On one occasion, I did an area trip to the border region in conjunction with a visit to Romania. The purpose was to understand conditions as they pertained to the area called Transnistria. Transnistria was (and still is) an unrecognized, breakaway state that is internationally recognised as a part of Moldova. It was a bizarre situation to witness the military presence of thousands of Russian troops in Transnistria. Those troops were supposedly a peacekeeping group that was sandwiched between Ukraine and Moldova. Using the program as cover, I was able to provide HQ with timely, relevant, beneficial observations along with raw analysis of the situation at the time.

Conclusion

I had the great fortune of being assigned to a region where the ICO program had no history. I also had superiors who possessed intellectual depth and leadership skills, along with that rarest of bureaucratic attributes—real risk management skills. They supported and had faith in my approach to getting our niche mission accomplished.

Among my recollections—some of which have blurred with the passage of time—the best are those of working with outstanding colleagues and meeting many individuals of genuine historical importance, including Václav Havel, Lech Wałęsa, and Gyula Horn. Many such individuals played a crucial role in my post-immigration career.

Donations to IRCC

Gerry Maffre

The CIHS received a considerable amount of memorabilia from the late Randy Orr, who was a member of the CIHS board and its former president. The Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21 will be reviewing those items for possible intake. The Society has also donated other memorabilia to Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada. A quantity of lapel pins, such as those displayed below, were sent to the IRCC training centre in Toronto.



Upper left: likely from a Four-Country Conference meeting; Upper right: Enforcement /Exécution de la Loi pin with 1869 on the crest; Bottom: a grey pin marking the 100th anniversary of Canada's 1869 Immigration Act.

We also transferred a small banner (below) to the Director General, Integrity Risk Management, at IRCC headquarters. It comes from Tom Tass, whose article appears at the beginning of this issue. The banner was created in 1993 during his posting to Warsaw as Eastern Europe's first Immigration Control Officer. The banner hangs from a red and white cord with a white fringe along the bottom. All photographs were taken by the author.



Working at Immigration Headquarters in the 1970s

Doug Dunnington

The Dunnington family headed to Ottawa in August 1974 for my posting to Immigration headquarters at the Department of Manpower and Immigration. Thanks to my wife Barb's trip back to Canada the previous Christmas, we had a new Costain carriage home waiting for us in Blackburn Hamlet. Our friend and colleague, Jim Metcalfe, had monitored its construction and so we had a fairly easy transition to Ottawa.

Headquarters was always a challenge for foreign service officers, as the required skill set was much different from that in visa offices. Working abroad essentially involved interviewing, selecting, and counselling new immigrants. Headquarters was concerned with developing policy and procedures, and required interacting with a variety of divisions within and outside the department.

On my arrival, I was told I would be in charge of operations in the United Kingdom, Europe, Africa, and the Middle East. That was quite a shock, as my only experience in the respective visa offices was in Belfast during my training and then two and a half years in London. My first task, the very next day, was to brief the new Canadian ambassador to Italy on our immigration operations in Rome and Milan. I of course asked for the file, but as I was soon to learn, there was often not much current material. Sticking to information available at headquarters, I found the Management Planning and Statistics Unit and asked for the numbers we had on the immigrant and non-immigrant categories being processed. I next visited the office that handled the monthly post reports to read the latest narratives describing any special developments at these posts. On reflection, I don't know why I just didn't pick up the phone and talk to the officers in charge and get these details!

Given my experience as a manpower recruitment officer in London, I soon became the foreign service liaison officer with the Manpower Division at headquarters and dealt with the immigration perspective on major recruitment projects under consideration.

Another of my early tasks was to design with a colleague from that organization a new system for the evaluation of job offers. The status quo allowed an applicant ten points toward the 50 required for an immigrant visa. Any applicant wishing to get that credit had to prove that there was indeed an employer who was offering a bona-fide job. That determination had to be made by an officer at a Canada Manpower Centre (CMC) (now called a Canada Employment Centre), who completed form MAN1234 and forwarded it to the visa office.

The change required the CMC to tell us whether, in addition to the job being bona fide, there were no Canadians who could do the job or be trained in the short term to do so. A CMC delivered a variety of subsidized programs to help the employer, so it was hoped we could ensure that the domestic labour force was considered before approving a foreign worker. The result was that approvals were only given to higher-skilled occupations and training of local candidates was required to prevent a long-term requirement for foreign workers.

For years, Canadian employers, unlike those in other countries, did not establish apprenticeship or even basic training programs. In addition, parents preferred their children to attend universities and colleges rather than enter skilled "blue collar" trades. The situation was of course more complex, but we needed to do something to signal that employers could not expect their skill requirements to be met forever by overseas workers. Canada Manpower Centres had the motivation and subsidized programs to change attitudes and work with employers, unions, and the education sector. Hopefully in the long term, Canada could develop a better training system that could be aided in the short term by foreign workers.

Another one of my enjoyable tasks was calling on university campuses in southern Ontario to address students who might be interested in joining the Immigration Foreign Branch's foreign service. We did this recruitment with other foreign service officers from the political stream and with trade commissioners, who sometimes considered us poor country cousins. I was determined to correct that position in my group.

I emphasized that our job in Immigration essentially determined the future of our country and the citizens who would compose it. It required an interest in people, their experiences, and motivations; how they would relate to the needs of Canada and the labour market; and providing guidance in how to be successful. An important dimension of the work was identifying immigration applicants who would not meet Canada's interests. Foreign service officers with Manpower and Immigration would spend the majority of their careers interviewing people who wanted a visa to immigrate, work, study, or visit. They clearly would need to like working with people.

I practised my presentation, included several cases that demonstrated our challenging job, and made sure my delivery was interesting and natural. My colleagues were impressed and asked how I was able to be so at ease and have the students so interested. I didn't tell them how long I practised writing and delivering the speech in front of a mirror!

One of the skills taught during my Ottawa posting was effective writing. I thought that university had provided me with that proficiency, but our director of Operations added a new dimension. Brian Danby was a public school graduate whose memos and submissions were classic. He did not hesitate to share that talent with his officers. Early in an Ottawa posting, most officers had a masterpiece in prose returned with several observations in red. Surprise and disappointment were the first reactions. However, on closer observation Mr. Danby's comments were usually right on. Most of us thank him for his excellent tutoring.

Another program that I was involved with was the Seasonal Agricultural Worker Program (SAWP). Employers in the Canadian agricultural sector were asking for government assistance, as they could not find Canadian workers willing to do the backbreaking work of planting and harvesting fruit, vegetables, and other crops. Increasing wage rates did not help to change minds and resulted in much higher prices for the consumer.

Another solution was to bring in seasonal workers from the Caribbean and Mexico who were used to the work and heat. They were attracted to the higher comparative wages that would help them improve the standard of living of their families back home and provide education for their children. Their government representatives were also interested in their citizens having access to a solid foreign currency.

Both the manpower and immigration sides were concerned that they might be accused of using slave labour. As a result, a formal negotiation process was established that consisted of employer representatives, foreign country representatives, and officials from both the federal immigration and manpower elements. It was decided that a premium wage and minimum living standards had to be provided and monitored on a regular basis through work site visits. Frankly, some people will always think that these workers are not being treated fairly. However, without the program, those workers would not be able to build better futures for their families. They simply would not have the same income back home. Barb voices this concern most times when we drive up to our cottage and pass two bunkhouses in Exeter.

My next assignment was to spend up to one year learning French to a level required of foreign service officers. Quite candidly, not all civil servants were as enthusiastic as our class. Our class thought they had gone to heaven with the opportunity to go to school full time on salary to learn a language. In particular, we were pleased that the pedagogy was not the traditional Ontario classroom method but sitting in easy chairs speaking and listening in French. Writing and reading were not involved. As a result, we made short shrift of any new student who entered our class with a negative attitude. At coffee break, we told them that we were eager to learn and would not tolerate any nonsense. If they didn't like it, they should go to a class where their studies would not require as much effort.

As a result, our teachers, and indeed the school, were delighted with our class and the motivation we demonstrated. We were therefore allowed to spend Friday afternoons at The Raftsmen Tavern in Hull, where we met and exchanged stories and drinks with locals who enjoyed teaching us some of the more colorful Quebecois words and expressions. We visited Montreal twice and enjoyed an Expos' game, again practising French as we went.

The highlight of our experience was an intensive five-day stay in the Laurentians that included role-playing exercises in French. The most memorable was our whole class writing in French, practicing the words and phrases in French, and then dressing up in the costumes of Cendrillon (Cinderella). Asticou videoed our entire play to show their funders and future students what an English-as-a-Second-Language program could achieve.

I returned to Immigration headquarters refreshed and ready for my next challenge but also mindful that our plan had always been to return to Kitchener with our little girls. Barbara's father had contracted cancer, and as an only child who had lived away for many years, she was anxious to be with him and her mom.

My prospective job sounded most interesting: executive assistant to the senior assistant deputy minister of Immigration. My task was to be the go-between for the senior and delivery levels of the department. It took little time to realize how daunting that task was. I had to become familiar with all the various activities and personalities of policy, program delivery, enforcement, and administration of NHQ plus, of course, the regions and foreign service operations. To say it was humbling was an understatement. I had only one year's experience at headquarters prior to this assignment and it was quite limited in scope. For the first time in my government career, I doubted my abilities.

My experience abroad had made me wonder how and why our various directives were developed. It seemed few of them indicated an understanding of the reality of our work abroad. My initial observation in headquarters was that there were

many interests to be considered before a policy and direction were finalized. A memo from a visa office to NHQ usually only required the approval of the officer in charge. In Ottawa, a whole slate of consultations and approvals both inside and outside the department had to be considered. Each was often affected by the personality of the officer responsible for that phase of the issue.

The other consideration quite candidly was that I often had no strong opinion on issues sent to my office. As a result, I could not give the senior ADM or deputy minister an educated opinion on whether they should support the position being advocated or send it back down the line. At that time, my immediate boss was from outside the department and civil service, while the deputy minister was a seasoned veteran with wide experience in the department and government.

The most impressive aspect of the deputy minister's office was his direction that all memos and documentation requiring his review be in his office by 4:00 p.m. every day. These items included not only the myriad of immigration matters but also those from the much larger employment division, unemployment insurance operations, and general administration.

Amazingly, all files with his directions and signature were on my desk the next morning by 8:00 a.m. I became most impressed with Mr. Manion and one day asked him how he could review and make decisions on all the files sent to him. He was rather surprised by my query. He simply said he really enjoyed his work so would get as much done before he left for home and bring the rest to do while he watched the hockey game!

Another of my responsibilities was to ensure that the ADM Immigration was prepared for the annual review by the House of Commons Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration. A general statement updating our operations was required, and then the floor was open for questions from the committee members. A similar effort was required by the department to anticipate any questions and answers that might be raised with the Minister in daily Question Period. The committee appearance was lengthier and covered a wider variety of subjects. It was my job to accompany the ADM and ensure that the briefing book had all the items that might be raised and explanations that could answer their queries. Suffice it to say that was a most interesting exercise.

As the months went by and Barb's father's health continued to deteriorate, we had to think about our intention to return to Kitchener. One night in February cemented our decision. The temperature was near minus 40 and the power was off. The four of us cuddled in bed with blankets, but we were still cold. Barbara murmured, "We were never this cold in Kitchener. It's time to go home".

Citizenship and Immigration Canada Selected Deputy Minister's Lifetime Achievement Award Winners, Part 1

Ed. note: With the permission of the Human Resources Branch of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada and the individuals concerned, the CIHS is pleased to present a series of reprints about employees who were awarded the Deputy Minister's Lifetime Achievement Award. In this issue, we highlight two of the 2012 award recipients: Mr. Vu Cao, and Ms. Susan Leith.

Vu Cao Deputy Minister's Lifetime Achievement Award Recipient, 2012

From the commendation (le texte français suit le texte anglais):

Mr. Vu Cao joined the Programs directorate, Quebec Region, Citizenship and Immigration Canada in 1989 as a regional program advisor after having worked for several years as an immigration officer both at port of entry and in Canada since June 1982. His commitment and dedication to CIC, both to the region and the department are unparalleled and his presence has made a significant positive contribution. His encyclopaedic knowledge and his vast experience are exceptional and span decades of legislative and policy changes, in many of which he has been directly consulted. Indeed, many sections in the current legislation and regulations benefit from consultations with Mr. Cao and a number of them actually also result from proactive suggestions made by Mr. Cao himself.

During the drafting and implementation phases of the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (IRPA), Vu Cao was the "go to" person and a much sought after collaborator for a number of national and regional committees and working groups on different aspects of the immigration and refugee protection program. This was also due to his long-standing reputation as an expert in the interpretation and application of immigration law and policy and his ability to provide clear, neutral and well-researched policy advice. In this context, he was asked to work on assignment in Ottawa on three different occasions, including participation in an in-depth immigration legislative review exercise further to the independent

consultant, Robert Trempe's, report to parliament "*Not Just Numbers: A Canadian Framework for Future Immigration*", and taking the lead on the development and implementation of a number of key regulatory policy initiatives.



In the Quebec context, he provides advice to the region with respect to the Canada-Quebec Accord in order to help ensure both that the Accord is applied appropriately and that IRPA is also respected. Co-incidentally, his colleagues at the provincial level with the *Ministère de l'Immigration et des Communautés culturelles* (MICC), also a key partner with CIC in delivering the Immigration program in the province of Quebec, are also regular clients seeking advice on the interplay between federal and provincial legislation, our respective programs and the application of the Accord. Mr. Cao is currently playing a lead role in the development and drafting of joint directives between MICC and CIC regarding the delivery of immigration programs to applicants destined to the province of Quebec. Another area in which Vu Cao's sage advice has become highly requested is that of litigation management in complex and high-profile cases where his knowledge of the act, the regulations and policy and his corporate memory have been key elements in defending decisions taken by immigration officers in the domestic network and visa officers in missions overseas. He is also a frequent invitee to conferences and presentations organized by the Canadian and Quebec Bar Associations. In

the same vein, Vu Cao has also been invited to participate in discussions with the *Association des aides familiales du Québec*.

Mr. Vu Cao's facility to anticipate problems and to propose legislative, policy and operational solutions in the context of new initiatives is remarkable. He provides insight characterized by a common-sense approach that takes into account principles of administrative law and relevant jurisprudence in order to ensure that CIC's programs are delivered in a manner that is fair and equitable and compliant with the Canadian Charter and provide quality of client service and ensure that services offered are efficient and accessible. He has been instrumental in developing a host of operational procedures in place across the department that have helped improve efficiency and better respond to the needs of all partners. In particular, his work streamlining procedures between CIC and MICC has resulted in gains in efficiency on both sides.

The impact of Vu's presence has also been felt strongly in the context of CIC's overseas operations and he is a frequently requested resource given his exceptional program knowledge and his networking skills with partners and stakeholders. In conclusion, Vu Cao has personally made a significant contribution to improving Canada's immigration and refugee protection programs. As Vu completes his final year at CIC, we feel that this is an opportune moment to recognize his contribution and to celebrate the accomplishments of an exemplary career as a public servant.

Nominated by:

Mr. Albert Deschamps, Regional Director General, Quebec Region

Vu Cao

M. Vu Cao s'est joint à la Direction des programmes de la Région du Québec en 1989 à titre de conseiller de programme régional. Ses connaissances encyclopédiques et sa vaste expérience sont exceptionnelles et les changements apportés aux lois et aux politiques au cours des dernières décennies n'ont plus de secret pour lui.

Au cours des phases de rédaction et de mise en œuvre de la *Loi sur l'immigration et la protection des réfugiés*, Vu était la personne-ressource à consulter ainsi qu'un collaborateur très convoité par un certain nombre de comités et de groupes d'immigration et de protection des réfugiés.

On lui a demandé d'accepter des affectations à Ottawa à trois reprises, notamment pour la révision en profondeur de la législation sur l'immigration en réponse au rapport au Parlement de l'expert-conseil indépendant Robert Trempe, *Au-delà des chiffres : l'immigration de demain au Canada*.

Vu joue actuellement un rôle de premier plan dans l'élaboration de directives conjointes entre CIC et le ministère de l'Immigration et des Communautés culturelles du Québec concernant la prestation des programmes d'immigration aux candidats à destination du Québec.

Ses conseils sont fortement sollicités dans la gestion de cas litigieux et complexes, susceptibles d'attirer l'attention du public. Sa connaissance de la *Loi*, du *Règlement* et des politiques ainsi que sa mémoire institutionnelle sont cruciales

lorsque vient le temps de défendre des décisions prises par les agents d'immigration au pays et par les agents des visas dans les missions à l'étranger.

Vu veille à ce que les programmes de CIC soient exécutés d'une manière juste, équitable et conforme à la *Charte canadienne*.

Sa contribution à CIC et sa passion à l'égard du programme d'immigration et de la protection des réfugiés lui ont valu le respect et l'admiration de ses collègues partout au pays et au-delà de ses frontières.

Une recrue récente de l'équipe des conseillers de programme régional a dit : « Je veux être le prochain Vu Cao ! » De toute évidence, il est une grande inspiration pour ceux qui ont le privilège de le connaître et de travailler avec lui.

*Candidature proposé par
M. Albert Deschamps, directeur général régional, Région du Québec*

Susan Leith
Deputy Minister's Lifetime Achievement Award Recipient, 2012

From the commendation (le texte français suit le texte anglais)

Susan Leith has been working in the immigration program for over 25 years. She has worked at the Port of Entry (when CIC had the POE), in the region in various capacities, overseas on temporary duty, and at NHQ. Her varied experience in a wide range of roles ably suited her to serve as the department's first "ombudsman", a role which later transformed into her current one, that of Director of the Office of Conflict Resolution.

She has been in this role for most of the last 12 years and in it, she has positively influenced the lives and careers of many employees across the department, both in Canada and around the world. Susan brought creativity to her new position, a strong desire to make a difference to those who would be seeking her assistance, organizational and cultural awareness, and a real talent for bringing solutions to complex issues. Her true talent is in being a great listener—someone who hears what is not said and who offers views that the person presenting the problem may never have considered. Always a consummate professional, she never loses her cool. She always speaks truth to power and she treats everyone with respect. She is a role model for many and a mentor for a lucky few. In terms of impact on the organization, Susan has firmly established the importance of conflict resolution. Her guidance is actively sought out at all levels of the organization and her advice is highly valued. CIC is seen as a leader amongst departments in the area of conflict resolution. This is because of Susan's efforts. The impact of her work has been wide-ranging and important to those who have sought it out and the fact that there is a general awareness now of conflict resolution in the workplace is equally a testament to her efforts.

*Nominated by:
Ms. Caroline Melis, Director General, Operational Management and Coordination
Ms. Barbara Diener, Regional Manager, Client Service Division, Human Resources Branch*

Susan Leith

Susan Leith travaille au sein du programme d'immigration depuis plus de 25 ans. Elle a été le premier « ombudsman » du Ministère, un rôle qui s'est plus tard transformé en son rôle actuel, soit celui de directrice du Bureau de résolution des conflits. Elle a ouvert la voie aux autres « ombudsmans » et d'autres ministères la consultant régulièrement pour obtenir de l'orientation et des conseils.

Susan a occupé ce poste pour la majeure partie des 12 dernières années et, à ce titre, a eu une influence positive sur la vie et la carrière de nombreux employés au sein du Ministère, tant au Canada qu'ailleurs dans le monde.

Les femmes étaient en minorité au Ministère lorsque Susan a commencé sa carrière au sein de la fonction publique. Elle parle souvent de certains défis de l'époque. Quiconque connaît Susan sait qu'elle est une habile conteuse, qu'elle possède un bon sens de l'humour et sait terminer ses histoires par de brillants mot d'esprit.

Dès le début de sa carrière, Susan était destinée à devenir gestionnaire. Après avoir gravi les échelons, elle est devenue superviseuse à l'aéroport Pearson. Elle a ensuite assumé le rôle de directrice du Contrôle aux points d'entrée au sein du

programme d'exécution de la loi à l'Administration centrale et a participé au remaniement des processus opérationnels qui a permis à CIC de satisfaire aux exigences en matière de réalisation d'économies dans le cadre de l'examen des programmes des années 1990.

Susan a su, dans le cadre de ses fonctions, faire preuve de créativité, d'un fort désir d'aider les gens qui ont recours à ses conseils et à sa compréhension organisationnelle et des différences culturelles, ainsi que d'un réel talent pour trouver des solutions aux problèmes complexes.

Son véritable talent, cependant, est de savoir écouter. Elle sait entendre ce qui n'est pas dit et offre des points de vue que la personne présentant le problème peut ne pas avoir pris en considération.

Candidature proposée par

Mme Caroline Melis, directrice générale, Gestion opérationnelle et coordination

Mme Barbara Diener, gestionnaire régionale, Division des services à la clientèle, Direction générale des ressources humaines

CIHS Presentation to Senator Mobina Jaffer, 14 February 2023

Following a conversation between Senator Mobina Jaffer and former CIHS president Michael Molloy at an event on 15 November 2022, the senator asked Molloy for a copy of the special Bulletin on the 50th anniversary of the Ugandan Asian Movement to Canada to deposit with the Senate Library. Diane Burrows tailored and organized the production of the necessary copies and Molloy made arrangements with the senator's office to present them to her in person.

On 14 February 2023, Dawn Edlund, Michael Molloy, and Diane Burrows went to the senator's office and then to the Senate gallery itself. The Senate speaker briefly introduced them as visitors in the gallery to the senators on the floor. After, they met Senator Jaffer for the presentation and photographs. Serendipitously, Senator V. Peter Harder (former deputy minister of Citizenship and Immigration Canada) walked by and joined the group for photos as well.

Other copies of this special issue will be sent to Library and Archives Canada, the library of Carleton University (Uganda project), and the CIHS archives.



Presentation of CIHS Special Bulletin 102 to Senator Mobina Jaffer in the Senate lobby. L-R: Senator V. Peter Harder, former CIHS President Michael J. Molloy, CIHS Bulletin Editor Diane Burrows, Senator Mobina Jaffer and CIHS President Dawn Edlund. (Photo courtesy of Seema Rampersad, Office of Senator Jaffer)

Renewal of cihs-shic.ca

Gerry Maffre

Over the past several months, some board members have worked with our webmaster and his colleagues to revamp our website. The goal has been a site to attract a range of researchers, to be fresh and content-rich, and to be easy to navigate and to search—all in supporting CIHS's goals of promoting research into and communication about the history of Canada's immigration programs. In mid-February, we reached an important stage of approving a design and structure. Not only does it meet our stated goal, but the site will also be more accessible on a wider variety of digital tools and to people with varying accessibility needs.

Our next step is to move material from the old to the new site and its more logical structure. Then it will undergo some final testing before we give members an advance look at the new site.

We Have Changed our Mailing Address!

The CIHS's new mailing address, effective immediately, is:

The Canadian Immigration Historical Society
C.P./P.O. Box 4401, STATION E
OTTAWA ON K1S 5B4

Please update your records.

In Memoriam

Foley, Christine

Christine (Chris) Foley passed away in March 2023. She was a mainstay of the London, U.K. visa office as its locally engaged registry supervisor. Many immigration visa officers and staff of that office knew and respected her, and an even larger community in Canada's immigration operations knew of her through her many "subject matter expert" contributions in data management best practices as records moved from paper to computers.

Remembered by Joyce Cavanagh-Wood

I was in London from 1989 to 1992, during which era Chris was an absolute dynamo. She was the institutional memory of the immigration operation, having been there for many years. She knew all the rules, regulations, systems, and personalities. She ran the registry with a motley crew, ensuring that files were NEVER lost, and all BFs were attended to. She embraced technology when it was being introduced and was always eager to learn new ways of improving the operation.

She was a charming lady whose smile could win over the hardest, grumpiest colleagues. She treated all with respect and did not tolerate abuse. I have thought of her often over the years and smiled when I remembered her warmth and high spirits. She remains an inspiration to me.

Remembered by Doug Dunnington

When I saw the name Chris Foley, I immediately thought of her beaming smile and charming lilting accent. She was one of the "lifers" we were fortunate to have in the London office, and she was eager to do anything she was asked. Chris was also a crackerjack in knowing program detail.

Remembered by Raphael Girard

Over the years, I spent more than six years in the London office and in every one of those years, Chris Foley was a key, dependable ally who epitomised the quest for learning even though she had the bare minimum of formal education. She mastered the CAIPS technology better than most and mentored scores of junior officers in the art of administration and organization of the workplace.

She was a junior registry clerk in London when I arrived to take up a job in February 1965. My immediate boss was a psychopath who seemed determined to break me for my pretensions at being in a non-line-officer position on my first posting. He set up a job-matching process where, with no support staff, I had to review all London's active case files to match applicants with incoming job vacancy notices. Within a week, I had accumulated almost all the active files in the registry—hundreds and hundreds—and I was falling farther and farther behind every day even though I stayed late every night. There were files everywhere. One evening, the boss passed my office on his way out, looked in and exclaimed "Good God what a mess! Get this cleaned up by tomorrow morning or else...." I carried on till midnight but finally cracked with a mountain of files still to be checked. In a fit of blind hysteria, I opened the door of the adjoining vacant office and threw the files in. Having cleared my desk and closed the doors tightly, I went to the registry and left a note for Chris saying that if she had attachments for files that were not in the registry, she should look on the floor of what had been Don Milburn's office. Next morning after the boss had passed and noted with some astonishment that my desk was clean, Chris came by. She smiled and assured me that the mess on the floor of the office next door would remain our secret. Career saved!

Remembered by Paul Grey

I had the great good fortune to be with Chris in London from 1970 to 1972. Not only was she great at her job, but she was great fun and a lovely person to be with. She was a devoted Leeds United fan, and as I was an equally assured Arsenal fan we had some moments. The trouble with getting to be 80 is that you have to witness the passing of people who meant a lot to you.

Remembered by Ian Rankin

I worked with/for Chris the summer of 1973. I was a summer student having my first experience with a large bureaucracy. Handling reception and paper flow was a delightful experience with the help of Ms. Foley. She was a pleasure to work for and made it a career-defining summer. Sad to hear of her passing.

Remembered by Barbara Sandilands

I was extremely fond of Chris. She really was a terrific person—organized, smart as a whip, funny and kind in equal measure. She ran that registry office with extraordinary efficiency for many years. She trained me (and so many others), and when I went back as an officer nine years later she was a mainstay. Very sorry to hear of her death, but she leaves many fine memories behind.

Remembered by Robert Shalka

Sad news indeed. I never did a posting in London but knew she was an institution in the office. I passed through London in 1983 en route to Moscow and she gave me a briefing on "Iris", the new electronic state-of-the-art file tracking and indexing system. At a time of 3x5 index and "BF" cards, "Iris" seemed so advanced. I later spent a month in London in 1997 helping out with Saudi files, and Chris was the CAIPS manager. She was pleasant and helpful. The story I heard was that she started out in the Leeds office as a "tea girl" at age 15 fresh out of school—this was still the old Britain where elementary education was the norm.

Remembered by Barbara Stewart

Gavin and I had the good fortune to work with Chris Foley in London, as did so many others. I believe she started her career in Leeds in the 1960s and transferred to London when that office closed. She was a mainstay of the London office for many years, and we had the greatest respect for her as a colleague and a friend.

Remembered by Gerry Van Kessel

When I worked at the office in London in 1972 as a summer student on a deservedly forgotten program, I saw Chris almost daily. She was most knowledgeable about the programs the office was carrying out. Being thrown in at the deep end without any training whatsoever (the program I was working on left time over to help out in doing other tasks), I had loads of questions about what needed to be done, and Chris was always helpful and cheerful. She and a few others demonstrated how good locally engaged staff contributed to the effective carrying out of the various immigration programs. It is with fondness that I remember her.

McAdam, Brian

Brian McAdam passed away in Ottawa on 12 December 2022. His career focused on overseas immigration service, as an immigration foreign service officer in London (twice), Hong Kong (twice, with the second posting as an immigration control officer), and Copenhagen, and as immigration program manager in Bridgetown, Barbados.

Remembered by Michael J. Molloy

When I took over the Amman visa office in the mid 1980s, I inherited the Beirut office files, which were a mess. The office had operated in a war zone after a long “exile” in Cyprus, and there was a repeating pattern. Every time the fighting heated up in a particular part of Lebanon, Lebanese in Canada would file a flurry of applications for relatives in the affected zone. (Beirut often received a ministerial representation by telex before the sponsorship arrived by bag.) When the fighting moved on, most of those who had been sponsored lost interest, leaving us with literally thousands of files that were open but long inactive. I hadn’t done any immigration case work for five or six years and was pretty rusty. I told Ottawa I needed the help of someone who really knew the case-processing business. They sent me Brian. He arrived just before I was scheduled to go to Nairobi for a management meeting, and by the time I returned he had reviewed over 10 years’ worth of files and had closed hundreds of them. We never heard from the people concerned again unless fighting returned to their neighbourhoods. Brian was a real professional.

Ratcliffe, Ann

During her public service career, Ann served as director general of Strategic Policy, Planning and Research at Citizenship and Immigration Canada. She passed away on 12 January 2023. Her obituary can be found [online](#). The family would be happy to receive any reflections.

Ricard, Lyse

We were saddened to hear of the passing of Lyse Ricard on 15 January 2023, at the age of 66. Her obituary (in French) can be viewed [here](#). CIHS recognizes the significant contribution made by Ms. Ricard in over 30 years of public service and especially during the seven years that she spent at CIC.

Ms. Ricard spent several years as a senior manager at Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC), now Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC). She joined the department as director general of Finance and Administration in 1998. In 2001, she was appointed assistant deputy minister, Centralized Services Delivery and Corporate Services. From 2003 to 2005, she was CIC’s Assistant Deputy Minister, Operations. Her tenure as ADM, Operations coincided with the creation of the Canada Border Services Agency, which took over the functions of several directorates within CIC.

An accountant by training, Ms. Ricard left IRCC in 2005 to join the Office of the Auditor General as assistant auditor general. In 2007, she moved to the Canada Revenue Agency, completing assignments as assistant commissioner and deputy commissioner. In 2012, Lyse was appointed Senate Ethics Officer by then-Prime Minister Stephen Harper, a position she held until her retirement in 2017.

Remembered by Don Cochrane

In August 2003, I was assigned to Lyse’s office as her Policy and Program Advisor, a role which was often staffed by a foreign service officer. While the work was fast paced and demanding, and involved long hours, I greatly appreciated the opportunity to work closely with a senior executive and to get an invaluable overview of the department. This experience served me well for the balance of my career. I remember Lyse as an extremely devoted senior manager who was very appreciative of those who supported her.



CIC Executive Committee Retreat at Meech Lake, 21 June 2004
Front row, L-R: Dawn Edlund, Lyse Ricard, Michel Dorais, Diane Vincent, Brigitte Diogo. Back row, L-R: Alfred MacLeod, Taitu Deguefe, Louise Gravel, Daniel Jean, John McWhinnie, Bill Pentney. (Photo provided by Dawn Edlund)

Smith, Hume

Hume's career with Canada's immigration foreign service took in a fairly equal measure of headquarters and overseas assignments. He joined immigration in 1964 and completed his training as a junior executive officer in September 1965. He and his spouse were then posted to London, where he worked as a counselling officer until September 1968, when he came back to Ottawa to work in immigration operations until July 1970. He was then posted to Stockholm, where he was the assistant officer in charge for three years. In September 1973, he moved to New Delhi, then Cape Town (seconded to External Affairs), and Pretoria. Several assignments at headquarters followed, including language training in 1980 and a stint as an assignment officer in the Personnel Branch for a year. Hume then became the immigration program manager in Sydney, Australia for four years, returning to Ottawa in 1985 to work as a deputy director until 1987. He then went to Ankara as the immigration program manager. He finished his career in Boston, again as immigration program manager.

Remembered by Ernest Allen

I knew Hume well during my first year in London, after which he was posted to Ottawa. Hume was a mild-mannered, gentle person, and an excellent colleague. Hume visited me in Islamabad in 1995 or 1996, at which time I believe he was again working in London.

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.

<p>The Canadian Immigration Historical Society (www.CIHS-SHIC.ca) is a non-profit corporation registered as a charitable organization under the Income Tax Act.</p>	<p>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.</p>	<p>President – Dawn Edlund; Vice-President – Anne Arnott; Treasurer – Don Cochrane; Secretary – Robert Orr; Editor – Diane Burrows; Past-President – Michael Molloy Members at large – Brian Casey, Charlene Elgee, Raphael Girard, Kurt Jensen, Gerry Maffre (Communications), Ian Rankin, and Robert Shalka Member emeritus – J.B. "Joe" Bissett IRCC Representative – Paula Pincombe Webmaster: Winnerjit Rathor; Website translations: Sylvie Doucet</p>
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