

***"To the Very Limits of our Strength?"* International Interests and Domestic Concerns in
Canadian Immigration Policy, 1945-1948**

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Abstract

This thesis is structured around international interests and domestic concerns as two central issues in the making of Canadian postwar immigration policy from 1945-1948. During the early post World War II period, the Department of External Affairs sought to strike a balance between these issues by integrating a greater consideration of international events into the formulation of Canadian immigration policy. The significant influence that the department had with the government helped to introduce a new dimension of active liberal internationalism and a keener sense of global responsibility and commitment into the national debate on immigration. Nevertheless, despite these efforts, the formulation and administration of Canada's immigration policy in the immediate postwar years was dominated by considerations of national self-interest, domestic politics and the national economy.

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INTRODUCTION

As the Second World War drew to a close, observers recognized that as a result of domestic interests, it had been nearly two decades since the Canadian government had actively sought "to encourage rather than impede the flow of immigrants."¹ The Department of External Affairs, among others, believed the government should now actively seek out things the country might do in this area, rather than things the country might avoid doing.² Even though Mackenzie King was still very much in command of the department, he remained preoccupied by the exigencies of the war, and as such, postwar planning was not a subject to which he could give steady attention.³ Consequently, he delegated much of the responsibility for long-term policy-making to senior bureaucrats and diplomats at External Affairs. These officials were inspired by a very different perspective on the Canadian role in global affairs than their predecessors and overseers in the Cabinet. Unlike King and his like-minded colleagues, External Affairs

no longer saw Canada as a country developing against odds and in need of protection but as a well-sinewed actor on the world scene, its status assured, its practices still to be worked out.⁴

Isolation from the world's problems, departmental officials realized, was no longer feasible. Immigration was one area in particular in which they recognized that

...the conservatism of Cabinet on population policies...[was] setting limits to policy proposals...[and was a]...handicap...placed on their vision of the country by

¹ Gerald Dirks, *Canada's Refugee Policy: Indifference or Opportunism?* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1977), 123. These domestic interests centred around contending with the socio-economic dislocation caused by the Great Depression, as well as with the federal government's preoccupation with managing its war effort.

² John W. Holmes, *Shaping of Peace: Canada and the Search for World Order, 1943-1957*, vol. 1. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1979), 25.

³ *Shaping of the Peace*, vol. 1., 26.

⁴ *Shaping of the Peace*, vol. 1., 26.

Canada's insensitivity to the plight of refugees, its archaic immigration regulations, and the racism clearly evident in practice. [Departmental officials] battled vigorously against what they regarded as the defensive mentality entrenched in the immigration branch...[and]...sought to warn the Cabinet of the desperate realities they saw in Europe...'

The department further recognized that, to help secure international stability, Western Europe would have to be reconstructed and rehabilitated as quickly as possible. Moreover, Canada would have to adopt additional measures beyond providing financial contributions to her allies to cover the enormous expenses of reconstruction. Not only did the Western European governments confront the enormous task of rebuilding their national infrastructures, but they were also burdened with the additional problem of having to provide for the approximately one million refugees and Displaced Persons (DPs) who were forced westward with the advance of the Red Army into Germany and Austria in 1945 and who, in the aftermath of the war, refused to be repatriated to their place of origin. With this in mind, External Affairs suggested that Canada could make a substantial contribution to European recovery by allowing some of the surplus European population to immigrate to Canada. The department believed that this would surely serve as one of the best, and most expedient means by which Canada could help to ameliorate the refugee and Displaced Person problem.

Officials at External Affairs were eager to counter the "old cautions" of the King government. The department supported the Keynesian belief that a more populous country would generate greater national wealth, and the skilled refugees and DPs of Europe could be integrated into the Canadian economy as a means of helping to ensure continued prosperity and growth.⁶

⁵ *Shaping of the Peace*, vol. 1, 94. See also *Canada's Refugee Policy*, 125.

⁶ David C. Corbett, *Canada's Immigration Policy: A Critique*. (Toronto: Macmillan, 1957), 112.

Departmental officials predicated their liberal internationalist goals on a realist stance. They recognized that it would be far more politically palatable to King and his Cabinet to introduce a more open immigration policy if there would be some tangible economic advantage for the nation. Consequently, External Affairs began lobbying for an expanded postwar immigration policy based on the belief that this would contribute to Canadian prosperity.

The department was also quick to point out that Canada was a nation whose prosperity had traditionally depended upon foreign trade. Throughout the first half of the twentieth century, between one-quarter and one-third of Canada's GNP was derived from exports.⁷ Furthermore, during the course of the war, Canada's dependence on international trade—which had already been significant—increased substantially.⁸ As a result, Canadians “had a vested interest in the re-establishment of normal trading relations at the earliest possible moment, and in the greatest possible volume.”⁹ Accepting some of the surplus European population into Canada, the department suggested, would greatly assist with this difficult task. As External Affairs saw it, the renewed prosperity of Europe was in the interests “of the Europeans themselves, of peace, and Canadian commerce.”¹⁰

⁷National Archives of Canada (hereafter cited as NAC), RG 19, Records of the Department of Finance, vol. 764, 304-6; table, n.d. (Based on figures from *The Canada Year Book*, 1945. (Ottawa: Dominion Bureau of Statistics, 1946). Cited in Hector M. Mackenzie, “The Path to Temptation: The Negotiation of Canada's Reconstruction Loan to Britain in 1946.” *Historical Papers* (Canadian Historical Association, 1982), 196-220.

⁸ During the war Canada rose to third position among trading nations, due to the heavy demand created for foodstuffs and war materials. One-third of all goods and services produced in the Dominion during 1944 and 1945 were exported, which compares with less than one-fifth of a much smaller production in 1938. See *The Canada Year Book*, 1947. (Ottawa: Dominion Bureau of Statistics, 1947), 848.

⁹Robert A. Spencer, *Canada in World Affairs: From UN to NATO, 1946-49*. (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1959), 189.

¹⁰John W. Holmes, *Shaping of Peace: Canada and the Search for World Order, 1943-1957*. Vol. 2. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982), 17.

Canadian policy-makers had developed an almost euphoric confidence in the positive effects which the removal of barriers to international trade would have upon international cooperation. One of the most sensible and obvious means of achieving greater international cooperation, they believed, would be to facilitate world trade. Canadians had learned the lessons of the preceding decades well, recognizing that poor economic conditions were a significant factor leading to the rise of fascism in Europe.¹¹ The world's political stability demanded a strong and healthy economic structure,¹² and a rapid global recovery from the war was one of the best ways in which Canada could protect its national security. Helping to alleviate the refugee situation, authorities further acknowledged, was one means by which the country could help ensure its national security since, if left unresolved, the refugee issue could have a profoundly negative effect upon international political and economic stability. Because Europe, and Great Britain in particular, represented a traditional market for staple exports and constituted the foundation of the multilateral 'trading arch' upon which Canada had depended in prewar days, the restoration of Europe's prosperity was of vital importance to Canada.¹³ Besides, since "the war had stimulated a tremendous industrial expansion in Canada," wartime gains could only be

¹¹ See NAC, RG 25, Records of the Department of External Affairs (hereafter cited as DEA), vol. 2106, file AR 405/1/8/10, Canadian High Commissioner in London to Secretary of State for External Affairs (SSEA), December 3, 1945.

¹² At this time, the Western allies were well aware of the danger that the refugee situation 'presented to the reconstruction of the economic and social life of Western European countries, in particular to the occupied and controlled countries.' See Louise W. Holborn, *The International Refugee Organization: A Specialized Agency of the United Nations, Its History and Work 1946-1952*. (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1956), 46.

¹³ Spencer, *Canada in World Affairs*, 197. For example, in 1939, Canada exported \$328.1 million worth of goods to the UK and \$57.9 million worth of goods to the rest of Europe. In 1946 those figures rose to \$597.5 million for the UK and \$334.4 million to the remainder of Europe. By comparison, in 1939 Canada exported \$380.3 million worth of goods to the US, and \$887.9 million in 1946. Overall then, in 1939 total exports to Europe surpassed the total amount of bilateral trade with the US by \$5.6 million. In 1946 total exports to Europe surpassed total trade with the US by \$44 million. See *The Canada Year Book, 1947*. (Ottawa: Dominion Bureau of statistics, 1947), 884.

sustained if “foreign trade was maintained and expanded.”¹⁴ Concern with the future of the continent stemmed from the “full recognition that the economic interests of Canadians were involved in the recovery of Europe.”¹⁵

Canada’s new international responsibilities, mandarins at External Affairs argued, would require the country to offer a greater commitment to refugees and immigration more generally. External Affairs also believed that Canada would achieve enhanced international stature through an expanded immigration policy. This increased stature could be achieved by adopting a new immigration policy¹⁶ which would coincide with, and help secure, a number of the objectives of the United Nations’ organizations which had mandates to alleviate the European refugee crisis. Organizations such as the General Council of the Allied Intergovernmental Committee on Refugees (IGCR), the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA), and, later, the International Refugee Organization (IRO), actively pressed for international assistance to help relieve this most difficult predicament.

By the first quarter of 1946, Canada was beginning to reach the limit of her capacity to economically contribute to European recovery. For example, the last export credit to the continent—the first one having been extended in 1944—was offered in May 1946, and inquiries after that date were politely but firmly refused.¹⁷ The Canadian government further recognized

¹⁴ Spencer, *Canada in World Affairs*, 197.

¹⁵ *Shaping of the Peace*, vol. 2, 82.

¹⁶ It should be noted that during the period in question, Canadian immigration policy did not differentiate between a ‘refugee’ and an ‘immigrant.’ For all intents and purposes they were considered the same. In fact, an official and internationally recognized definition of a refugee was not formulated until 1951 with the ratification of the Status of Refugee Convention adopted by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

¹⁷ See “Canadian Policy in Europe, September 1946-August 1952, in “A Survey of Canadian External Policy (1946-52).” DEA, vol. 6390, file, 5296-C-40-1-2.

that additional financial contributions to Europe could no longer be sustained beyond the end of 1947. Indeed, between March 1945 and December 1947, Canada assisted its allies in their reconstruction efforts by loaning over \$2 Billion to Western Europe—"not in any sense an act of charity" but as "an investment in the future of Canadian trade."¹⁸ However, the Canadian coffers were quickly drying up. Therefore, alternative solutions would have to be found to continue to help contribute to the recovery of the continent. Canadian policy-makers, particularly those in the Department of External Affairs such as Lester Pearson and Hume Wrong, believed that maintaining strong ties with traditional European partners like Great Britain would also have the additional advantage of mitigating the increasing cultural and economic influence which the United States was having upon Canada.¹⁹

Strengthening political affiliations was yet another manner in which greater international cooperation could be facilitated. This could be best accomplished, officers from External Affairs believed, by increasing ties with other nations through multilateral²⁰ institutions like the United Nations (UN). Furthermore, since key European states like Britain and France were permanent members of the Security Council, they would be essential—as strong and healthy allies—in helping Canada achieve its international objectives. Helping its allies recuperate from the war so that Canada could achieve its own aims in the interests of world peace²¹ provided an important

¹⁸ DEA, vol. 6390, file, 5296-C-40-1-2.

¹⁹ John English, *Shadow of Heaven: The Life of Lester Pearson, Vol I: 1897-1948*. (Toronto: Lester & Orpen Dennys, 1989), 94. Others, however, contested this view. See the comments of F. H. Soward in DEA, vol. 6390, file, 5296-C-40-1-2.

²⁰ See Alan Henrikson, "The Canadian Contribution: From Word to Concept to Model," paper delivered at the 65th Anniversary Conference of the Canadian Institute of International Affairs, Ottawa, December 5, 1993.

²¹ See the comments of Gordon Graydon, CCF MP for Peel in the House of Commons, *Debates*, vol. IV (June 30, 1947), 4824.

impetus for the country to help rectify the European refugee situation.

By the end of 1945, the sheer magnitude of the refugee problem in Europe had begun to create increasing tensions between the Western Allies and the Soviet Union. As the refugee dilemma persisted into the late 1940s, set against the backdrop of escalating Cold War tensions, Canadian policy-makers such as Escott Reid and Dana Wilgress, among others, became increasingly concerned over the difficulties arising between the Western Allies and the Soviet Union (USSR) regarding the forced repatriation of refugees. External Affairs came to believe that, left unresolved, the refugee crisis might endanger postwar cooperation among the great powers.²² To avoid an international confrontation over repatriation, they felt the best solution would be to disperse the Displaced Persons by resettling as many of them as quickly as possible.²³ Moreover, the department determined that restoring peace and prosperity to the continent was the best safeguard against the spread of Communism in Europe. Officials such as Pearson, Reid, Wilgress and Wrong, exhibited concern over what they perceived as communist advances²⁴ in Western and Southern Europe, fearing they were gaining considerable popularity in France, Greece, and Italy. Indeed, these officers were apprehensive that the Communist Party in these countries might gain power democratically by exploiting the difficulties resulting from the refugee

²² See the address by the Hon. Paul Martin before the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations on the Refugee Problem in *Documents on Canadian External Relations: 1946*. Vol. 12. (Ottawa: Department of External Affairs, 1977), 940-944, (hereafter cited as *DCER*).

²³ Angelika E. Sauer, "A Matter of Domestic Policy? Canadian Immigration Policy and the Admission of Germans, 1945-50." *Canadian Historical Review*. 74, 2 (1993), 232.

²⁴ See NAC, RG 2, Records of the Privy Council Office (hereafter cited as the PCO), vol. 118, file, W-22-5-G, May 3, 1946.

crisis, in order to convince the electorate that their leaders were unable to govern effectively.”

Despite the numerous concerns of the Canadian government, and the significant position of the country during and immediately after the Second World War, “the international political environment which had produced the refugee problem was beyond the reach of Canadian influence.”²⁵ Canada, officials at External Affairs resolved, would have to resort to other means to have its voice heard by the ‘Great Powers’ on international issues in the emerging ‘new world order.’ The best means of having a say in world events, they determined, was to exert as much influence as possible at the UN and its affiliated agencies. Therefore, External Affairs believed that Canada would have one of its first opportunities to demonstrate to the world its commitment to international affairs and multilateral cooperation by helping the international community to rectify the European refugee crisis through immigration initiatives. Indeed, an international impulse such as the European refugee crisis helped to make immigration an important issue on the Canadian postwar political agenda.

Historians have traditionally studied Canada’s immigration and foreign policies separately. For example, Canada’s immigration historians do not seem sufficiently aware of the broader problems of international politics, while diplomatic historians have lacked interest in the domestic

²⁵ See the 23 page memorandum by Escott Reid, Assistant Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs (USSEA), and head of the Second Political Division, August 30, 1947, in NAC, MG 31-E-46, Reid Papers, vol. 13, File “US and the Soviet Union,” memorandum entitled, “The United States and the Soviet Union: A Study of the Possibility of War and some of the Implications for Canadian Policy,” 14.

²⁶ See Sauer, “A Matter of Domestic Policy?” 237. For greater elaboration on this issue, see John F. Hilliker, “No Bread at the Peace Table: Canada and the European Settlement, 1943-7,” *Canadian Historical Review*, 61, 1 (1980): 69-86. See also, House of Commons, *Debates*, June 30, 1947: 420-23.

factors in policy-making.²⁷ Yet during the period in question, many policy-makers regarded Canada's policy toward immigrants and refugees from Europe as "an integral component of relief, rehabilitation, and the eventual reconstruction of that war-ravaged continent." After all, immigration in the immediate postwar era was "directly linked to issues of political stability and international security."²⁸

As early as 1958, political scientists began to acknowledge that immigration policy plays a part in both domestic and international relations.²⁹ In a 1976 article, political economist Constantine Passaris said that few scholars had given much consideration to the international political ramifications of Canadian immigration policy. He argued, "[t]he correlation that exists between Canada's foreign policy and the course of its immigration policy appears to have been totally neglected."³⁰ Similarly, in their book, *Canada as a Principal Power*, David DeWitt and John Kirton stated that,

[a]n issue area that clearly transcends the domestic/foreign policy dichotomy...is immigration....[i]mmigration is an inextricable part of foreign policy since, by definition, it involves the transboundary movement of people, the purposeful

²⁷ See Sauer, "A Matter of Domestic Policy?" 228-30. Sauer illustrates how "intellectual biases [while] hardly surprising in an era of narrow specialization, reveal the reductionist nature of any compartmental approach that focuses on one dimension at the expense of the other. It is clear that the traditional historiographical gap between immigration and foreign policy can and should be closed." Also see Diana Lary, "Immigration and Foreign Policy: Separate Concerns?" *Between the Headlines*. (Winter 1992-93): 27. Also relevant to the central position adopted in thesis—namely, the interrelatedness of immigration and foreign policy—is the fact that there is little agreement among scholars of foreign policy "about what subject matter appropriately falls into the category of foreign policy, and what is excluded." See Kim Richard Nossal's *The Politics of Foreign Policy*. 2nd ed. (Scarborough: Prentice-Hall, 1989), 2. It should come as little surprise therefore, that immigration has been largely excluded from the study of Canadian foreign policy.

²⁸ See "A Matter of Domestic Policy?" 229. Also see Holmes, *Shaping of the Peace*, vol. 1, chapter 3, and Spencer, *Canada in World Affairs*, 67.

²⁹ See the work of David Corbett, in "Immigration and Foreign Policy in Australia and Canada." *International Journal*. 13, 2 (Spring 1958), 110.

³⁰ See Constantine Passaris, "'Input' of Foreign Policy to Immigration Equation." *International Perspectives*. (Nov/Dec 1976): 23.

governmental allocation of scarce resources to implement policy, and the establishment of criteria that define one state's position *vis-a-vis* the global community...immigration policy can be viewed as a direct extension of a country's national interest, implicitly introducing domestic criteria to the formulation of a foreign policy.³¹

By 1986, historian Donald Avery acknowledged the need to examine more closely the relationship between immigration policy and foreign policy. At the time, he indicated that "...much more research remains to be done about Canada's immediate post-war refugee policy." This was necessary, he suggested, in order to determine "to what extent...Canadian immigration and foreign policies coincide[d] in these years..."³² A recent article in the *Canadian Historical Review* by Angelika Sauer, however, has addressed this matter head on, and drawn the attention of historians to a serious historiographical issue.

None of the *major* studies on Canadian postwar immigration policy (all of which have been written by political scientists), such as David Corbett's *Canada's Immigration Policy: A Critique*, Gerald Dirks *Canada's Refugee Policy: Indifference or Opportunism?* Freda Hawkins' *Canada and Immigration: Public Policy and Public Concern* or Reginald Whitaker's *Double Standard: The Secret History of Canadian Immigration*,³³ have fully considered the international

³¹ David B. DeWitt and John J. Kirton. *Canada as a Principal Power: A Study in Foreign Policy and International Relations*. (Toronto: John Wiley & Sons, 1983), 239. Also see Alvin Finkel, "Canadian Immigration Policy and the Cold War." *Journal of Canadian Studies*. 21, 3 (1986): 53.

³² Donald Avery, "Canadian Immigration Policy Towards Europe 1945-1952: Altruism and Economic Self Interest." *Zeitschrift der Gesellschaft für Kanada-Studien*. 6, 10 (1986): 39.

³³ David C. Corbett, *Canada's Immigration Policy: A Critique*. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1957), Freda Hawkins, *Canada and Immigration: Public Policy and Public Concern*. 2nd ed. (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1988), Reginald Whitaker, *Double Standard: The Secret History of Canadian Immigration*. (Toronto: Lester & Orpen Dennys), 1987.

political environment as a framework in which immigration policy was shaped.³⁴ It is significant that although all of the above sources acknowledge the problem, none seriously attempted to address the historiographical rift between the study of immigration and foreign policy.

This thesis is structured around international interests and domestic concerns as two central issues in the making of Canadian postwar immigration policy from 1945-1948. During the post World War II period, the Department of External Affairs sought to strike a balance between these issues by integrating a greater consideration of international events into the formulation of Canadian immigration policy. To demonstrate this, an account, based predominately on primary sources, will be provided of the Canadian government's reaction to the postwar European refugee crisis. A central aim of this thesis, therefore, will be to assess the intricate balance between national concerns and international interests in the determination of early Canadian postwar immigration policy. A second objective will be to develop an understanding of the international context, and demonstrate how it contributed to the shaping of Canadian immigration policy during these years. Subsequently, a third goal will be to develop an understanding of the domestic reaction to the refugee crisis, to determine why this reaction was important, and to indicate how it influenced the development and implementation of Canadian policy. Finally, an equally important aim of this work will be to test the validity of Sauer's thesis that the international dimension is a important ingredient in immigration policy.

The first chapter, 'International Impulses,' provides context by establishing an overall perspective of the magnitude and nature of the postwar European refugee crisis, the reaction of

³⁴ Emphasis added. See "A Matter of Domestic Policy?" 228. It is significant to note, as well, that a major historical study of Canadian postwar immigration policy has yet to be written.

the international community to that crisis, as well the Canadian position up to the early months of 1946. The second chapter, 'The Home Front,' examines the domestic context, including the numerous factors which influenced policy-makers and determined policy. These factors include a domestic labour shortage, the response of business and finance, national agricultural needs, the reaction of parliamentarians, the question of national unity, a brief examination of the traditions of past policy, an analysis of the role of the media, intelligentsia, and public opinion, as well as a demonstration of the reaction and role of senior government officials. The final chapter, 'Reluctant Relief: Canada's Early Postwar Initiatives,' explores the role of the Interdepartmental Committee on Immigration, analyzes the performance of the Immigration Branch, and examines in detail Canada's various immigration programs from 1945 to 1948, including: the movement to Canada of ex-Polish servicemen, the Close Relatives Scheme and the Group Movement Plan.

A full spectrum of both primary and secondary sources was utilized in the research and writing of this thesis. Most important among the primary sources were three record groups of archival material deposited at the National Archives of Canada: RG 25, the Records of the Department of External Affairs, RG 2, the Records of the Privy Council Office, and the Records of the Immigration Branch contained in RG 76. In addition, several other published primary materials were consulted, including government and manuscript collections, memoirs, scholarly journals and newspapers.

CHAPTER I

International Impulses

As a humanitarian and economic concern, Canadian officials were well aware of the need to alleviate the European refugee crisis as quickly as possible. By early 1944, senior Canadian policy-makers like Norman Robertson, the Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, had been aware of the potential humanitarian and economic difficulties regarding the need to resettle the European refugees that could arise in the aftermath of the war. Yet the sheer size of the refugee crisis, and its unanticipated emergence as a “fundamentally political” issue, “caught Canadian policy-makers by surprise.”¹ When Canadian officials sought greater information on the refugee dilemma from their British counterparts, they discovered that the numbers of refugees seeking asylum in Western Europe already assumed ‘tremendous proportions’.² Asked to prepare a report for departmental officials, Gerry Riddell of the European and Commonwealth Division of External Affairs compared the refugee crisis with the refugee dilemma of the 1930s, concluding that the present dilemma constituted a ‘real new European refugee problem.’³ In order to carry out the provisions of the Yalta Agreement, military authorities in the zones of occupation were prepared to, and at times did, forcibly repatriate reluctant East Europeans. The summer and fall of 1945 witnessed a real battle between the American authorities and interned Russians. Indeed, in order to appease their wartime ally, “[i]t took clubs, rifles and shots over prisoners’ heads to

¹ “A Matter of Domestic Policy?” 231.

² “A Matter of Domestic Policy?” 232.

³ DEA, vol. 3470, file 7-1946-1, Riddell memorandum, ‘The Refugee Problem,’ September 4, 1946. Also see DCER 11: 1232-33, Acting Secretary of State for External Affairs (SSEA) to High Commissioner in London, November 16, 1945.

usher them into the boxcars that were to bear them home to the Soviet Union.”⁴ Some, in fact, chose to commit suicide rather than return to the USSR. When states such as the Netherlands persisted in providing sanctuary to Soviet citizens, Moscow resorted to blackmail to seek their return.⁵

Nevertheless, the General Council of the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA) repeatedly emphasized the agency’s interest in quickly and peacefully achieving mass repatriation.⁶ Official UNRRA documents clearly stipulated that “[t]he Administration in the course of the performance of its functions will bear in mind that the main task to be performed is to encourage and assist in every way possible, the Displaced Persons’ early return to their countries of origin.”⁷ Yet UNRRA officials continued to face considerable resistance from those persons refusing all efforts to repatriate them. As a result, in a desperate attempt to allay the worsening situation, and in a breach of all customary procedure for a United Nations official, Fiorello LaGuardia, the colourful former New York City mayor, and the second Director-General of UNRRA, exceeded the limits of his authority and directed a letter, dated May 29, 1946, to forty-eight countries represented on the UNRRA Council asking for specific proposals for a solution to the problem of Displaced Persons who refused repatriation, and for information concerning prospects for permanent resettlement. Although the twenty-three replies

⁴ David J. Dallin and Boris Nicolaevsky, *Forced Labour in Soviet Russia*. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1947), 292.

⁵ For example, in 1945, 12,000 Dutch citizens remained under Soviet control in their German zone of occupation. Soviet authorities refused to let them go, however, until Soviet nationals being sheltered by the Dutch government had first been released. See *Forced Labour in Soviet Russia*, 292.

⁶ George Woodbridge, *UNRRA, A History*. vol. I. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1950).

⁷ Woodbridge, *A History*, 472.

were not promising, the LaGuardia letter was an effective reminder that a serious resettlement problem existed, and that UNRRA officials were well aware of it. Otherwise, UNRRA adhered strictly to its mandate to facilitate repatriation.

Yet it was becoming difficult for Allied officials to continue to force citizens of Communist countries to return home, especially as understanding of the fate that awaited them upon their return became increasingly clear. After the masses of refugees had been repatriated by the end of September 1945, Allied officers became quite reluctant to forcibly return those refugees who remained.⁸ Consequently, growing opposition in Western Europe and North America to forced repatriation brought about the discontinuance of this policy by October 1945, as growing Soviet intransigence over the repatriation issue led Western officials to see the Eastern Europeans in question increasingly as political refugees who refused to return home for fear of being persecuted for their ideological convictions.

By this time, the difficulties between the Western Allies and the Soviet Union surrounding the refugee issue fit well into the pattern of the worsening Cold War,⁹ “not as the prime cause, yet more than a mere symptom.”¹⁰ By the end of 1945, the refugee question had become ‘a source of friction’ between the Western powers and the Soviet Union, as was evident from the difficulties

⁸ This included over 1 million Poles, 170,000 Balts, 100,000 Yugoslavs and 54,000 Soviets. For verification, see Mark Wyman, *DP: Europe's Displaced Persons, 1945-1951*. (Philadelphia: The Balch Institute Press, 1989), 68.

⁹ For example, the Soviets' intransigence at the UN over the refugee issue—especially with respect to repatriation—led Canadian officials to determine that a firm and resolute policy towards the Soviets was necessary. For greater elaboration, see Donald Page, “Getting to Know the Russians.” in Aloysius Balawyder, ed. *Canadian Soviet Relations, 1939-1980*. (Oakville: Mosaic Press, 1981), 15.

¹⁰ Wyman, *DP*, 84, and Dirks, *Canada's Refugee Policy*, 106.

which had arisen between the two at the meeting of the Council of Foreign Ministers in London.¹¹ Making matters worse, in September 1945, Igor Gouzenko, a cipher clerk at the Soviet embassy in Ottawa, defected, turning over to Canadian authorities evidence of a Soviet espionage network operating in Canada, with connections to other Soviet intelligence operations then underway in Britain and the United States.¹² Indeed, it has been noted how, "From the Canadian perspective, the revelation of Soviet espionage...was a substantial and perhaps dominant element in the transformation of early post-war attitudes about the wartime ally."¹³

Conditions between the Western Allies and the USSR had already begun to deteriorate as a result of the brutality of Soviet policy in Eastern Europe, and what seemed to be the clear violation of the Yalta agreement on 'liberated territories.'¹⁴ Moreover, at the founding conference of the United Nations in San Francisco in the spring of 1945, the obstructive behaviour of the Soviet delegation was the first in a number of events between 1945 and 1947 that would lead

¹¹ For greater detail, see the memorandum from the Second Political Division to the Associate Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs (USSEA), November 28, 1945, in *DCER* 10 (1944-45), 1241-3. According to R.G. Riddell of External Affairs, "The Russians feel that the terms of the Yalta Agreement are not being fulfilled, and they are annoyed because the Americans are protecting Vlasov and his officers and other Soviet citizens whom they regard as traitors. They are also displeased because they are not given access in the British zone to camps containing displaced persons whose Soviet citizenship is not clearly established."

¹² For greater detail of the Gouzenko Affair, see Robert Bothwell and J.L. Granatstein eds. *The Gouzenko Transcripts: The Evidence of the Kellock-Taschereau Royal Commission of 1946*. (Ottawa: Deneau, 1982); as well as John Sawatsky, *Gouzenko: The Untold Story*. (Toronto: Macmillan, 1984).

¹³ Denis Smith, *Diplomacy of Fear: Canada and the Cold War, 1941-1948*. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988), 234. Indeed, for Canadians, the Gouzenko case marked "the end of innocence." Bothwell et al. *Canada Since 1945*, 42. Also see *Shaping of the Peace*, vol. 2, 15.

¹⁴ By establishing an 'exclusive' sphere of influence in Eastern Europe, most notably in Poland, the Soviet Union was clearly violating the spirit if not the letter of the Yalta accords.

Canadian officials to reassess Soviet policy and the Canadian policies to be adopted in response.¹⁵

Indeed, Soviet anger over repatriation created even greater incorrigible attitudes between the former allies. Perhaps, as it has been suggested,

Soviet and Western sensitivities were pushed to extremes on the issue because it symbolized basic differences between the two systems: the Western democracies looked on the rights of the individual as paramount, possessing liberties and the right of asylum, deserving care, while Communists saw the state as the supreme power, the sole arbiter of questions affecting individuals. From such sharply opposing philosophies, the issue of voluntary-versus-forcible repatriation could never be settled with a compromise.¹⁶

As a corollary of the Cold War, the controversial nature of the refugee crisis and the obdurateness of the stands taken by the two groups of states resulted in more time being allocated in the United Nations to the discussion of the refugee situation in Europe than to any other question except security.¹⁷

It was evident that UNRRA had become irreparably paralyzed by the internal factionalism brought about by the Cold War. Indeed,

by the autumn of 1945, when the period of mass repatriation ended, it became increasingly apparent that a new international agency would be needed to resettle those refugees who, for one reason or another, would not return to their homelands. Since most of the refugees in question were from Eastern Europe, and were therefore claimed by the Soviet Union and its satellites, the matter was one of considerable political difficulty, and it was accordingly approached with care by the international community.¹⁸

¹⁵ For greater detail on the Soviet behaviour see DEA, vol. 6390, file, 5296-C-40-1. For additional insight into the gradual deterioration of Canada-Soviet relations, see, Don Page and Don Munton, "Canadian Images of the Cold War, 1946-47," *International Journal*, 32, 3, (Summer 1977): 577-604; Bercuson, "A People so Ruthless as the Soviets," as well as *Shaping of the Peace*, vol. 2, 14-24, as well as

¹⁶ Wyman, *DP*, 84.

¹⁷ Holborn, *The International Refugee Organization*, 108.

¹⁸ Malcolm Proudfoot, *European Refugees, 1939-52. A Study in Forced Population Movement*. (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1956), 399.

With its mandate scheduled to expire on June 30, 1947, UNRRA was in no position to resolve the dilemma of what to do with the non-repatriable refugees. The new dilemma facing Allied officials was to adopt a new method of dispersing the Displaced Persons. To do so would require a new and aggressive organization, one which, it has been suggested, was freed as much as possible from the internal problems which had impeded UNRRA and from the financial and staffing difficulties which had plagued the Intergovernmental Committee on Refugees.¹⁹

At the plenary sessions of the General Assembly of the United Nations in August 1945, the international community reaffirmed its commitment to refugees. The complexity of the European situation, delegates resolved, necessitated some detailed examination and debate. The refugee matter was therefore referred to the Economic and Social Council's (ECOSOC) Third Committee on Social and Humanitarian Questions, which was to review the matter during its first session, scheduled to commence in Paris in January 1946. The Third Committee discussed the refugee question between January 28 and February 8, during which time the points of view of the Soviet and East European governments on the one hand, and the Western states on the other, grew more uncompromising. Finally, by February, ECOSOC presented a short resolution to the General Assembly where it passed unanimously on February 12. The resolution stated,

the problem of refugees and displaced persons of all categories is one of immediate urgency....no refugees or displaced persons, who have finally and definitely, in complete freedom after receiving full knowledge of the facts, including adequate information from the Governments of their countries of origin...shall be compelled to return to their country of origin. The future of such refugees or displaced persons shall become the concern of whatever international body may be recognized or established...²⁰

¹⁹ Dirks, *Canada's Refugee Policy*, 105.

²⁰ Proudfoot, *European Refugees*, 399-400.

Shortly thereafter, the Western powers, led by the United States and the United Kingdom, proposed the establishment of an international agency or commission to repatriate those refugees and DPs who wished to do so, and to permanently resettle those who were unwilling to be repatriated. ECOSOC established a Special Committee on Refugees and Displaced Persons, whose membership of twenty countries included Canada.

The Special Committee met from April 8 to June 1 in London, and, at first, made little progress in their attempt to create an effective organization to alleviate the refugee situation in Europe. As the official historian of the IRO has suggested, “[t]he intention behind the creation of a new international agency was not solely to relieve national governments of their responsibilities, but to cope with a situation which had outgrown national jurisdiction and facilities, and to solve the problem in such a way as to leave it manageable at the national level.”²¹ The greatest impediment to reaching any agreement arose over the question of just who exactly would qualify for assistance from the new agency.²²

After much extensive debate, the Special Committee produced a majority report and a draft constitution for a proposed International Refugee Organization (IRO), whose principal purpose would be to resettle the Displaced Persons in countries other than their lands of origin.²³ The report and draft constitution were presented to the full council of ECOSOC, where after five

²¹ Holborn, *The International Refugee Organization*, 127.

²² ECOSOC, *Special Supplemental Report*, no., (June 7, 1946), 70.

²³ United Nations, *General Assembly Summary Record, Third Committee*, (January 28, 1946), 8. For greater detail on the mandate of the proposed organization see, J. Donald Kingsley, *Migration from Europe: A Report by the Director-General to the General Council of the International Refugee Organization on experience gained in the field of migration through the processing and transportation for resettlement of more than one million refugees and other migrants.* (Monaco: Editions du Rocher, 1951).

days of often acrimonious debate, they were adopted on June 20, against the vociferous protests of the Soviet bloc. The meetings of the Special Committee clearly indicated that, other than the Soviet Union and its satellite states, virtually all other countries expected the United Nations to be involved in seeking a solution to the refugee situation because of the organization's commitment to human rights. As for the question of repatriation, many delegates to the Special Committee determined that this issue was also intricately linked to human rights, since it dealt with the provision of asylum. Therefore, those refusing repatriation would warrant international protection under the auspices of the United Nations or some other associated agency, such as the newly proposed IRO.²⁴ The peaceful and permanent resettlement of the refugees and DPs in states other than their lands of origin was necessary, delegates believed, so that the important and essential work of postwar reconstruction could proceed smoothly.²⁵ As far as the Soviets were concerned, resettlement remained an explosive issue, and Soviet delegates to the United Nations repeatedly pointed out that Western policy

flagrantly violated their sovereign right to control their own nationals. They further asserted that the West by its policy was providing refuge for war criminals and traitors who should be returned for just punishment; that the refugee camps of the West had become centers of anti-communist propaganda; that the refugees were being used for forced labour and as mercenaries; and that the West intended to enrich itself by resettling the so-called refugees to those countries of the world making the highest bid for their labour.²⁶

The Third Committee of the General Assembly took up the refugee question, along with various recommendations of ECOSOC, on November 4, 1946, as well as during seventeen

²⁴ United Nations, *Year Book*, (1946), 73.

²⁵ United Nations, *General Assembly Summary Record, Third Committee*, (January 28, 1946), 12.

²⁶ Proudfoot, *European Refugees*, 404. For a specific example relating to Canada, also see, *DCER 12* (1946), 395-6. "Minister of Poland to Secretary of State for External Affairs, September 7, 1946.

subsequent meetings. Throughout the course of these discussions, the Soviet Union and its allies maintained their resolute position on repatriation. Finally, after a long and difficult period lasting sixteen months, during which the refugee matter served as the focus of much heated debate and confrontation, the foundation for a multilateral agency to repatriate and resettle European refugees was established. Although the IRO needed another two years to come into formal existence, it was decided that as of July 1, 1947, the Preparatory Commission of the IRO would take over responsibility of the remaining refugees, then under the care of UNRRA, the IGCR, and the Allied zonal authorities in camps or refugee centers in Austria, Germany, and Italy. The Soviet Union and Eastern European states, however, refused to join the IRO, perceiving it as an instrument of the West, especially since a focus upon resettlement programs was to be one of the basic functions of the organization. As a result, throughout its course of operations, the Soviet bloc bitterly opposed the IRO at every opportunity.

Canada's position on the refugee question was conveyed to the Third Committee by Stanley Knowles, a CCF member of parliament. Like Britain and the United States, Canada urged prompt action to alleviate the situation for the remaining 'hard core' of over one million UNRRA and Intergovernmental Committee refugees. By early January 1946, the Department of External Affairs made it clear in a communiqué to Vincent Massey, the Canadian High Commissioner in London, that "the problem of refugees is an international one and should therefore be dealt with on a wide, international basis with the participation of as many countries as possible."²⁷ This

²⁷ DEA, vol. 3672, file 5127-EA-40-5, External Affairs to Canadian High Commission, London, January 14, 1946. Also see Paul Martin's address to ECOSOC, September 17, 1946, where he states, "It has been the view of the Government of Canada throughout all of these discussions that the question of refugees could be solved only through co-operation amongst the United Nations in the fullest degree possible." Cited in *DCER*, 12, (1946): 940.

matter was particularly pressing, in light of the fact that both the IGCR and UNRRA were scheduled to cease operations within the year.²⁸ The Canadian government was also concerned about the expected costs that the refugee agency might incur, and therefore urged ECOSOC in June 1946, to establish a subcommittee on finance, to be chaired by Canadian Senator J.E. Turgeon.²⁹

The Senator's task was to provide ECOSOC with a detailed report on the estimated operating budget of the new agency.³⁰ "Canada's acceptance of the chairmanship of this important committee was intended," in part, "to indicate to the world community that this country could assist in solving the refugee situation in ways other than by admitting displaced persons."³¹ The Department of External Affairs, realizing the hesitancy of the King government to implement a more lenient immigration policy so soon after the war, suggested to the Cabinet that a substantial financial contribution to the proposed organization would relax—at least for the time being—some of the increasing international pressure upon the government to open Canada's doors to the European refugees.³² Members of the Department were well aware that it would take time for advocates of a less restrictive immigration policy—including both those within the bureaucracy, as well as those within the larger society—to persuade the government that

²⁸ United Nations, *General Assembly Record, Third Committee*, (January 28, 1946), 12.

²⁹ The Canadian government was concerned to ensure that any approach to the refugee situation make sound economic sense for those countries which were going to be expected to contribute to the proposed new organization. See DEA, vol. 3687, file 5475-T-40-3, Bryce to Wrong, September 16, 1946; DEA accession, 1989-90-029, file, 58-II(s), Circular D382, Dominions Office to SSEA, August 29, 1946; DEA vol. 3688, file, 5475-T-40-4, Molson to SSEA, March 5, 1947.

³⁰ ECOSOC, *Official Record, First Year, Second Session*, (1946), 107.

³¹ Dirks, *Canada's Refugee Policy*, 111.

³² DEA, vol. 3687, file 5475-T-40/5, External Affairs memorandum, August 11, 1946.

conditions now warranted such action.³³

During the deliberations on the proposed new agency in 1946, the Canadian government's position reflected the country's commitment to multilateralism. While helping to initiate the administrative changes and reorient the policy focus necessary for Canada's adjustment to postwar realities, External Affairs also attempted to align Canada's response to the European refugee crisis within the broader axioms of Canadian foreign policy: functional internationalism, great power cooperation, and, if that should fail, the consolidation of the Western powers in a 'firm but fair' attitude towards the USSR.³⁴

Despite the demonstrated concern of the Department of External Affairs with the European refugees and the question of immigration policy overall, the economic interests of the country were the first and foremost concerns of the Canadian government. Thus, External Affairs officials resolved to present immigration as a central means of meeting the economic needs of the country. Prominent officials such as Norman Robertson, for example, portrayed the European refugee crisis largely in economic terms, as a potential impediment to Canada's desire to improve the vitality of international trade in the postwar era. Ultimately, the efforts of departmental officials like Robertson did prove effective. In September 1946, after much prodding from External Affairs, the Canadian government made its position clear, by publicly espousing its belief that the refugee situation was indeed hindering the recovery of Europe and hence of international trade. In an address to ECOSOC, Paul Martin, the Canadian Secretary of State, made it clear that

³³ See RG 76, Records of the Immigration Branch (hereafter cited as IB), vol. 443, file 673931, pt. 11. Pearson to Robertson, May 31, 1946. Also see DEA, vol. 3673, file, 5127-EA-40, Riddell to Wrong, June 8, 1946.

³⁴ See "A Matter of Domestic Policy?" 233-34. For greater elaboration see Smith, *Diplomacy of Fear*, Chapter IV.

the refugee problem was “regarded as part of the larger problem of relief and rehabilitation, and should accordingly be so treated...[t]here is...the important practical consideration that the peaceful recovery of Europe might well be hindered and delayed indefinitely if a million non-German refugees were to be abandoned to their fate in occupied territory.”³⁵ In a background paper presented to Senator Turgeon, the Canadian representative of the Special Committee studying the refugee situation, Robertson laid out Canada’s stance.

The problem of refugees is an economic as well as a social and humanitarian question. For this reason, the government feels that if conditions can be created which will lead to full employment and economic stability, the resulting worldwide labour demand will provide a fairly rapid and more or less automatic solution to the refugee problem. Therefore, this government believes this question should be approached from a basically economic point of view rather than from the standpoint of treating Displaced Persons and refugees as wasted manpower from which each country should accept its quota.³⁶

In the end, largely as a result of the initiatives undertaken by the Department of External Affairs, Canada signed the constitution of the IRO, “very much aware of the probable implications that this decision would have for the country.”³⁷ It had been made clear to the delegates attending the Third Session of ECOSOC that, at the very least, “[i]n practical terms, Canadian support of the refugee organization will mean the provision of funds and the acceptance of refugees for resettlement in Canada.”³⁸

Canada’s enthusiastic participation in the International Refugee Organization, therefore, symbolized the transition which had taken place in Canadian policy-making as a result of the

³⁵ *DCER*, 12 (1946), 940.

³⁶ *DEA*, vol. 3672, file, 5475-T-40-5, N.A. Robertson to J.G. Turgeon, April 4, 1946.

³⁷ Dirks, *Canada’s Refugee Policy*, 116.

³⁸ *DEA*, vol. 3673, file, 5475-T-40-7, “Commentary for the Use of the Canadian Delegation, Third Session, United Nations Economic and Social Council, September 1946.”

country's participation in the Second World War. Throughout the course of the proceedings, the Canadian delegation was wholly supportive of their Western Allies' postwar stance on the refugee issue, realizing that the country's position would, in all probability, reinforce the recalcitrant positions on refugees adopted by the members of the Soviet bloc, who were determined to have their expatriates excluded from the mandate of the IRO.³⁹ Following the general line of Canadian foreign policy in 1946, delegates to meetings discussing the IRO were instructed to forego discussions of details and to accept agreements reached between the 'Big Three' even when they contradicted Canadian wishes.⁴⁰ Canada accepted the IRO as the 'best compromise that could be achieved.' Limited international cooperation, after all, was better than no cooperation.⁴¹

³⁹DEA, vol. 3470, file 7-1946-1, Riddell, 'The Refugee Problem,' September 4, 1946; PCO, vol. 120, file w-36, Riddell to Robertson, April 13, 1946.

⁴⁰For greater elaboration on the Canadian strategy see Paul Martin's address to the Social and Economic Council, Sept., 17, 1946, *DCER* 12: 940-4. DEA, vol. 3687, file 5475-T-40, memorandum, Riddell to Robertson, May 20, 1946, and SSEA to Riddell, June 14, 1946. DEA vol. 470, file 7-1946/2, report of the delegation to the Third session of ECOSOC, autumn 1946. PCO, vol. 120, file w-36, memorandum by Riddell, Oct. 1, 1946, and Pearson to Reid, Oct. 29, 1946.

⁴¹See Louis St. Laurent's address to parliament in the House of Commons, *Debates*, vol. IV (June 30, 1947), 4838.

CHAPTER II

The Home Front

Three months after the end of the war, on September 5, 1945, A.L. Joliffe, the Director of the Immigration Branch of the Department of Mines and Resources, formally recommended that the Cabinet reaffirm its support for the existing restrictionist immigration policy and agree that the procedures “not be changed until the country is well advanced toward normal conditions and its immigration absorption possibilities can be accurately determined.”¹ During the period in question, Canadian immigration policy was still administered according to legislation passed in 1910. The Immigration Act of that year did not in and of itself exclude many types of immigrants. It did, however, give the government wide discretionary powers. The government could, for example, by Order-in-Council, prohibit the entry of any national or occupational group as it saw fit. Given so many socio-economic uncertainties, Joliffe further suggested that no serious action regarding any substantial change in Canadian immigration policy should be undertaken until 1947 at the earliest, and that only then should any long term considerations of Canadian immigration policy be subject to a review by Cabinet early in that year.² Consequently, on October 25, 1945, the Cabinet decided to maintain Canada’s existing immigration regulations.³ J.A. Glen, the Minister of Mines and Resources reaffirmed his department’s position to the House of Commons on December 14th of that year. Mr. Glen stated, “at this moment there can be no policy on

¹ PCO, vol 82, file 1-50-M, “Orders-in-Council, Memorandum to Cabinet re: immigration policy,” September 5, 1945.

² PCO, vol 82, file 1-50-M, “Orders-in-Council, Memorandum to Cabinet re: immigration policy,” September 5, 1945.

³ See PCO, vol 82, file 1-50-M, “Orders-in-Council, Minutes of the Cabinet Committee on Immigration,” October 25, 1945.

immigration because, as has been stated by several honourable members, the first duty we have as a government at the moment is the repatriation of our soldiers and the care of the dependants of our overseas personnel. There is, therefore, no immediate long-range policy with regard to future immigration. The terms will not be known until a policy is evolved.”⁴

The government had not planned for a renewed postwar immigration policy because it expected difficulties in the transition to a peacetime economy. In his memoirs, Lester Pearson recalled how the government’s fears failed to materialize.

The government expected severe economic dislocations and difficulties in the re-entry of hundreds of thousands of ex-servicemen and women into the labour market. It was thought there might be high unemployment and economic recession. This...did not happen. The change-over was made smoothly and successfully under plans that had been previously drawn up. War veterans were quickly absorbed into the labour force. They were also treated more fairly and generously, with far more efficient plans for their civil re-establishment and training, than we had after World War I.⁵

With much of Europe in ruins, reconstruction needs determined that demands for Canadian raw materials and manufactured products were especially strong, and export demands fueled the growth of the Canadian economy.⁶ With the swelling demands for labour⁷ of an expanding economy, returning military personnel had little difficulty finding gainful employment. In fact, by the end of 1946, the economy had successfully reintegrated the 1,000,000 returning military personnel as well as the 1,150,000 workers from war industry, and was clamouring for additional

⁴ House of Commons, *Debates*, vol III, (1945), 3537.

⁵ *Mike*, vol. 1, 289.

⁶ By the end of 1947, with European reconstruction in full swing with the aid of Marshall Plan funding, the voracious demands for Canadian goods seemed almost limitless. Indeed, the Western resolve to shore up the economic infrastructure of Western Europe in a bid to ward off further Communist encroachment proved to be of paramount significance in helping to perpetuate Canadian prosperity.

⁷ For the first time since the turn of the century, which was coincidentally, the last period of mass immigration, Canada experienced a serious labour shortage.

labour to meet growing demands.⁸ In addition, and also in the autumn of 1946, the Department of Labour submitted to the Cabinet a detailed report entitled, "Occupational Needs That Might Be Met By Immigration," which endorsed the recruitment of immigrant workers to meet the growing needs of Canada's primary industries.⁹

With hundreds of thousands of newly reunited families, a 'baby boom' was inevitable. This 'boom' served as a considerable impetus for economic growth. In addition, after nearly six years of war and austerity, pent up consumer demand bolstered by wartime savings, led to a sharp rise in domestic consumption. As the economy was reoriented towards peacetime production, growth was fueled by massive spending on consumer goods, services and housing, as well as on large expenditures directed towards the expansion of existing industrial capacity. Remarkably, rapid economic growth occurred despite a reduction in government expenditures from \$5,245 million in 1945 to \$2,634 million in 1947.¹⁰

As a result, a labour shortage ensued. Understandably, it was not long before groups and associations representing labour-intensive industries such as clothing, agriculture, mining and lumbering,¹¹ began lobbying Ottawa for a relaxation of the immigration restrictions, such as the

⁸ See "The Effect of Immigration in Relieving Labour Shortages during 1947," in the *Labour Gazette*, vol. 68, 2, (March 1948): 147, 151-52.

⁹ PCO, vol. 83, file, 1-50-7, "Report of the Department of Labour for the Cabinet Committee on Immigration," October 1, 1946.

¹⁰ See *The Canada Yearbook*, 1948-49. (Ottawa: Dominion Bureau of Statistics, 1949), xxv.

¹¹ There were, "continually growing shortages" in the extractive sectors of the economy, while in manufacturing it was noted at the time that "there are certain classes of jobs which are difficult to fill." Acute shortages were also experienced in the white-collar professions. See *Labour Gazette*, (1947), 151-52.

infamous Order-in-Council P.C. 695 which had been instituted during the Great Depression.¹² Despite the health and vitality of the Canadian economy, pro-immigration advocates from all segments of society confronted an obdurate bureaucracy resistant to change. During the initial postwar period, one of the most difficult tasks for Canadian policy-makers seemed to be the necessity to orient themselves to the new reality—namely, Canada's significantly enhanced national wealth. The trepidation of the 'old era' lingered despite numerous indicators that times had changed.

Big business did not share the government's apprehension towards the prevailing postwar prosperity in Canada. Convinced of the vitality of the national economy, corporate leaders were eager to quickly capitalize on market opportunities, and desperately needed labour to do so. Writing at the time, historian John Barnett succinctly summarized the situation. "The businessman with a narrow internal market," he wrote, "in a sparsely settled country, and confronted with higher debts and heavier taxation, cannot see how we can possibly make progress or even carry on unless we secure quickly a larger population."¹³ The Edmonton Chamber of Commerce supported this view. Its 1945 Annual Report released on October 15 of that year stated,

...an increase in population through immigration would improve Canada's position and influence in world affairs....It would enable this country particularly to adjust her domestic economy by providing more diversified and larger home markets, and it would also reduce the per capita expenses of the many governments and other

¹² The Order-in-Council restricted immigration to the following categories: British subjects and American citizens with sufficient capital to maintain themselves until employment was secured; agriculturalists with sufficient means to farm in Canada; farm labourers with guaranteed employment; any individual engaged in mining, lumbering or logging with assured employment in one of these industries; and the wives and unmarried children of adult males legally resident in Canada.

¹³ John Barnett. "Post-war Immigration to Canada." *Dalhousie Review*. 25 (April 1945), 22.

services which a modern nation is expected to provide for her citizens.¹⁴

If the domestic supply of labour could not meet demands, the country would have to import labour from abroad. Since it was the resource-extractive sectors of the economy which were especially in need of additional labour, and because the nature of this work was so physically demanding and tended to offer low-wages and low-status,¹⁵ and since a surplus of other more lucrative and appealing jobs were available in the expanding Canadian job market, more often than not native-born English-Canadians tended to avoid such employment. Such circumstances, big business declared, would necessitate that Canada turn elsewhere for a ready supply of cheap labour. The most obvious sources were the teeming refugee and Displaced Persons camps in Europe. It was there, business lobbyists reminded Ottawa, that the government would be wise to quickly accept the 'cream of the crop' of this vast and pliable source of labour before other nations could capitalize on such a 'golden opportunity.'¹⁶

Agriculture was yet another sector of the burgeoning economy that was desperate for additional labour. During the war more than fifteen thousand German prisoners of war and

¹⁴ Cited in House of Commons, *Debates*, vol. III, (1945), 3528.

¹⁵ In rural areas a great many of the available jobs in construction, road building, railroad repair, logging, mining and fishing were dangerous and isolating. In urban Canada, many of the less desirable jobs were to be found in restaurants, laundries and garment sweatshops—generally positions in which a great many Canadians who, bolstered by their wartime savings, simply refused to accept because of their low socio-economic status.

¹⁶ See Troper, *Canada's Immigration Policy Since 1945*, 261. Also see the brief submitted by the Canadian National Committee on Refugees to the Senate Committee on Immigration and Labour in August 1946. Several prominent businessmen such as C.E. Burton, President of the Robert Simpson Company, were affiliated with the CNCR. In their brief, the committee stated, "Eventually these displaced persons must be settled somewhere and presumably it will be an international responsibility for which Canada will have a share. If this resettlement on an international basis is postponed for some time, the most desirable persons will have been selected by other nations and those who are left will have been so long in camps that it will be difficult for them to adjust to normal life." It would, therefore, "be to Canada's advantage to take some initiative in selecting future immigrants for this group promptly." See *Proceedings of the Senate Committee on Immigration and Labour*, no. 9 (1946), 228.

approximately thirteen thousand Canadian conscientious objectors served on the nation's farms. At the end of the war, however, the POWs were repatriated to Germany and the conscientious objectors returned home. Thus, with the loss of so many labourers, an already dire situation was made worse. Aggravating the situation further was the postwar "baby boom" which placed additional domestic demands upon an agricultural community that was already hard pressed to keep pace with the needs of the country's thriving export markets.

J.S. Duncan, President of Massey-Harris, the giant farm implements manufacturer, addressed the Rotary Club of Montreal on December 4, 1945. In his speech, Duncan declared that: "[n]ever was there a time since Canada was first settled which has been more favourable to settlement than at present." Duncan argued further that more inhabitants of Canada would help to expand the domestic market and enlarge export opportunities.¹⁷ Other Canadian executives shared similar views. At the Imperial Bank of Canada's seventy-first annual meeting, Robert Stanley Waldie, the bank's President and Vice-President of Canada Bread, cautioned shareholders that without viable immigration initiatives, Canada's postwar prosperity might falter. Immigration did not lead to unemployment, declared Waldie, on the contrary, it stimulated "consumption-good industries." He added further, "It should be noted that the reduction of the general overhead expenses of our economy depend [sic] in large measure on an increase in the density of our population which lessens especially the transportation and administrative charges per unit of production."¹⁸

David Eckford Kilgour, the president of the North American Life Insurance Company, had

¹⁷ DEA vol. 3673, file 5127-EA-40C.

¹⁸ See DEA vol. 3673, file 5127-EA-40C.

comparable views. "We must face the situation frontally," he stated in an address to a Bank of Canada meeting, adding that, "to hold the position we have attained during the war, to utilize our greatly expanded production capacity, to develop our ample spaces and our wealth of natural resources and meet our tremendous commitments, we must attract to this country additional population."¹⁹ A. McGowan of Canadian National Railways addressed himself to the same subject and observed that "the admission of more people would increase Canada's prosperity and assist in its development. When the Dominion's population is doubled, it will raise the standards of living."²⁰

In a January 1947 address to the annual shareholders meeting, Sydney G. Dobson, the President of the Royal Bank of Canada also affirmed his faith in increased immigration as necessary for the country's economic future. "One of Canada's outstanding needs," he wrote, "is increased immigration. If this country is to develop as it should, more people are required but a policy of selective immigration should be embarked upon. Certain of the restrictive regulations that make a prospective immigrant uncertain of being able to enter Canada, or remain after arriving, should be reversed." Dobson acknowledged the relationship between immigration and the economic dimensions of both domestic and foreign policy. He also gave credence to the opinions of those External Affairs officers who sought to promote immigration to rehabilitate Europe and ensure world peace. "The volume of our exports," he stated, "which is our very life

¹⁹ See House of Commons, *Debates*, vol. III, (1945), 3525. IB, vol. 443, file, 673931, Excerpt from R.S. Waldie to the Imperial Bank of Canada, n.d.; excerpt from D.E. Kilgour to Bank of Canada, n.d., cited in DEA vol. 3673, file 5127-EA-40C.

²⁰ House of Commons, *Debates*, vol. III, (1945), 3525.

blood, depends largely upon the state of international affairs.”²¹

The Senate was one of the foremost supporters of corporate Canada’s endorsement of pro-immigration initiatives.²² The result was the increasing politicization of the immigration policy issue. In an address to the upper chamber, Senator Thomas Crerar, the former minister responsible for immigration stated his belief that,

[i]t would be good for business for Canada again to adopt a vigorous immigration policy....It will augment the productive power and strength of this country and its capacity to carry its financial burden. In addition to that we shall be doing a fine generous Christian act in endeavoring to make some contribution toward relieving the plight of the homeless millions in Europe.²³

As a result of the proliferation of debate over immigration in the Senate engendered by those such as Senator Crerar, the Senate’s Standing Committee on Immigration and Labour was reinstated in April 1946.²⁴ Under the auspices and direction of Senator Thomas Murdock, the committee was given the mandate to undertake a comprehensive review of Canadian immigration policy and bureaucratic procedure and to give some consideration to the direction and future immigration needs of the country. As a sign of the rising importance of the immigration debate in public discourse and its elevated position in the national consciousness, the Senate committee’s public hearings and published reports received wide media attention. It was in this regard that the committee served its greatest purpose. By providing immigration advocates with a national public

²¹ *Winnipeg Free Press*, January 11, 1947.

²² It is significant that many Senators served on the boards of Canada’s largest corporations.

²³ Senate of Canada, *Debates*, May 8, (1946), 199, 204.

²⁴ The reconstituted committee held annual hearings until 1949. The committee was chaired for its first two years by Senator Thomas Murdock and subsequently by Senator Cairine Wilson. Its mandate was to summon witnesses, receive briefs, and submit annual reports to the Senate. The committee’s hearings were followed closely by many interested ethnic organizations, business organizations, and others with an interest in immigration matters.

forum in which to trumpet their views, the Senate committee helped to focus public attention upon the immigration issue.²⁵ The end result of the Senate committee hearings was a report in which the upper chamber criticized government policy and recommended the adoption of a new immigration policy that would reflect Canada's ability to make a greater contribution to the international resettlement efforts, while at the same time, broadening the country's general criteria for immigration admissibility.²⁶

As a result of the general prosperity of the postwar era, even organized labour, which had traditionally been one of the greatest adversaries of liberalized immigration, tended to lessen its opposition to the notion of Canada increasing the numbers of immigrants it allowed to enter the country. However, while labour did not formally oppose increased immigration, it did convey serious concerns to the government. For example, a brief delivered by labour union representatives to the Senate's Standing Committee on Immigration and Labour in 1946 stated, "Employment must be provided to all Canadians requiring work before immigration regulations are liberalized....when immigration does commence, care should be taken to admit only those immigrants quickly assimilable to the Canadian way of life."²⁷

By the time Mackenzie King announced the country's new immigration policy on May 1, 1947, the Liberal government was devoted to the principles of Keynesian economics. A large

²⁵ The Senate Committee's influence lay almost exclusively in the publicity which it gave to the immigration issue, since it lacked the authority to initiate new policy or establish a legislative reform package. See *None is too Many*, 229.

²⁶ The Committee's report stated that the government's existing policy was most accurately described as a "non-immigration policy." See Senate of Canada, *Debates*, (1946), 611-12.

²⁷ See House of Commons, *Debates*, vol. III (1945): 3534-6. Also see the *Proceedings of the Senate Committee on Immigration and Labour*, no. 8, (1946), 222.

number of the civil servants who administered Canada's Department of Finance as well as those who served on the government's special interdepartmental Economic Advisory Committee, including Clifford Clark, R.B. Bryce, (who studied under Keynes at Cambridge), J.H. Perry, A.K. Eaton and W.A. Mackintosh, had been drawn largely from academia where Keynesianism was the prevailing ideology, albeit not without a significant number of detractors and skeptics. During the war years many government initiatives had flirted with the principles of Keynesian economics in legislation such as the Family Allowance Act of 1944. The success of such initiatives convinced Canada's economic policy-makers that Keynesian theories worked well. As a result, Keynesian principles became a 'new orthodoxy' for civil servants. Advocates from all spheres of the bureaucracy who actively sought a more liberalized immigration policy explicitly sold the notion of an expanded immigration policy to the Cabinet predicated upon Keynesian thinking about the positive effects of immigration. For example, the additional labour that increased immigration would bring, officials believed, was a central element necessary to keep the economy running at full capacity.

Throughout the early postwar period, there was considerable debate over the concept of the 'absorptive capacity'²⁸ of the economy, and its influence in determining the scale and scope of the country's acceptance of immigrants. During the peak period of social and economic readjustment (1945-49), labour-force surveys from the Dominion Bureau of Statistics clearly

²⁸ Stated simply, absorptive capacity is used to determine the ideal rate of absorption of immigrants. The central element used to determine this factor is the ability of the economy to provide and sustain an adequate level of employment for potential immigrants. As a diagnostic tool, the purpose of determining Canada's absorptive capacity was to help policy-makers calculate the threshold beyond which an excess number of immigrants would create negative ramifications such as unemployment. The most important and authoritative study on absorptive capacity was written under the auspices of the Canadian Institute of International Affairs in 1949 by Dr. Mabel Timlin of the University of Saskatchewan for Dr. H.L. Keenleyside, the Deputy Minister of Mines and Resources. The study was subsequently published as M.F. Timlin, *Does Canada Need More People?* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1951).

indicated that Canada's absorptive capacity remained remarkably high.²⁹

In addition to the preoccupation with the national economy, another central issue which influenced the King government's approach towards postwar immigration policy was national unity. With the national preoccupation with the war, the recommendations released by the Rowell-Sirois Royal Commission on Dominion-Provincial Relations in 1940, which suggested a fundamental redistribution of powers between the federal and provincial governments, did not have an immediate wide-ranging impact upon relations between the dominion and its provinces.³⁰ Relations between Ottawa and the provinces were frequently strained as a result of many of the same traditional complexities which provided the diversity, texture and nuance of Canadian politics. As a nation, Canada was "huge, fragile and pluralized in its policies," and often seemed "all too ready to split into regions, cultures, languages and ethnic groupings." As a result, virtually all government policies, "were dictated by a complicated and volatile domestic situation, and by the continuing quest for national consensus."³¹ Indeed, prior to the war, relations between the federal and provincial governments were particularly strained as a result of the vicissitudes of coping with the traumatic effects of the Great Depression. Although these difficulties—especially those regarding distribution of powers and legislative and jurisdictionary authority—had been set aside as a result of the centralizing emergency powers bestowed upon Ottawa during the war, many of the underlying political and philosophical fissures began to reemerge in the aftermath of

²⁹ Canada's absorptive capacity remained so high that Timlin concluded her study by wholeheartedly endorsing an active Canadian immigration policy, suggesting that "a larger population for Canada should mean a higher physical product per capita and hence higher real incomes for Canadian citizens." *Does Canada Need More People?*, 52.

³⁰ The major exception, of course, was the Tax-Rental Agreement between the Federal and Provincial governments.

³¹ Hillmer, *The Canadian Diplomatic Tradition*, 6.

the conflict.

In order to circumvent many of the divisive issues between his government and the provinces, King, ever the consummate politician, continually strove to appease all interests. The Prime Minister was inclined to avoid controversy at all costs, and he tended to upstage his critics by adopting a conciliatory, 'middle ground' approach to most issues. This was, perhaps, his most successful political strategy.³² This compromise approach was evident in King's May 1947 address to parliament on immigration. While acknowledging new international obligations, Mr. King also made it clear that the country would not move too fast or too far.

The policy of the government is to foster the growth of the population of Canada by the encouragement of immigration. The government will seek by legislation, regulation, and vigorous administration, to ensure the careful selection and permanent settlement of such numbers of immigrants as can advantageously be absorbed in our national economy. Like other major problems of today, the problem of immigration must be viewed in the light of the world situation as a whole. A wise and productive policy...cannot be devised by studying only the situation within our own country...Canada's policy has to be related to the social, political and economic circumstances resulting from the war....it should take account of the urgent problem of the resettlement of persons who are displaced and homeless.... We have...a moral obligation to assist in meeting the problem, and this obligation we are prepared to recognize...

At the same time, Mr. King made it explicitly clear to Canadians that the society in which they lived would not be altered in any significant way as a result of a liberalized immigration policy.

The Prime Minister reassured Canadians that,

I wish to make it quite clear that Canada is perfectly within her rights in selecting the persons whom we regard as desirable future citizens. It is not a "fundamental human right" of any alien to enter Canada. It is a privilege. *It is a matter of domestic policy*.... This does not mean, however, that we should not seek to remove from our legislation what may appear to be objectionable discrimination..... There will, I am

³² More often than not the prime minister's statements obscured his government's true stand on issues, leaving its position ambiguous at best. For King, this proclivity tended to work since ambiguity often offended the least. As for his successes, King's record as Canada's longest serving prime minister serves as solid testimony to his adroit political skills.

sure, be general agreement with the view that the people of Canada do not wish, as a result of mass immigration, to make a fundamental alteration in the character of our population. The government, therefore, has no thought of making any change in immigration regulations which would have consequences of the kind.³³

One of the central precepts of preserving national unity this century has been the need for Anglophone politicians to address the interests and concerns of Francophone opinion, paying particular attention to Quebec. Therefore, it should come as little surprise that English and French Canadians have often quarreled over immigration policy. In the interests of maintaining national harmony, the federal government has had to ensure that the country's immigration policy reconciled the views and reflected the interests and needs of the whole country as well as its constituent parts. In terms of politics, a preoccupation with preserving their language and culture has been the seminal issue which has divided the French-Canadians from their English-speaking countrymen. Many Quebecers have felt threatened by immigrants, the majority of whom had chosen to assimilate into the dominant English-speaking community which many Quebecers viewed as unsympathetic if not openly antagonistic towards French-speaking Canadians.

At the end of the war, attention once again focused on the future orientation of the country's immigration policy. The French-language press was divided, and although there appeared to be some mellowing of opposition to immigration in some instances—apparently as a humanitarian response to the horrors of the war—anti-immigrant sentiment continued to prevail, especially in Quebec. During 1946, columnist Alexis Gagnon published a series of articles for Montreal's *Le Devoir*, arguably the most influential newspaper in the province. Gagnon's articles were also carried by newspapers elsewhere in Quebec, ensuring him a wide readership. According

³³ Emphasis added. See House of Commons, *Debates*, (May 1 1947), vol. III, 2644-2647.

to Gagnon, a sort of pseudo-conspiracy existed amongst various ethnic groups which pressured both the public and government to consider liberalizing Canada's immigration laws. The crux of Gagnon's anti-immigrant stance stemmed from his belief that once settled in Canada, the new immigrants would integrate themselves into the English-Canadian community. In advocating for immigration liberalization, Gagnon suggested that the objectives of the country's existing ethnic communities was not merely to seek the safety of relatives and family or to assist their former fellow countrymen, but rather, to perpetuate the Anglo domination of the structures of the state through immigration, and thus impede the demographic significance of French Canada's high birth rate. The pro-immigration campaign, Gagnon believed, had no economic motivation; it was, rather, yet another example of English-Canada's efforts to assimilate French-Canadian culture.³⁴ Apparently, the absurdity of Gagnon's argument fell for the most part, upon deaf ears.³⁵

In parliament, Quebec MPs expressed serious reservations about the prospects of liberalizing Canada's existing immigration policy so soon after the war. Of special concern to the Prime Minister and his Cabinet, however, was that included among some of the most vociferous opponents to a liberalization of the Immigration Act were members of their own caucus.³⁶ Despite the misery in the refugee camps of Europe and the evident and growing demand for immigrants at

³⁴ These opinions were widely shared. Meeting in Winnipeg in the autumn of 1946, the Canadian Chamber of Commerce called for increased immigration as part of a policy of national development. In response, the press in Quebec portrayed the news as an attack on French Canada. Newspapers such as Montreal's *La Presse* and *La Patrie*, Quebec City's *Le Soleil*, Granby's *La Voix de L'Est*, Sherbrooke's *La Tribune*, and Trois Riviere's *Le Nouvelliste* all suggested that unless a selective system of immigration restrictions was implemented, Canada would be "forced to accept a wave of undesirable immigrants." See *None is too Many*, 234.

³⁵ To suggest that an alliance existed between Canada's Anglo-Saxon business elite, and the country's various, multi-ethnic, multi-denominational communities—the Jews in particular—was both paranoid and inane given English-Canada's traditional anti-immigrant bias towards non-Anglo-Saxons. Even though business increasingly called for more immigrants, existing racial bias persisted as 'old stock' Europeans remained the preferred choice.

³⁶ House of Commons, *Debates*, 1945, vol. III, 3535-6.

home, Quebec MPs continued to cloak their hostility and parochial opinions towards immigration under the pretense that Canada's sole responsibility was to its own citizens. For example, in 1946, Ligouri Lacombe, the independent MP for the constituency of Laval-Deux Montagnes insisted that Canada needed to maintain its restrictionist policy. "There is no room for immigrants in Canada. Our sole duty is to put our own house in order....We are not in a position to absorb even a very small flow of immigrants...The economic needs of our country forbid all immigration....Why should we allow immigrants to compete with our citizens in the quest of jobs."³⁷ Overall, the prevailing attitude toward immigration among French-Canadian politicians remained, at best, pessimistic.³⁸

Canada had a long tradition of restricting the entry of immigrants into the country. In the wake of Russia's 1917 Bolshevik Revolution, foremost among excluded individuals were suspected "Communists," Socialists, radicals and other activists whose opinions and beliefs were believed to directly countervail the political and socio-economic interests of the Canadian state.³⁹ With the revelations of Soviet espionage activity uncovered by the Gouzenko affair, the period of postwar immigration, tempered as it was by an overall revulsion towards fascism as well an evolving anti-Soviet, anti-Communist Cold War mentalité, meant that 'security concerns' would increasingly play a significant role in establishing eligibility criteria for entry into the country. In the wake of the embarrassing revelations of the extent of the espionage network operating in

³⁷ House of Commons, *Debates*, (1946), vol. I, 532.

³⁸ See Michael D. Behiels, "Quebec and the Question of Immigration: From Ethnocentrism to Ethnic Pluralism, 1900-1985." (Ottawa: Canadian Historical Association, 1991), 11.

³⁹ See Donald Avery's, *Reluctant Host: Canada's Response to Immigrant Workers, 1896-1994*. (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1995), and his "Dangerous Foreigners: European Workers and Labour Radicalism in Canada, 1896-1932." (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1979).

Canada, the government was determined to limit seditious activities in the country. With chaos in Europe and the throngs of people seeking to enter Canada from the war ravaged continent, it was feared that immigrants would turn out to be Fascist or Communist agitators, and propagate subversive ideas among their ethnic compatriots if allowed into the country. The government's greatest fear was that foreign leftists would conspire with like-minded domestic groups to aggravate existing social problems with the goal of agitating anti-government sentiment amongst the populace, especially within the labour unions.⁴⁰ Mackenzie King believed that the political activities of Canadian Communists, while legal, constituted a real threat to the government, if not the entire social, economic and political order of the country. What is more, widespread public support endorsed the government's anti-leftist bias, especially in Quebec where the Catholic Church demonstrated a particular vehemence for the 'godless red menace.'

Those with political opinions thought to be left-leaning were systematically denied entry to the country even on a temporary basis. Although legislation at the time only prohibited entry into the country for those persons "who believe in or advocate the overthrow by force or violence of the Government of Canada or of constituted law and authority, or who advocate or teach the unlawful destruction of property," as well as those who were convicted of treasonous behaviour or espionage "against His Majesty's allies"⁴¹ the Immigration Branch denied entry to Communists and suspected Communists "without giving reasons." This was in spite of the fact that, as Glen

⁴⁰ Shortly before his retirement, the Prime Minister exhibited particular concern that escalated strike activity in key sectors of the economy indicated that Communists had successfully infiltrated the nation's trade unions in order to inhibit Canada's participation in the U.S. sponsored Marshall Plan for European reconstruction. To counteract such events from taking place, the PM proposed amending the Criminal Code so as to limit Communist interference in such activities of the Canadian economy. See NAC, *Cabinet Conclusions*, Vol. 12, February 5, 1948. For greater elaboration on this issue see Finkel, "Canadian Immigration and the Cold War," 56-57.

⁴¹ IB, vol. 800, file 547-1, "confidential memorandum" in Director's files, July 5, 1946.

admitted to the Cabinet on March 5, 1947, there were, strictly speaking, “no provisions of law for rejection” on the basis that someone was a Communist. The Cabinet, however, approved such activity. After discussion, the Cabinet agreed that where, as a result of security investigation, it was demonstrated that a prospective immigrant was a Communist, admission should be refused by the Immigration Branch without reason being assigned for such action.”⁴²

At the time of the Second World War and in the immediate post-war period, the Canadian people were better informed than they had ever been, receiving accurate and informed opinions of world events from influential journalists such as Grant Dexter, George Ferguson, Blair Fraser, Max Freedman, Arthur Irwin, Ken Wilson, Bruce Hutchinson, and Norman Smith.⁴³ Critics have suggested that a sophisticated level of political partisanship existed between these leading journalists and senior Liberal Party officials because they so frequently endorsed the government’s new domestic and foreign policy initiatives.⁴⁴ The close working relationships (and often personal relationships) that these leading journalists shared with government ministers and policy-makers, stemmed primarily from the fact that all were ‘passionate nationalists’ and ‘committed internationalists.’ Like the Liberal-bureaucratic team, the majority of Canada’s most influential and leading journalists of the time were all “deeply impressed by the expertise, dedication, and vision of the mandarins and the cabinet ministers.” Traditional political partisanship alone cannot

⁴² NAC, *Cabinet Conclusions*, vol. 8, March 5, 1947.

⁴³ Dexter, Ferguson and Freedman worked for the *Winnipeg Free Press* (Ferguson also later became the editor of the *Montreal Star*), Fraser was the Ottawa editor for *Maclean’s*, Irwin wrote for the *Montreal Star*, Wilson for the *Financial Post*, Smith for the *Ottawa Journal*, while Hutchinson, at one time or another wrote for the *Winnipeg Free Press*, the *Financial Post* as well as *Maclean’s*.

⁴⁴ The support of Norman Smith of the Conservative-leaning *Ottawa Journal*, however, which on the whole endorsed the government’s foreign policy initiatives, serves as evidence of the fundamentally non-partisan character of the reporting of Canadian postwar foreign policy among the country’s leading journalists.

adequately explain the close relationship that existed between leading Canadian journalists and senior government officials. A more accurate understanding of the relationship suggests that the country's leading journalists simply shared a deep intellectual, ideological and personal affinity with the members of the 'Liberal-bureaucratic team.'

Since the First World War, Canadian reporters and editors had begun to adopt the journalistic style that was made increasingly popular by the American journalist Walter Lippmann of the *New York Herald Tribune* and J.W. Dafoe, the editor of the *Winnipeg Free Press*. This style entailed a professional duty to accurately inform the public about government policy, to provide informed and intelligent critical analysis of that policy, and as a consequence, influence both the public and policy-makers in government. This new style was accentuated even further by the events of the war. To contend adequately with the rapid pace of expansion in the role and responsibilities of the state, journalists found it necessary to develop and nurture the respect and confidence of those in government who were making key decisions. With senior civil servants increasingly responsible for formation and administration of government policy, in order for journalists to gain an authoritative and informed opinion on the workings of government, it became essential for them to win the trust and confidence of the country's senior bureaucrats and policy-makers. Canada's leading journalists "developed and maintained" a confidence among senior government officials "to an extent never seen in Ottawa before or since."⁴⁵ The result was that the success of this relationship helped to promote the emerging public consensus regarding the merits of the country's postwar foreign policy.

⁴⁵ See Patrick Brennan's introduction to his *Reporting the Nation's Business: Press Government Relations during the Liberal Years, 1945-1957*. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994), x.

This is not to suggest, however, that these journalists were not objective, and at times, critical of government policy. Shortly after the war, with the transition to a peacetime economy well under way, the country's leading newspapers began to question and challenge the government's position on immigration. In July 1946, for instance, Toronto's influential *Globe and Mail* proclaimed that the government's piecemeal initiatives and overall "wait and see" approach on immigration was inadequate, and outwardly rejected the measures to allow entry to a few first-degree relatives as a token and inefficient response to both the European refugee crisis and the country's needs.⁴⁶ The Montreal *Gazette* was also highly critical of the government, suggesting that the failure to take further concrete action with respect to immigration demonstrated a lack of initiative and foresight. Immigration, the *Gazette*'s editors suggested, could serve as a central means of helping to enhance the economic future of the country.

The government attitude on the question appears to be a masterpiece of sterile indirection...this country is taking no immigrants, does not want any, and is giving no encouragement to any prospect that any will be wanted or assisted to come here in the future. That is hardly a plan to induce prospective migrants to plan on coming to Canada when facilities are available.⁴⁷

Editors at the country's leading newspapers continued to be critical of the government's inaction on the immigration issue during the winter of 1946-47. In a January 1947 editorial, the pro-business and conservative leaning *Globe and Mail* declared that,

Few indeed are the issues before this country that are more urgent than immigration. It is inconceivable that a government would be brazen enough to attempt to keep it away from parliament any longer. The minister was successful in stifling debate in the past session. It would be a calamity if the members allowed themselves to be put off again. The nation is accustomed to having its wishes ignored by the government but it

⁴⁶ *Globe and Mail*, July 23, 1946.

⁴⁷ *Gazette*, August 29, 1946.

expects more regard for public opinion by parliament.⁴⁸

A month later, when the government announced an Order-in-Council, P. C. 371, which further broadened the admissibility of close relatives of Canadian citizens, the *Globe & Mail* responded once again with scathing criticism of the government's actions. "Minor modifications of the existing regulations," the paper asserted, "to allow this or that limited class of people to come in under certain conditions in themselves restrictive are no substitute for a broadly conceived immigration plan. Until the government accepts the dictates of public opinion and gets moving on a realistic programme of immigration, it cannot hope to free itself of further criticism and impatience."⁴⁹ A day later, even the *Winnipeg Free Press*, which itself had been criticized for what many perceived as its consistent endorsing of government policy, reproached the government for its close-relatives scheme. Its editors stated that, "While the changes in regulations announced by the minister may result in some increase in the flow of immigrants from Europe, it does not, in itself, constitute a new policy. Instead, it is merely a broadening of the classifications from which immigrants may be accepted. Inch by inch procedures are too gradual a method of opening the doors."⁵⁰

Of the relatively small number of journalists and editors who could write intelligently about Canadian foreign policy and international relations during the early postwar period, all shared the conviction that the country's commitment to internationalism was the right direction for the country to take. Significantly, most of the country's leading journalists on international

⁴⁸ *Globe and Mail*, January 13, 1947.

⁴⁹ *Globe and Mail*, Feb 13, 1947.

⁵⁰ *Winnipeg Free Press*, February 14, 1947.

affairs, with the notable exception of Bruce Hutchinson, were active members of the Canadian Institute of International Affairs. Indeed, the CIIA served as an auspicious meeting place where many journalists shared ideas and built friendships with their country's current and future diplomats as well as with many 'up-and-coming' political figures.⁵¹ Cross-fertilization of ideas among members of the CIIA was so extensive that it should come as little surprise that Grant Dexter's 1944 book, *Canada and the Building of Peace*, published under the auspices of the CIIA, read like a manifesto and blueprint of the bureaucracy's approach to postwar policy-making.⁵²

The country's leading foreign relations journalists shared strong internationalist convictions with the senior officials of the Department of External Affairs. This ensured Canadian foreign policy-makers that during the crucial transition period in the country's foreign relations, they would be able to count in virtually every instance, "on the timely and eloquent support of this influential group of journalists" on the home front.⁵³ As many of their articles and editorials indicate, these shared convictions encompassed similar attitudes and opinions towards the best approach the government should take towards formulating the country's new postwar immigration policy.

The Canadian press played a significant role in helping to shape public attitudes towards Canada's new postwar foreign policy initiatives. As mentioned, this resulted in the reaching of a

⁵¹ According to Brennan, in the process of forging these important contacts, many journalists "were imbued with an almost evangelical sense of mission to spread the internationalist gospel." *Reporting the Nation's Business*, 122.

⁵² Grant Dexter, *Canada and the Building of Peace*. (Toronto: Canadian Institute of International Affairs, 1944), also see *Reporting the Nation's Business*, 122.

⁵³ *Reporting the Nation's Business*, 120, 123.

widespread public consensus about the merits of Canada's new and expanded postwar relationship with the international community.⁵⁴ This pleased External officials immensely since they recognized that achieving widespread government and public support for their vision of the country's postwar international role was crucial. More specifically, press opinion on the issue of immigration also helped to 'soften' public opinion by encouraging a more amenable acceptance of a liberalized postwar policy. Although clearly substantiating and precisely determining the level of influence which the Canadian press exerted over public opinion is at best, both difficult and problematic, the attention that politicians and policy-makers have traditionally paid to the press is, in itself, sufficient enough evidence to support the significant role in society which these elite groups have credited it with.⁵⁵

The close relationship between the Canadian press and the Department of External Affairs had been strengthened in 1946 after the departure of Norman Robertson to London as Canadian High Commissioner. Like his predecessor O.D. Skelton, Norman Robertson was a traditionalist in his approach to the protocols of conventional diplomacy. As a result of his administrative style, he was rather skeptical of the dependability and quality of opinion of journalists, and did not believe that cultivating public opinion via the press was an especially good idea.⁵⁶

⁵⁴ While the discrediting of isolationism and the postwar emergence of Communism as the threat to Western democracy were undoubtedly the primary factors responsible for forging a domestic consensus on the country's international posture, "the role of the press in deepening and sustaining that consensus should not be underestimated." *Forging the Nation's Business*, 120. Others, however, have disagreed. "It would be difficult to substantiate the claim...that Canadian foreign policy was backed by a well-informed public opinion. Indifference was the prevailing attitude. See Spencer, *Canada in World Affairs*, 404.

⁵⁵ As historian Paul Rutherford has demonstrated, although the country's leading newspapermen already appealed to an audience which, for the most part, shared similar views, that audience was both large and powerful. See Paul Rutherford, *The Making of the Canadian Media*. (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1978), 124-5.

⁵⁶ See Granatstein, *A Man of Influence*, 190, 252.

During his tenure as Under-Secretary, however, Lester Pearson took an all together different administrative approach. Pearson was much more aware of the influence of the press, and of the need to cultivate good relations with journalists in order to help shape the contours of public opinion. The fact that Pearson also possessed an affable personality and had a relaxed and inviting demeanor certainly helped to place him in good stead with the members of the press. While posted as the Second-Secretary at the Canadian Embassy in Washington during the war, Pearson learned greatly from the American example, having witnessed just how useful, knowledgeable, proficient, and like-minded journalists like the *New York Times*' James Reston and columnist Walter Lippmann could be, whether as purveyors of information, political commentators and advisers, or as educators of public opinion.⁵⁷ Nevertheless, this did not mean that Pearson had entirely abandoned the traditional 'quiet diplomacy' of his predecessors.⁵⁸

In the summer of 1946, shortly after serving as a wartime special assistant with External Affairs, H.F. Angus of the University of British Columbia, writing in the *Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science*, warned the government that if the country continued to "postpone consideration of our immigration policy until our reconstruction policy has taken shape there is a serious danger of overlooking the importance of laying a sound foundation for the future development of Canada." After all, wrote Angus, "Without a very substantial increase in her own population it will be impossible for Canada to retain her relative importance when other nations of equal or greater population rebuild their shattered lives." This sentiment reflected

⁵⁷ See Escott Reid, *Time of Fear and Hope: The Making of the North Atlantic Treaty*. (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1977), 83, as well as Norman Smith, "Pearson, People, and Press," *International Journal*, 29, 1 (Winter 1973-4), 16-17.

⁵⁸ *Mike*, vol. 2, 34.

Angus' belief in the merits of a larger population. In an earlier article in the *International Journal*, he stated that, "it is arguable that a larger population would be less likely to depend on fluctuations in the external demand for primary products and more able to maintain a stable economic life in the midst of a world-wide depression."⁵⁹ The government, Angus clearly concluded in his summer 1946 article, needed a history lesson in order to prompt it into action. "Immigration into Canada during the next few decades is likely to play a very important part in our national economic life," he wrote. "On it might depend the place which Canada will be able to take in the world. As has been emphasized, conditions are very different from what they were before the recent war and even more different from what they were before the war of 1914-1918." Moreover, as a professor of international relations, Angus was well aware of the international ramifications of immigration. The country needed an immigration policy, he believed, "which would protect legitimate Canadian interests and at the same time take account of legitimate world interests, which it is not a Canadian interest to disregard."⁶⁰

In a subsequent article published the following year in the *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Angus once again warned the government that the current immigration regulations should not be "taken too seriously as an index of contemporary opinion. The rules were made a generation ago." Furthermore, he suggested, "It can well be argued that Canadians ought in their own interests to make whatever immediate sacrifices may be necessary in order to attract and establish immigrants on a large scale." In the end, Angus

⁵⁹ Angus, *Immigration*, 65.

⁶⁰ H.F. Angus, "The Future of Immigration into Canada," *Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science*, 12 (August 1946): 379, 386.

concluded, "A larger population might give greater influence in world affairs," which would correspond accordingly with the country's new internationalist activism.⁶¹

B.K. Sandwell, the editor of *Saturday Night* magazine, was another prominent and outspoken advocate of immigration. He was Honourary Chairman of the Canadian National Committee on Refugees and drew as much attention as possible to the refugee issue in his magazine, in contributions to other publications, and at Senate committee hearings.⁶² Sandwell warned *Saturday Night's* readers of the significant foreign policy ramifications of Canada's immigration policy. "It is time that the countries which have been accustomed to receiving immigration," he cautioned, "and which have in late years developed such an intensely selective policy about it, woke up to the fact that what they are doing is no service to the countries from which the immigration comes."⁶³ Sandwell also dismissed the theory of Canada's limited absorptive capacity. In a April 19, 1947, editorial in *Saturday Night* entitled, "A New Science," he praised a book by Professor Griffith Taylor, head of the Department of Geography at the University of Toronto, which estimated that Canada could possibly accommodate 50,000,000 people without diminishing its "North American" standard of living.⁶⁴

⁶¹ See Angus, "The Need for an Immigration Policy." *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*. 253, 3 (September 1947): 17, 19-20. For example, in a brief submitted to the Senate Committee on Immigration and Labour, the CNCR warned the government that the nation's current position on immigration threatened Canada's new internationalist activism. The committee stated, "At present, Canada's is pursuing a selfish and exclusionist policy which is, in these circumstances, destructive to life and is *internationally dangerous*." Emphasis added. See *Report of the Senate Committee on Immigration and Labour*, no. 9, (1946), 228.

⁶² For example, see B.K. Sandwell, "Our Immigration Problem: Some Facts and Fallacies." *Queen's Quarterly*. 53, 4 (Winter 1946), 502-510, as well as his "Population, A Canadian Problem," *Queen's Quarterly*. 54, 3 (Autumn 1947), 312-22.

⁶³ *Saturday Night*, May 22, 1948.

⁶⁴ Professor Taylor's book outwardly refuted the idea that the existence of unemployment in Canada was proof of the country's incapacity to absorb large numbers of immigrants. See Griffith Taylor, *Our Evolving Civilization: An*

In a brief article published by the *International Journal* in the spring of 1947, M.J. Coldwell, the leader of the federal CCF Party, declared his belief that as a member of the United Nations, Canada had a responsibility to do everything in its power to assist the European refugees.⁶⁵ Referring to Canada's participation in the International Refugee Organization, the new United Nations organization with a mandate to rectify the global refugee problem, Coldwell espoused his belief that failing to take action, and prompt action for that matter, could have serious consequences.⁶⁶

A Gallop poll conducted on February 24, 1945, asked whether respondents believed Canada required a larger population. While 65 percent believed the country needed a 'much larger' population, only 21 percent believed the country's current population was 'just about right,' 9 percent were undecided and 5 percent offered a 'qualified' opinion.⁶⁷ A similar poll taken on October 26, 1946, asked the same question, and the results were virtually identical.⁶⁸ Yet in a CIPO poll taken earlier in April of that year asking respondents whether or not they would like to see large numbers of people from the British Isles migrate to Canada, only 37 percent favoured such a proposal, while 45 percent were opposed. Most telling, however, was the response to a similar question taken in the same poll which asked whether Canada should allow a large number of people from the European continent migrate to Canada. Only 21 percent were in

Introduction to Geopacific & Geographic Aspects of the Path to World Peace. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1946).

⁶⁵ M.J. Coldwell, "Refugees and the United Nations." *International Journal*. 2, 1 (Spring 1947), 104.

⁶⁶ *Refugees and the United Nations*, 104-5.

⁶⁷ *Canadian Views on Immigration and Population*, 57.

⁶⁸ *Canadian Views on Immigration and Population*, 59.

favour of such a proposal, while 61 percent were opposed, 10 percent gave qualified support and 8 percent were undecided.⁶⁹

A further series of Gallop polls conducted by the Canadian Institute of Public Opinion in April 1947⁷⁰ indicated that 51 percent of respondents supported the idea that Canada needed immigrants, while 11 percent believed immigrants were needed only if they were of the 'right type.' Nevertheless, 30 percent believed that the country needed no new immigrants at all.⁷¹

As the economy continued to prosper, and almost a year after a new immigration policy was put into effect and large numbers of immigrants began arriving in the country, support for immigration had become cautiously supportive.⁷² It was clear, however, that at least some restrictionist impulses persisted despite the best efforts of pro-immigration advocates.⁷³

No doubt, confusion contributed to the shifts in public opinion. The seemingly endless debate over refugees and immigrants, for instance, was often esoteric and academic in nature.⁷⁴ This was especially so since the government's stand on immigration was so ambiguous. So much so, in fact, that the editors of the *London Free Press* asked their readers "Have we a Policy?" The

⁶⁹ CIPO poll April 24, 1946, cited in *Canadian Views on Immigration and Population*, 59.

⁷⁰ This was, coincidentally, less than one month before the Prime Minister delivered his statement on immigration to the House of Commons. King certainly had the results of the polls in mind when he announced the government's new position.

⁷¹ CIPO poll, August 2, 1947, cited in *Canadian Views on Immigration and Population*, 60.

⁷² A CIPO Poll conducted on January 7, 1948, again asked whether respondents approved or disapproved of people from Britain and Europe immigrating to the country as they had during 1947. This time 58 percent approved, while 28 percent disapproved and 14 percent remained undecided. This was, however, the strongest showing of public support to date.

⁷³ At the time, a similar situation existed in the United States. See Divine, *American Immigration Policy*, 117-22.

⁷⁴ The debate over the absorptive capacity of the economy is a notable example.

paper insisted that Canadians had to “make up our minds what course we are to follow, and we must do it soon. Are we, as Prime Minister King suggested, not to consider any new immigration policy until all Canadians are employed? Can we agree on what constitutes full employment? Is there employment if there are jobs available, but at wages which are not acceptable? Must we agree on this before admitting immigrants?” In the end, as the *Free Press* editorial demonstrated, questions and confusion outnumbered answers.⁷⁵

It is possible to make a general statement about the alignment of attitudes towards immigration. In terms of demographic trends, it would appear that English-speaking Canadians, the country's well organized ethnic minority communities,⁷⁶ businessmen, members of the press, clergymen, and an increasing number of politicians, seemed on the whole, to have been in favour of the admission of large numbers of immigrants. On the other hand, the representatives of the labour movement were less supportive, and French-Canadians from all walks of life were generally opposed to any liberalization of the country's immigration policy. This alignment of views was seemingly related to the interests individuals and groups had in maintaining their “positions of economic strength, social status and political power.”⁷⁷

The fact remained that, for Mackenzie King, the question of immigration was a matter of *realpolitik*. Any significant change in the country's position toward immigrants would only come about when there would be practical benefit. The determining factor was, as mentioned,

⁷⁵ *London Free Press*, May 31, 1946, cited in *None is too Many*, 228.

⁷⁶ Especially the Ukrainian, Polish, German and Jewish communities.

⁷⁷ Martin Levine, “Compassion when Convenient: Canadian Attitudes Toward Immigration in 1946 and 1947.” M.A. Research Essay, Carleton University, 1975, 5.

undoubtedly national economic self-interest. Gradually, the government realized that the country's post-war prosperity could be sustained. The leading advocate of this belief in the Cabinet, the so-called 'prophet of prosperity' was C.D. Howe, the powerful and influential Minister of Reconstruction and Supply who had played such a key and successful role in managing much of the country's domestic war effort. Because of his excellent wartime performance, Howe was delegated the monumental task of overseeing the reconversion of the national economy to a peacetime footing. Of concern, Howe realized, was that the country was not going to experience wide-spread unemployment, but rather, a labour shortage—which Howe had predicted to his colleagues in September 1945.⁷⁸ Furthermore, like most Canadians, Howe realized that export trade was essential for maintaining the country's prosperity, and European markets, therefore, were essential for the continued long-term growth of the economy. Accordingly, as a result of the economy's demand for labour, Howe became an outspoken advocate of increased immigration.

Indeed, for Howe, immigration was very much a part of Canada's reconstruction efforts. So essential was immigration, that when a lack of shipping threatened to interrupt Canada's newly announced immigration program in the summer of 1947, Howe went to Europe determined to rectify the situation.⁷⁹ As a result of his experience he was more determined than ever to play an important role as a pro-immigration advocate and saw to it that additional resources were

⁷⁸ Robert Bothwell & William Kilbourn, *C.D. Howe: A Biography*. (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1979), 206.

⁷⁹ See the *Ottawa Citizen*, July 25, 1947. Howe's first hand experience of the devastation in Europe caused him to become even more convinced of the dual merits of immigration. On the one hand, as an expedient means to alleviate the burdens of reconstruction efforts in occupied Germany, as well as to meet Canada's demands for labour. But most importantly, on a humanitarian level to alleviate the human misery and suffering. Howe was exceptionally dismayed by the appalling conditions of the European refugee camps. According to his official biographers, for Howe, the trip "was a sobering experience" and he "returned to Canada shaken." *C.D. Howe: A Biography*, 216.

diverted to the country's various immigration initiatives since "the speeding up of the immigration movement" should "be treated as a matter of high priority."⁸⁰ Upon reporting to his colleagues, the Cabinet gave its authorization to secure additional shipping. Moreover, also as a result of Howe's insistence, the Cabinet agreed that,

a maximum movement of 3,000 persons per month from displaced persons camps can be handled. This number will include movement of special groups and be supplemented by labourers suitable for primary steel plants and for steel foundries, the construction industry, railroad maintenance gangs and similar heavy work. For those not included in special groups, the Department of Labour will arrange accommodation in one of the three military camps and distribute the men from these. Agricultural workers can of course be absorbed in unlimited numbers.⁸¹

Now more convinced than ever of the merits of immigration and the key role it could play in helping to sustain Canada's postwar affluence, King—largely as a result of Howe's beckoning—began to delegate authority for immigration away from Glen. According to King, "Glen is a curious conceited fellow, very vain...I think he just does not want it to appear he is not wholly equal to the demands of the immigration debate which is clearly the case. He is really a disappointment as a Minister. Pleasant in personal relations but really next to useless in government."⁸²

The position of Deputy Minister of Mines and Resources became available during the winter of 1947. Howe saw this as an excellent opportunity to introduce a new management direction in the Immigration Branch, headed by someone who was more in tune with the needs of

⁸⁰ PCO, vol. 82, file 1-50-M. "Minister of Reconstruction and Supply to Deputy Minister of Mines and Resources," August 29, 1947.

⁸¹ PCO, vol. 82, file 1-50-M. "Minister of Reconstruction and Supply to Deputy Minister of Mines and Resources," August 29, 1947.

⁸² NAC, William Lyon Mackenzie King Papers (hereafter cited as WLMK) MG 26 J1, Personal Diary, February 12, 1947.

the country. Upon Howe's strong recommendation, the Prime Minister sought someone with liberal views on immigration, preferably an experienced civil servant, yet someone who unlike Glen, possessed a competent and strong demeanor that would allow them to supercede the anti-immigration bias and bureaucratic inertia that had plagued the Immigration Branch since the early 1920s. The ideal candidate was Dr. Hugh Keenleyside, an experienced foreign service officer who had established himself as a hard-working and progressive member of the Department of External Affairs who had recently served as Canada's Ambassador to Mexico. As a policy-maker, Keenleyside was well aware of the international dimensions of the refugee issue,⁸³ and had in fact, worked with Jack Pickersgill in drafting the Prime Minister's May 1 statement.⁸⁴ One of Keenleyside's first tasks in office was to remove many of the obstacles that had restricted the flow of immigrants to the country since the 1920s. There can be little doubt, therefore, that his appointment served as a turning point in the evolution of the country's postwar immigration history.

By the end of the war, calls for a new approach to immigration were increasingly heard from politicians. In parliament, the opposition parties as well as government back-benchers criticized the government's lack of resolve and initiative. Mr. Anthony Hlynka, representing the Alberta riding of Vegreville, where a large number of Canadians of Eastern European origin lived, spoke of Canada's humanitarian responsibilities to the Displaced Persons. "I appeal to the minister to give first consideration to stateless or displaced persons," stated Hlynka. "Regardless of racial

⁸³ As a member of the legation in Tokyo during the late 1920s and early 1930s Keenleyside gained invaluable experience in dealing with the difficulties of immigration policy.

⁸⁴ *On the Bridge of Time*, vol. 2., 297.

origin, these groups of people should, I believe, have priority over all others....the government...has a moral and a Christian obligation to these unfortunate people of Europe who to-day find themselves scattered in practically every country in the old land, without homes, without food, without shelter, and without hope....these...people perhaps have...sacrificed much more for us than we would sacrifice for them.” Hlynka also reminded his fellow parliamentarians of the European refugees commitment to democracy. “May I point out,” he stated, “that this group comprises the democratically minded people who had to move into western Europe when totalitarianism was advancing.” Hlynka further sought to point out to his colleagues that compared to the country’s allies, Canada simply was not doing enough to help alleviate the suffering in Europe. Referring to Britain’s immigration initiatives, he stated, “the essence of the point I want to make is simply this. Despite the fact that they have no room for more immigration, that the returned men are not rehabilitated as yet, that their economic position is not stabilized, the British government is allowing these people to come in....I was disappointed that Canada was not the first to make that move.”⁸⁵

In the same parliamentary debate, another MP of Eastern European extraction, F.S. Zaplitny, also spoke of Canada’s obligation to the DPs because of their anti-Communist sympathies and commitment to freedom and liberty. “The fact that they have found it necessary to become refugees, to get away from totalitarian rule, proves that they have the principles of democracy and freedom so deeply in their hearts that they were willing to suffer privation in order to preserve them....I believe we shall find among the refugees of Europe some of the best

⁸⁵ House of Commons, *Debates*, vol. III, (1945), 3528-29.

democrats in the world”⁸⁶ W.R. Thatcher representing the riding of Moose Jaw also spoke of the merits of the refugees. “These people,” he stated, “are not cast-offs or failures; many are the best their respective countries have to offer.” The moral imperative, Thatcher reiterated, demanded that the country take action. “Many of those who are suffering to-day are former allies,” he stated. “The vast majority of these refugees were active opponents or victims of the fascist countries. The conditions of these people, which is beyond description, pleads for them. Canada in the interests of justice and humanity, cannot indefinitely ignore that plea.” More pragmatically, alleviating the refugee situation, Thatcher realized, would help Europe get back on its feet which was essential for Canada since, as he stated, “To-day, to a considerable degree, the prosperity of Canada is dependant upon our foreign export markets...”⁸⁷

Similarly, David Croll, a distinguished Jewish-Canadian, and Liberal backbencher, reminded his colleagues that “the planning and development of Canada from Confederation on were based on continually expanding the population.” As his colleague W.R. Thatcher had said, “there is no denying that immigration has been the life history of this nation.”⁸⁸ However, Croll was especially critical of the excuses used by his party to explain the delay in announcing a new immigration policy. The government, he believed, “have allowed surface reasons to remain in the path of our own interests and in the interests of common humanity. The truth is that if we are looking for reasons for dodging the problem we can find them, but we must ask if they are fair to ourselves and fair to the rest of the world.” Moreover, like the advocates of big business and

⁸⁶ House of Commons, *Debates*, vol. III, (1945), 3534.

⁸⁷ House of Commons, *Debates*, vol. I (1946), 525.

⁸⁸ House of Commons, *Debates*, vol. I, (1946), 524.

similar to Anthony Hlynka's comments to the Commons only a few months before, Croll expressed his concern that compared to the country's allies Canada was failing to capitalize on a unique opportunity. "We must ask ourselves whether we can afford to miss this opportunity, whether we can afford to let Australia and New Zealand 'beat the gun.'" Besides, Croll informed the Commons, even Pope Pius believed that immigration could "help solve Europe's saddest problem."⁸⁹

Like some of his colleagues, Mr. C.C.I. Merritt, representing the Riding of Vancouver-Burard, insisted that "there is not a single thing which is more important to the economy of Canada or to full employment than that we should have a definite policy of mass immigration." Merritt also believed in the virtues of an immigration policy which would help in the efforts to rehabilitate Canada's European allies. "I believe," he wrote, "that to enable the people of Europe to have a decent economic standard of living and so contribute towards world peace we must relieve them of part of their surplus population." And again, like others in the Commons who in their efforts to pressure and persuade the government, Merritt made reference to the large-scale initiatives of Canada's Commonwealth allies. "Australia has given the green light to immigration," he stated, "What have we done? We have done nothing so far."⁹⁰

For the first time in decades, the numbers of those outspoken and determined Canadians who argued for an expansionist immigration policy outnumbered their opponents. Economically and politically, in matters of both domestic and foreign policy, the government began to view immigrants once again as assets rather than liabilities. In addition, for the first time in years, the

⁸⁹ House of Commons, *Debates*, vol. I, (1946), 527-29.

⁹⁰ House of Commons, *Debates*, vol. I (1946), 534, 536.

politically explosive nature of the immigration question had, at least for the time being, been assuaged for the Canadian government. The threat of losing considerable electoral support over the immigration issue subsided as the moral imperative and overwhelming humanitarian appeal of the European refugee crisis continued to mount and began to sway public opinion. In its own economic self-interest, and to a lesser extent, as a responsible nation in the international arena, Canada began to respond to the requests from its European allies who, in their efforts to reconstruct their shattered societies, were desperate for any and all assistance which would help to finally and permanently settle the refugee problem. In turn, these factors had a liberalizing effect upon the traditional constraints of Canadian public policy, and created an opportunity for Mackenzie King's government to at last turn its attention to altering its existing policy which had until then, remained generally restrictive. With an understanding of the domestic impetus' and constraints upon government policy, therefore, the country's initial piece-meal and eventual large-scale immigration initiatives will be the focus of the final chapter.

CHAPTER III

Reluctant Relief: Canada's Early Postwar Initiatives

During the early postwar era, Canadian immigration law provided the minister and senior policy-makers with the ability to wield great discretionary power and influence in their administration of the country's immigration policy. In no other example is this more clearly evident than in the case of Canada's response to the postwar European refugee crisis. During the period lasting from May 1945 to May 1947, the Canadian government gave constant explanations for its lack of more concrete action, and its piece-meal and *ad hoc* response to the crisis in Europe. Canada's Minister of Mines and Resources, whose department housed the Immigration Branch, as well as the Branch's Director, time and again—and in the face of continually mounting moral and political pressure both at home and abroad—used virtually every power and excuse at their disposal to delay the government's inevitable announcement of a new policy on immigration.

Government officials and policy-makers seemed thankful for the leeway at their disposal. In a memorandum to his Cabinet colleagues on the issue of immigration policy, Glen detailed the latitude available to the government. "Existing immigration legislation," he wrote, "enables the Governor General in Council to impose restrictions and vary the requirements of admission of immigrants to meet changing conditions in the country." According to Sections 37 and 38 of the Immigration Act, Glen added, those individuals who had applied for entry to the country and who ~~did not qualify under one of the admissible classes~~¹ "can only be legally provided for by the authority of the Governor General in Council in waiving the restriction applicable to their ~~individual cases~~." This discretionary initiative, the minister reminded his colleagues, had been used

¹ As mentioned, this included those persons eligible under Order-in-Council P.C. 695 of 1931.

on a number of occasions during the preceding fifteen years to allow the entry of a number of aliens who were “chiefly refugees, many of them being industrialists with considerable capital available for investment, others possessed technical knowledge of a higher order or valuable experience in world trade.” When it suited the country’s interests, it was made clear, exceptions to the rules would be made.² On most other occasions, however, the rules would be strictly enforced. According to Glen,

Following the cessation of hostilities in Europe there has developed a steadily increasing number of inquiries....from residents of Canada for the entry of relatives from continental Europe. These proposed immigrants are not of the admissible classes and the applicants are being advised of this fact and further informed that there are no facilities for transportation or immigration examination at this early date following the cessation of hostilities.³

Privately, government officials assured one another that immigration initiatives would remain restrictive, at least for the time being. However, this seemed to contradict the rather large commitments that External Affairs officials had been making to their international counterparts. At the third major session of UNRAA in August 1945, for example, Lester Pearson affirmed Canada’s commitment to help resolve the European refugee crisis. Quoting President Harry Truman, Pearson stated, “As the winter comes on the distress will be increased. Unless we do what we can to help, we may lose next winter what we won at terrible cost last spring. We must help to the very limits of our strength, and we will!’ Speaking for my own country—Canada—may I repeat those words? We must help to the very limits of our strength and

² It was the flexibility of the discretionary provisions of Sections 37 and 38 of the Immigration Act which eventually permitted Canada to accept some 64,860 displaced persons. Under normal circumstances of the time, over 40,000 of the aforementioned refugees would have been inadmissible to the country as immigrants if not for the Orders-in-Council that were passed to grant them entry.

³ PCO, vol. 82, file I-50, Memorandum to Cabinet on Immigration Policy from the Minister of Mines and Resources, September 5, 1945.

we will.”⁴

One of the greatest barriers to the expedient formulation of an effective immigration policy was that the administrative bureau responsible for immigration—the Immigration Branch—was located within the Department of Mines and Resources. Responsibility for immigration was delegated to Mines and Resources in 1936, since, as a result of the Great Depression, immigration was considered a lesser priority by a government preoccupied with more immediate and pressing concerns. As a branch of the Department of Mines and Resources, the Immigration Branch was only one of more than thirty boards, agencies, and sections all requiring the attention of senior bureaucrats.⁵ Nevertheless, in the aftermath of the war, when immigration matters once again rose to the forefront of public debate, the government failed to relocate the Immigration Branch to a department where it would receive the necessary attention and resources it required to contend with the exceptional demands of the postwar era. As a result, other government departments in the policy making structure dealing with immigration matters began to pressure both the government and the Immigration Branch to take more effective action. External Affairs believed that the Immigration Branch was fundamentally ignorant of the new postwar realities in both Canada and the world. Consequently, a departmental rivalry emerged. As will be shown, different policy and administrative priorities led to serious bouts of tension between External Affairs and the Immigration Branch.

In September 1945, External Affairs presented the Cabinet with a report which urged the

⁴ As cited in Armstrong-Reid, “Canada’s Role in the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration 1942-1947,” 310.

⁵ See House of Commons, *Debates*, vol. VI (1947), 5417-18.

government to carefully review the nation's future immigration needs. The report was intended as a long-range strategic study, and as such, did not address the more immediate growing group of opinion—both domestic and foreign—which increasingly called for Canada to begin accepting refugees for resettlement. No accurate assessment of the desirable number of immigrants annually entering Canada could be made, the report suggested, until servicemen had been re-established in Canada, industry had been converted to a peacetime footing, and international trade patterns had stabilized.⁶

When Lester Pearson returned to Washington as Ambassador to the United States, he continued to lobby the government to help alleviate the European refugee situation. In a December 4, 1945 letter to Norman Robertson, Pearson detailed how, at the request of E.J. Tarr (the president of the CIIA), he had met with officials of the Canadian Pacific Railway Public Relations and Colonization Departments to discuss the Sudeten German settlers in Northern Saskatchewan and British Columbia. This was, Pearson wrote, “a matter...I have been interested in ever since 1938 when I assisted at Canada House in getting them out to Canada.” The C.P.R. men emphasized to Pearson that some of the Sudeten settlers were eager to get relatives and friends out from Czechoslovakia, “where, as you know, they are having a very difficult time, and where so many of them, although strong anti-Nazis for years, are being expelled to Germany.” The CPR officials acknowledged the political difficulties involved, but stated their hope “that something might be done before long to bring further Sudetens to Canada.” Predicting a chain of lobbying efforts on behalf of immigrant and refugee groups, Pearson added, “I would not be surprised if they make approaches to the proper quarters in Ottawa.” Most important, however,

⁶ DEA, vol. 4164, file 939-EA-40-1 memorandum to Cabinet, September 5, 1945.

Pearson gave his support to the initiative. "The cause certainly is a good one," he suggested,

assuming, of course, that the Sudetens in question are in the same political categories as those who have already come to Canada. I must say I was cheered by the story I was told of the way the original settlers (after initial difficulties and some misunderstanding) had settled down and become useful citizens. I should think that five or ten thousand more of the same type would be equally useful. The difficulties in the way of their settlement would, of course, be less than in the case of the original settlers, because they would be going to districts where friends and relatives had already built up communities.⁷

As a result of concerted public support, the government granted landed immigrant status, in October 1945, to those refugees who had been fortunate enough to receive sanctuary in Canada during the war. External Affairs officials sought to build upon this success by encouraging the government to take even further steps to resettle some of the surplus European population. As a result of the difficult course of events then taking place in Europe with respect to the growing number of stateless persons, and the threat that their continued presence posed to international stability, departmental officials, led by Norman Robertson, seized upon an appropriate opportunity to effect a substantial change in Canadian immigration policy. In a letter to Lester Pearson dated December 24, 1945, Robertson stated,

We are...receiving numerous inquiries both from individuals and organizations concerning the possibility of admitting to Canada the relatives and friends of persons who have already settled here. In many cases these representations are made on behalf of individuals or groups of people in Europe who will almost certainly never be able to return to their places of origin. I think, therefore, that we shall have to begin to make some preliminary investigation into the question of post-war immigration, even if it is possible to do so only within the limits of our own department. As shipping becomes available, the pressure for the admission of refugees will increase, and there might be some advantage now in considering the lines along which policy might eventually be formulated."⁸

In response, External Affairs established a refugee committee to formulate a course of action the

⁷ *DCER* 10 (1944-45), pt. 1, 1265-66.

⁸ *DCER* 10, pt.1, 126.

country might pursue.

By early 1946, External Affairs felt confident enough in the progress made towards the reintegration of returning servicemen into civilian life and the rapidity with which industry had reoriented itself to a peacetime economy. Indeed, industry's efforts to reorient itself towards peacetime production were so successful that many manufacturers began to complain of shortages of labour.⁹ Such factors prompted the department to favour, as a matter of departmental policy, permitting the entry into Canada of a number of refugees. This position was contained in a memorandum sent to the Director of Immigration, by Norman Robertson. "I feel," wrote Robertson, "that special consideration might now be given to the particular problem which is raised in Europe: the existence of thousands of refugees for whom new homes will have to be found....special provision might be made for the settlement in Canada of a limited number of refugees, drawn from particular groups of people and chosen in light of conditions existing in this country for their maintenance."¹⁰

Within a few days of sending the memorandum, Robertson suggested the need to establish an interdepartmental committee on immigration in addition to the existing departmental refugee committee as well as the Cabinet Committee on Immigration, which had been established on October 18, 1945. The explicit purpose of the Interdepartmental Committee was to formulate the basis of a new post-war immigration policy, which External Affairs anticipated, would be announced by the government in the early months of 1947.¹¹ Robertson requested other

⁹ See *None is too Many*, especially chapter 8.

¹⁰ DEA, vol. 3672, file 5127-EA-40-5, January 21, 1946.

¹¹ DEA, vol. 4164, file 939-EA-40-1, External Affairs to Immigration Branch, February 6, 1946.

departments, including the Immigration Branch of the Department of Mines and Resources, to participate in putting together a program to assist European refugees. Other notable government officials similarly endorsed the External Affairs initiative. Lieutenant-General Maurice Pope, head of the Canadian military mission in Germany, suggested to Ottawa that it should make some concessions to refugees in light of the crisis faced by the victims of Nazism who found themselves displaced by the war's aftermath. Ever practical, Pope realized the country would inevitably have to yield to international pressure and accept some of the European refugees. Therefore, he suggested Canada should take action while it would still have its choice of the most skilled and educated refugees. "I am reminded, Pope wrote to Ottawa, "of the wisdom of Talleyrand's aphorism—to yield before one is compelled to do so and while one can still make mint by it."¹²

External Affairs also explained to the Cabinet and to their bureaucratic counterparts in the Immigration Branch, that an interdepartmental apparatus was needed, because in the words of one officer, "[s]omething has to be done for the refugees in Western Europe. Provision might be made to permit the entry of some and to open processing and medical operations again in Europe, as the United States is doing."¹³ The department used all means available to exert pressure upon the Immigration Branch and the Cabinet to take action comparable to those initiatives undertaken by the country's closest allies. For example, departmental officials frequently cited an American presidential directive of December 1945, which led to the establishment of American refugee processing facilities in occupied Germany, and allowed DPs to enter the U.S. as regular quota

¹² IB, vol. 443, file 673931, Pope to Secretary of State for External Affairs, March 11, 1946.

¹³ DEA, vol. 4164, file 939-EA-40-1, External Affairs to Immigration Branch, February 6, 1946.

immigrants.¹⁴ These details were used by the department to persuade, if not embarrass the Immigration Branch to make more concerted efforts to facilitate immigration into the country. Ultimately, the Interdepartmental Committee became External Affairs' major tool for advocating the liberalization of existing immigration laws and for combating the restrictionist mentality of immigration officials.¹⁵

The refugee problem, as Robertson had predicted in late 1945, failed to devolve into a solely humanitarian concern. It had become, as it has been shown, a fiercely politicized issue on the international agenda. During 1946 the consensus between East and West on solving the refugee problem evaporated. Although the refugee question had been included on the agenda for the first session of the General Assembly of the United Nations, and originally promised to be a welcome test of the premise of Canada's notion of international cooperation on a functional basis, both sides became increasingly recalcitrant and uncompromising in their respective positions as the year-long and often arduous debate on the IRO worked its way through UN committees and

¹⁴ See the directive released by President Truman on December 22, 1945. It read, "The grave dislocations of populations in Europe resulting from the war has produced human suffering that the people of the United States cannot and will not ignore. The government should take every possible measure to facilitate full immigration to the United States under existing quota laws....the Secretary of State is directed to establish with the utmost dispatch consular facilities at or near displaced person and refugee assembly center areas in the American zones of occupation. It shall be the responsibility of these consular officers, in conjunction with the immigration inspectors, to determine as quickly as possible the eligibility of the applicants for visas and admission to the United States. For this purpose the Secretary will, if necessary, divert the personnel and funds of his department from other functions in order to ensure the most expeditious handling of this operation." Quoted in *Proceedings of the Senate Committee on Immigration and Labour*, (1946) no. 1, 24. Also see the official Presidential Statement released the following day. "The United States shares the responsibility to relieve the suffering. To the extent that our present immigration laws permit, everything possible should be done at once to facilitate the entrance of some of these displaced persons and refugees into the United States. In this way we may do something to relieve human misery and *set an example to the other countries of the world which are able to relieve some of these war sufferers. I feel that it is essential that we do this ourselves to show our good faith in requesting other nations to open their doors to these people.*" (Emphasis added) At the time, no similar response was made by Canadian officials. See *Proceedings*, (1946), 21.

¹⁵ PCO, vol. 82, files I-50 and I-50-M. Minutes of the Interdepartmental Committee on Immigration for 1946. As cited by Sauer, in "A Matter of Domestic Policy?" 233.

sub-committees.¹⁶

Representatives from the departments of Health and Welfare, Labour, and the Immigration Branch met with External Affairs officers on March 4, 1946 in the first meeting of the Interdepartmental Committee. The committee discussed, in great detail, the ramifications of Canadian inaction in the face of mounting international pressure and the growing opinion within External Affairs calling for a more active policy response to the situation in Europe. With considerable goading from External Affairs, the committee agreed to recommend to the Cabinet that Canada should admit some of the refugees. The committee knew full well that—given the concerns of Quebec—King and his Cabinet were extremely reluctant, and therefore unlikely, to make fundamental policy changes so soon after the war and agreed that any recommendation calling for the admittance of refugees to Canada should be couched in the form of a special program, or on an *ad hoc*¹⁷ basis, and should not—at the present time—lead to any fundamental change in policy or legislation.

In the early months of 1946, during the first sessions of the Interdepartmental Committee, the uniqueness of the position on immigration adopted by External Affairs came to light. This is especially evident when the position of the department is compared and contrasted with the stance taken by other departments. The minutes of the Interdepartmental Committee clearly illustrate the divergent opinions of the various departments—especially External Affairs and the Immigration Branch—and the lack of consensus that existed between them on many crucial issues.

¹⁶ "A Matter of Domestic Policy?" 234.

¹⁷ These initiatives were to be manifested through Orders-in-Council.

For example, Immigration Branch officials believed that “nobody, not even External Affairs, actually wanted to see refugees admitted.” The real challenge, the Immigration Branch suggested, was for the Interdepartmental Committee to devise a high-profile, low-commitment program to take pressure off of External Affairs at international gatherings and split, if not pacify, pro-refugee advocacy efforts in Canada.¹⁸ The primary concern of the Immigration Branch, rather ironically, was to maintain the status quo by doing very little with respect to the drafting and implementation of a new immigration policy. Instead, the initiative to formulate a new policy was assumed by the Department of External Affairs. In its efforts to go beyond the traditional parameters of the Immigration Branch’s rather narrow and parochial views on immigration, the Department of External Affairs successfully integrated an international dimension into the formulation of Canadian immigration policy.

Members of the Interdepartmental Committee were well aware of the fact that it was External Affairs officials who had the most direct contact with the prospective immigrants. It was also these same officials who had to confront the representatives of foreign governments at international gatherings, and justify Canadian policy to the international community. In fact, the Immigration Branch played a very small and insignificant role in discussions of international matters with representatives of foreign governments and UN officials. The Immigration Branch’s poor understanding and appreciation of the intricacies of international affairs also enraged many members of the Interdepartmental Committee. For example, many members complained bitterly of their increasing dissatisfaction with the performance of the Immigration Branch in the resettlement

¹⁸ Abella & Troper, *None is too Many*, 214.

of the European DPs.¹⁹

Other more fundamental criticisms of the Immigration Branch's role were also made. M.G. Glassco, the Secretary of the Cabinet Committee on Immigration Policy, complained to Gerry Riddell of the Department of External Affairs about the vast amount of discretionary power left in the hands of the Minister of Mines and Resources. In a note to Riddell in July 1946, Glassco stated,

whatever historical justification there may have been for placing immigration under Mines and Resources has now disappeared. Moreover, a Minister whose responsibilities are perhaps the most widespread of any member of the Canadian Cabinet cannot be expected to have time to make a thorough study of immigration, a field quite separate from the rest of his Department's functions. In practice this means that the Director of Immigration exercises the great discretionary authority allowed the Minister under the Immigration Act and hence, this officer possesses a degree of power far out of proportion to his nominal responsibility.²⁰

Important matters on the agenda for the first meeting of the Interdepartmental Committee were a planned discussion of whether refugees who were relatives of Canadian citizens should be given priority to enter Canada, questions of medical standards, transportation problems, and the desirability of religious or fraternal organizations acting as sponsors.²¹ The two items which would cause controversy both within and beyond the committee for the next several months concerned broadening the categories of individuals eligible to enter Canada, and acquiring adequate ocean transport. The committee recommended that first degree relatives of Canadians should be permitted to qualify for immigration. Such a move would enable some European refugees to come and yet it would not open the thorny issue of whether to establish nationality quotas, as was the

¹⁹ PCO, vol. 82, file I-50, Minutes of the Interdepartmental Committee on Immigration, March 4, 1946.

²⁰ PCO, vol. 82, file I-50, July 18, 1946, "Note for Mr. Riddell."

²¹ PCO, vol. 82, file I-50, Minutes of the Interdepartmental Committee on Immigration, March 4, 1946.

practice in the United States.²² With respect to the apparent shortage in shipping, the committee could do little but urge the proper authorities to do everything possible to acquire additional passenger vessels.²³

A number of factors combined to cause the Cabinet to adopt the committee's recommendations. The Cabinet recognized the political impact of the mounting pressure from Canadians wishing to be reunited with their families. In the opinion of most senior External Affairs officials in Ottawa, the *ad hoc* measures were of the short term variety, although they were welcomed as measures which would alleviate some of the pressure requesting the government to take immediate action. This, it was hoped, would prevent the government from prematurely announcing a new policy before the Interdepartmental Committee could present its final recommendations to Cabinet. The intention of External Affairs officials to delay the formal announcement of a new policy, while continuing to encourage Cabinet to allow entry to the country through Order-in-Council, was not a reflection of bureaucratic inefficiency but rather stemmed from a desire to introduce and implement a strong and effective policy that would legitimately serve the interests of the country in the post-war era. Departmental officials simply wanted the study and analysis from which any new policy would derive to be based upon as

²² PCO, vol. 82, file, I-50, March 4, 1946. The committee determined that the quota system of admission was "by no means as flexible as the existing Canadian legislation and thus is not satisfactory."

²³ On the matter of transportation difficulties, see Glen's comments to his Cabinet colleagues in PCO, vol. 82, file I-50, Memorandum to Cabinet on Immigration Policy from the Minister of Mines and Resources, September 5, 1945. Solutions, senior External Affairs officials resolved, could be found to alleviate the shipping shortages the government so frequently referred to as justification for government inaction, and as the prime cause of the delay in announcing a new policy on immigration. For example, Pearson had deep reservations about the sincerity of the government's public assertions that insufficient shipping was available for the transport of refugees. In a letter to Norman Robertson, speaking of his official contact with Fiorello LaGuardia, the Director-General of UNRRA, Pearson wrote: "I do not think we should mention shipping difficulties to Mr. LaGuardia because I feel certain he would reply with an offer to get ships from the American War Shipping Board." IB, vol. 443, file 673931, Pearson to Robertson, June 4, 1946.

accurate and sound an assessment of the country's post-war immigration requirements as possible.²⁴

Of the 3500 wartime refugees granted residency status by the government, approximately 650 were Polish engineers and technicians whom, as mentioned, Immigration officials felt had made a significant contribution to the country's war effort. The issue of Polish refugees once again received considerable attention from Canadian officials in the early months of 1946. By the end of the war a labour shortage had emerged in the agricultural sector of the Canadian economy. This was worsened by the fact that by the end of August 1946, the last of the thousands of German prisoners of war who had worked on the nation's farms were repatriated. Canadian agriculturalists, deeply concerned, lobbied the government to find replacements for their lost labour.

At about the same time, one of the largest single groups which refused to be repatriated after the war was the so-called 'Anders' Army,' the Polish Corps named after their commanding general which had fought under British command in Italy and North Africa. Britain was prepared to offer residency to some of the members of this unit but could not accommodate them all. At a meeting of High Commissioners in London on April 12, 1946, Vincent Massey was asked to inform his government of this matter, which he did in a letter to Norman Robertson on April 24: "The British government is greatly worried over the disposition of Polish servicemen who have been or are to be demobilized. Any help that Canada or other countries could give to them would

²⁴ See DEA, vol. 3673, file, 5127-EA-40-9, Extract from Memorandum by Second Political Division, "International Obligations Arising from the Refugee Problem." February 12, 1947.

be very much welcome.”²⁵ Subsequently, in a letter to the Prime Minister, Norman Robertson suggested that “It has occurred to me that we might be in a position to kill two or three birds with one stone by agreeing to take demobilized Polish soldiers—man for man—for the German prisoners of war we would be returning to Britain. That way, we would be getting a supply of heavy labour of the type I understand to be in considerable demand.” Moreover, he continued, “the movement...would make an appreciable beginning on the very difficult task of disposing of the large forces of Polish soldiers in Western Europe who, for understandable reasons are unwilling to return to Poland.” As a close confidant of King, Robertson was keenly aware of the PM’s concerns. In an effort to sell the idea to the PM, Robertson added, “The fact that they would be coming in as agricultural labourers or lumber workers to take the place specifically of German prisoners of war who would be shipped back, would I think remove the matter from the field of public controversy.” King agreed but suggested that the idea would first require the approval of Cabinet.²⁶ Subsequently, External Affairs began to present the plan to senior Cabinet members.²⁷

Shortly thereafter, the Prime Minister approved in principal a proposal “to take demobilized Polish soldiers, man for man, in return for German prisoners of war being returned to the United Kingdom.” The Cabinet quickly approved the Prime Minister’s proposal in late May, primarily because of the severe agricultural shortage expected for the upcoming farming season.²⁸

²⁵ DEA vol. 3674, file 5127-EA-40C, Massey to Secretary of State for External Affairs, April 24, 1946.

²⁶ DEA, vol. 3673, file, 5127-EA-40C, Robertson to King, May 9, 1946.

²⁷ See Wrong’s letter to Humphrey Mitchell, the Minister of Labour in *DCER* 12 (1946), May 14, 1946, 377.

²⁸ WLMK, vol. 419, Cabinet Minutes, May 29, 1946.

Further discussions between Canadian and British officials ensued, culminating on July 23 with the passage of Order-in-Council P.C. 3112, permitting the entry of 4,000 Polish veterans. The government's priorities were clear. Self-interest had dictated the course of its actions. No excuses were uttered by government officials about the pressing need to reintegrate returning servicemen or re-establish European immigration inspection offices. Most surprising was that, unlike programs of general immigration, transportation of these men to Canada was not considered a problem, since the British government had agreed to arrange and finance the transport of these men to Canada.²⁹ In the end, the re-settlement of the Polish soldiers proved to be the only major resettlement scheme of 1946. However, the experience that officials gained in processing this movement of refugees proved to be exceptionally beneficial in organizing subsequent schemes to bring immigrants to the country.

The movement of the Polish veterans to Canada did not come without some political fallout. Mr. A. Fiderkiewicz, the Polish Ambassador in Ottawa, expressed his government's concerns that these men were needed in Poland, "to take an active part in the work of the reconstruction of their country." Further, because of the practical economic benefit that these men would provide to Canada, the Ambassador objected to the fact that they were being regarded by the Canadian government "as a human reservoir" upon which Canada "could conveniently draw." Any decision to determine the immigration and settlement of Polish citizens in foreign countries, the Ambassador insisted, "can be made only on the basis of bilateral agreements with

²⁹ The government's frequent reiteration of transportation shortages continued well into the late 1940s. For example, see the PM's May 1, 1947 statement on immigration to the House of Commons when he stated, "At present, the limiting factor is not our legislation or regulations, but the shortage of transport.... The problem of transportation is a real one. It cannot be overcome in a week or a month, or indeed within the next year. The shortage of shipping means that Canada cannot secure more immigrants simply by changing laws and regulations." *Debates*, vol. III, (1947), 2644.

the Polish government.”³⁰ Despite these protests—which provide a good glimpse of the escalation of tensions between the Allies and the states of the Soviet-dominated bloc—the resettlement plan went ahead as scheduled.

The arrival of the Poles in Canada further stimulated domestic interest and received considerable public attention, particularly in the form of editorials in some of the country’s leading newspapers. Toronto’s *Globe and Mail*, which had been a major advocate of immigration, and which had criticized the government for its lack of initiative, remained skeptical about the government’s motivation to bring the Poles to Canada. Shortly after Order-in-Council P.C. 3112 was announced, the paper asserted that,

We have no reason to doubt...that the decision was arrived at because of the need for a quick labour force, rather than through any desire to assist these refugee troops in their political predicament. There can be no quarrel with the conditions under which these men may achieve eventual citizenship. But neither can it be supposed that this is even the beginning of an intelligent program of immigration.³¹

As the *Globe and Mail* understood, Canada’s current immigration program was simply too timid. This was especially so because emigration—particularly to the United States—remained a serious problem. In 1945, 22,722 immigrants came to Canada, while during 1946 71,719 people entered the country. In addition to the government’s Polish refugee initiative, approximately 48,000 British and European women, who had married Canadian servicemen overseas, and their 22,000 children also born abroad, helped push the total numbers of immigrants into Canada for the years 1945-6 to approximately 95,000. However, and of particular concern, emigration to the United

³⁰ DCER 12, (1946), 395-6. “Minister of Poland to Secretary of State for External Affairs, September 7, 1946.

³¹ *Globe and Mail*, July 29, 1946.

States during the same period numbered about 43,000.³²

As the example of the Polish ex-servicemen demonstrates, on the international front the repatriation of refugees was becoming increasingly difficult. In the spring of 1946, Fiorello LaGuardia, the Director General of UNRRA, publicly declared that repatriation was simply not working. Overseas resettlement, it appeared, was the only feasible option.³³ Subsequently, in a letter to all UNRRA members, LaGuardia inquired about what each member state was prepared to do to help alleviate the DP problem. Quoting LaGuardia in a letter to Robertson, Pearson wrote, "All nations are sympathetic to this problem, but...more than sympathy is needed and specific proposals need to be developed for actually moving people to new lands."³⁴

In another letter written to Robertson that same day, Pearson noted that the Americans had already done all that they could under their limited quota-system to admit as many refugees as possible. He realized that LaGuardia was of the opinion "that countries such as Canada and the United States, which have been so generous in forwarding food and supplies out from their countries, should be at least a half or quarter as generous in receiving into their countries the persons who had been most tragically dealt with by the war." Adding further pressure, Pearson continued: "In response to the President's directive of December 22, facilities for the speedy handling of United States immigration visas were set up in Europe and the first substantial flow of immigrants is now arriving." He added, "I understand that this committee [Interdepartmental Committee on Immigration] has not made a great deal of progress as yet and it is, therefore, likely

³² See *The Canada Yearbook*, 1948-49. (Ottawa: Dominion Bureau of Statistics, 1949), 174; as well as Barry Broadfoot, *The Immigrant Years: From Europe to Canada, 1945-1967*. (Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 1986), 1.

³³ Proudfoot, *European Refugees*, 293.

³⁴ IB, vol. 443, file 673931, pt. 11. Pearson to Robertson, May 31, 1946.

to be some time before any change is recommended in the Canadian laws and, of course, it would be even longer for such proposed changes to be enacted.” Realizing that he would have to present at least some position to his international colleagues, Pearson ended: “I would be grateful, however, to learn of any specific plans which are now receiving favourable consideration and which at the same time are sufficiently definite that I could properly give information on them to Mr. LaGuardia.”³⁵

Hume Wrong informed Pearson that he should let LaGuardia know that since Canada was a willing and major participant in organizations like UNRRA and the IGCR, the country was aware and concerned about the refugee issue, although no further action could be undertaken until a study was conducted to determine “the relationship between immigration policy and the absorptive capacity of the Canadian economy.” Besides, there was little the country could do in the interim given the serious shortage of shipping.³⁶

By the late summer of 1946, with the situation in Europe deteriorating as tensions between the Allies and the Soviets over the refugee issue rapidly escalated, officials from External Affairs began to come under increasing pressure at the United Nations for the Canadian government to publicly proclaim its intent on the refugee issue. At the request of Pearson, who feared the prospects of having to attend the upcoming session of the United Nations General Assembly without a refugee program to present, Hume Wrong suggested that the Director of the Immigration Branch send inspection teams to visit displaced persons camps and begin processing eligible refugees. The Immigration Branch maintained its intransigent position. No new initiatives

³⁵ IB, vol. 443, file 673931, pt. 11. Pearson to Robertson, May 31, 1946.

³⁶ IB vol. 443, file 673931, pt. 11. Wrong to Pearson, June 3, 1946.

would be forthcoming. Given the government's recent concession authorizing the entry of Polish ex-servicemen, Joliffe was of the opinion that External Affairs could convince United Nations officials that a delay of another year was necessary for Canadian officials to prepare adequately for any large-scale reception of European refugees. Despite their dislike for the Immigration Branch's current stance, External Affairs, the Acting Under-Secretary implied, was still responsible for justifying and affirming the government's position to the international community.³⁷

Even cautiously supportive individuals grew increasingly critical of the country's lack of initiative. Agreeing that the country was in need of a larger population—although not as a result of mass immigration—Mr. L. Philippe Picard, representing the constituency of Bellechasse, had earlier expressed his frustration to the House of Commons. "People outside Canada," he stated, "should know what to expect from this country. The immigration laws have been too elastic and, if I may say so, the administration of those laws has been more or less of a hodge-podge during the last thirty years...the fact remains that for the last twenty-five or thirty years Canada has had no definite immigration policy and has had also very unsatisfactory immigration laws."³⁸

Dismayed with the response of the Immigration Branch to the crisis in Europe, officials from External Affairs conveyed their concerns directly to the Cabinet. Once again, with the forthcoming session of the General Assembly, External Affairs was concerned that the discrepancy between the government's consistent declarations of sympathy for the displaced persons and the country's actual commitment to them could damage the country's international

³⁷ II3, vol. 443, file, 673931, pt. 11. Wrong to Joliffe, September 4, 1946.

³⁸ See House of Commons, *Debates*, (April 3, 1946) Vol. I, 538

credibility. Senior External Affairs officers anticipated some potentially embarrassing situations for the Canadian delegation to the U.N. The Canadian delegation to the 1946 General Assembly believed that an announcement that Canada would accept European refugees as immigrants would go a long way towards helping to resolve the issue. In a letter to headquarters in Ottawa, Lester Pearson suggested that, "The delegation might find itself in an embarrassing position if, in a discussion on the eventual disposition of refugees, it could refer only to Canada's action in the past in admitting a few refugees or in revising the immigration regulations of residents in Canada." However, "if it were possible to announce a practical plan for the resettlement of even a small number of refugees, the delegation might be able to influence in a very constructive way, the consideration of the refugee question."³⁹ For that matter, if countries like Canada did not take some immediate action, perhaps more radical measures would have to be adopted by the international community to rectify the steadily worsening refugee situation.⁴⁰

Shortly thereafter, in a memorandum to the Cabinet, Louis St. Laurent, the recently appointed Secretary of State for External Affairs, shared Pearson's comments with his colleagues.⁴¹ The minister supported the advocacy efforts of a number of Canadian ethnic

³⁹ See DEA, vol. 3687, file, 5475-T-40, Pearson Memorandum to St. Laurent, October 10, 1946.

⁴⁰ DCER 12, (1946), 1026, Memorandum from the SSEA to Cabinet, October 12, 1946. As Abella & Troper have suggested, External Affairs played upon the fears of Immigration Branch officials by suggesting that if Canada did not undertake more proactive measures to help rectify the refugee crisis, then officials from some of those countries most severely affected by the crisis would call for more drastic measures such as a UN imposed quota system of mandatory refugee acceptance. See *None is too Many*, 220. For the government's stance on the quota issue see PCO, vol. 1, file, 1-50, Memorandum to Cabinet on Immigration Policy from the Minister of Mines and Resources, September 5, 1945. As a nation with a sparse population and a small open economy, Canadian Immigration Branch officials opposed an inflexible system like the American quota structure. Canada needed the ability to quickly capitalize upon changes in the international economy. See Allan Green, *Immigration and the Postwar Canadian Economy*. (Toronto: Macmillan, 1976), 16.

⁴¹ DCER 12, (1946), 1026, Memorandum from the SSEA to Cabinet, October 12, 1946.

organizations such as the Central Mennonite Committee, the Canadian Ukrainian Committee and the Canadian Jewish Congress who, time and again, had pledged their intentions to the government to sponsor and support the movement to Canada of refugees. "Limited numbers of refugees," St. Laurent suggested, "might be admitted to Canada in co-operation with organizations of this nature, which have been pressing strongly for permission to do something on behalf of friends and relatives of their members."⁴²

A report presented by the Interdepartmental Committee on Immigration to the Cabinet on April 4, 1946, urged that internationally recognized travel documents which refugees had received from agencies such as UNRAA and the IGCR should be accepted by Canadian officials in lieu of regular passports.⁴³ The Cabinet responded to this recommendation by passing two Orders-in-Council on May 28. The first, P.C. 2070, authorized Immigration Branch officials to accept international recognized travel documents in lieu of a regular passport. The second, and more important, Order-in-Council, P.C. 2071, permitted Canadian citizens to apply for the admission to the country of their first-degree relatives. At the same time, the Cabinet endorsed in principle the Interdepartmental Committee's request that a long term report on the country's immigration needs be prepared.⁴⁴

⁴² DCEP 12, (1946), 1026, Memorandum from the SSEA to Cabinet, October 12, 1946.

⁴³ DEA vol. 4164, file 939-EA-40-1, Minutes of the Interdepartmental Committee on Immigration, April 4, 1946.

⁴⁴ Although the Cabinet approved, in principle, the concept of a long range study of immigration needs on May 9, 1946, it was mid-July before the Interdepartmental Committee met to discuss the type of approach to be adopted to complete the study. The committee agreed that the participating departments should prepare brief studies based on their own vantage points which could provide the basis for the policy review. In subsequent meetings in early August of that year the Committee also discussed idea of instituting a Royal Commission or some other independent body to conduct a review of immigration policy, although the idea was swiftly rejected. See DEA, vol. 4164, file 939-EA-40-1, Minutes of the Interdepartmental Committee on Immigration, July 16, 1946, as well as Minutes of the Interdepartmental Committee on Immigration, August 9, 1946.

In the face of mounting public pressure for the government to take more concrete action, it is significant that the Immigration Branch did not want news of the long term study to be released. A departmental memorandum from External Affairs summarized the situation well. Escott Reid, the acting Under-Secretary, informed officials at the country's missions and posts that, "With reference to recent changes in Canadian immigration regulations...the Cabinet, when approving the short-term recommendations embodied in P.C. 2070 and P.C. 2071, also approved a proposal that a review of long-term immigration policy be undertaken under the auspices of the Cabinet committee as recommended." The recommendation thus approved by the Cabinet was that a general report on immigration, together with suitable recommendations as to policy, "should be prepared within the next twelve months. The Minister made no mention of this review of long-term immigration policy in his statement of May 29 and this information, therefore, should...be treated as confidential."⁴⁵ The last thing Immigration Branch officials desired was additional public pressure to announce a new policy. The reality, however, was that the government had no plans in the works to give substance to the Orders-in-Council since Immigration Branch officials had not yet begun the process of reestablishing its European inspection facilities which were required to process immigrant and refugee applications.

External Affairs officials were not particularly impressed by P.C. 2071, viewing it as nothing more than an empty political gesture to buy the government more time before it was forced to initiate a new immigration policy. If the Cabinet had wished to make the May Orders-in-Council truly useful tools, a good deal of initiative and expense would have been required. The

⁴⁵ The memorandum was also referred to the Canadian Immigration delegation to the Economic and Social Council in New York. See PCO, vol. 82, file 1-50, June 13, 1946.

only way to make the Orders-in-Council effective, Gerry Riddell wrote, “would be to organize immigration teams, send them to the continent to find people, arrange for the movement of people to ports, and charter shipping. I feel certain that the government is not, at the moment, prepared to take such initiative on such an elaborate scale.”⁴⁶ Besides, as the Canadian Military Mission in Berlin reported to External Affairs, the result of the governments ill-conceived actions amounted to Canada “raising false hopes and...creating useless paperwork for ourselves.”⁴⁷

Making matters worse, in late July of that year UNRRA officials mistakenly reported that Canadian officials in Berlin had established an office to process applications for immigration to Canada. Officials moved quickly to diffuse the situation. On August 14, the Director of the Immigration Branch wrote to UNRRA officials in Germany informing them that, although P.C. 2071 had permitted applications to be made, it was still required that all applicants be assessed by a Canadian Immigration Branch officer and that, “we do not know when circumstances will permit the reopening of our immigration offices on the continent.” On August 19, P.T. Molson from the High Commission in London apprised the IGCR that the necessary measures to bring refugees and immigrants to Canada from Europe were not yet possible despite the recent legislative amendments granting authority to go ahead with such plans. For the time being, the initiative for further action lay with the Immigration Branch which was not prepared to immediately follow through on the instructions of the Cabinet. As Molson complained to the IGCR, “it seems a pity that these unfortunate people should be allowed to remain under the

⁴⁶ DEA, vol. 3673, file, 5127-EA-40, Riddell to Wrong, June 8, 1946.

⁴⁷ DEA, vol. 3673, file 5127-EA-40, Canadian Military Mission in Berlin to External Affairs, July 17, 1946.

illusion that steps are being taken to arrange for them to live in Canada.”⁴⁸

Consequently, External Affairs officials once again pressed the government for action. In Europe, George Vanier, Canada's Ambassador to France, had one of the best perspectives on the nature of the refugee situation. He decried the ineptitude of the Immigration Branch, espousing his belief that their officials appeared to have no “awareness of the urgency of the problem facing our consular officer in Berlin...some of the inquiries are doubtless in one of the possible classes. Yet, there is no machinery for inspecting or examining such applicants, and apparently, no prospects that this lack of will be remedied in the near future.” A stalwart supporter of refugee causes, Ambassador Vanier explained to senior officials in Ottawa that few in the international community took seriously Canada's consistent excuses for inaction. “It is simply not true that no transport is available,” he wrote Ottawa.

This is immigration's stock reply to any question of urgency in the opening of continental inspection offices....There is little doubt...space will shortly be available for people such as immigrants. As far as North West Europe, some space is available now. The real bottleneck in getting immigrants from the continent of Europe to Canada is the lack of inspection offices, not the lack of transport. This will become increasingly true each month as more ships become available on the continental lines....We cannot continue to have our officers in Berlin, the Hague and Brussels answer all immigration inquiries with the flat statement that transport is not available when both the officers concerned and the applicants know this is not the case.⁴⁹

However, until November 1947 there were only two vessels in Canadian service which were able to provide berths for the various immigration initiatives. Shipping was somewhat scarce because so much merchant shipping was dedicated to cargo transport for postwar reconstruction. In fact, worldwide demand for civilian sea transportation continued to outpace the available

⁴⁸ *None is too Many*, 218-9.

⁴⁹ DEA, vol. 3673, file 5127-EA-40C, Vanier to External Affairs, August 27, 1946.

supply.⁵⁰ In March of 1947, Norman Robertson had informed Ottawa from London that, given the sheer number of applications being received at the High Commission, the supply of available shipping fell “desperately short” and that this would greatly impede the ability and usefulness of the immigration teams who were scheduled to begin processing operations in the near future.⁵¹ Even the overall intransigence of the Immigration Branch began to diminish, especially since Hugh Keenleyside, the new Deputy Minister, realized that, “Our government will be in a very difficult position if while professing ourselves anxious for a substantial increase in immigration, we allow the present situation to remain without making strenuous efforts to change it.”⁵² Although the British had agreed to provide three thousand berths per month to transport passengers to Canada, it was agreed that most of this room would be filled by British immigrants and the Polish veterans.⁵³ Nevertheless, the Immigration Branch persisted in suggesting that shipping was simply not available, even though less than a year earlier External Affairs officials were aware that, although difficult, additional shipping could be found if truly desired.⁵⁴

During the autumn of 1946, under unrelenting pressure from ethnic organizations as well as individual Canadians to allow their distressed relatives in Europe to come to Canada, the government announced its Close Relatives Scheme. In October, the Interdepartmental Committee

⁵⁰ This was also a particular cause of concern for the IRO. Eventually, however, the IRO, through its mass resettlement division, organized a fleet of its own through long term charters and by 1950, became the largest passenger carrying organization in the world. See Holborn, *The International Refugee Organization*, 397.

⁵¹ DEA, vol. 4164, file 939-EA-40-2, Robertson to Pearson, March 19, 1947.

⁵² DEA, vol. 4164, file 939-EA-40-2, Keenleyside to Pearson, April 5, 1947.

⁵³ DEA, vol. 4164, file 939-EA-40-2, Keenleyside to Pearson, April 23, 1947.

⁵⁴ DEA, vol. 4164, file 939-EA-40-2, Keenleyside to Pearson, April 23, 1947, as well as IB, vol. 443, file 673931, pt. 11, Pearson to Robertson, June 4, 1946.

on Immigration resolved to determine the exact numbers of requests the Immigration Branch had received from Canadian citizens seeking permission to bring their family members to Canada from the DP camps in Europe.⁵⁵ Upon examination of the rather large number of requests, the Committee determined that Canadian immigration teams, similar to the ones that had been sent overseas to process the Polish veterans, would be sent to Germany. The impetus to take further action also emanated from the international front where Canada's allies began similar initiatives.⁵⁶ The Interdepartmental Committee initiative received Cabinet approval on October 17, 1946.⁵⁷ Shortly thereafter, on November 7, Prime Minister King made the government's plans public, announcing that the Immigration Branch would soon commence the preliminary processing of applications from Canadians wishing to sponsor close relatives from Europe.⁵⁸ The Prime Minister also declared that immigration offices were to be opened in Paris, Brussels, and The Hague. The government made it clear, however, that numerous arrangements and details had yet to be worked

⁵⁵ The pressure upon the Immigration Branch was tremendous. Indeed, the Branch was compelled to act and to act fast. For instance, only two months before the announcement was made of the opening of processing facilities in Germany, Joliffe had informed External Affairs that "It is not possible to state at this time what action can be taken to deal with immigrants from Germany. We do not know yet whether such persons will be permitted to proceed to inspection points that we hope to be able to set up in Holland, Belgium, and France. We may have to send inspection officers into Germany but it is not yet possible to state what action can be taken." Amazingly, when the pressure became severe enough that bureaucratic resistance could no longer inhibit a new and much needed immigration initiative, it did not take long to set such an initiative in motion. See DEA, vol. 3673, file 5127-EA-40-7, Joliffe to External Affairs, August 14, 1946.

⁵⁶ Canada's two closest allies had, in fact, already taken action. See *Proceedings of the Senate Committee on Immigration and Labour*, (1946), no. 1, 24. Moreover, in November 1945, the British Home Secretary announced the Distressed Relatives Scheme under which specific categories of close relatives of British citizens were allowed into the United Kingdom. It continued its bold program for several years. Indeed, some MPs attempted to use the example of Canada's allies as moral suasion to get the country to embark upon even bolder initiatives. For example, see David Croll's comments to the House of Commons in the House of Commons, *Debates*, vol. VI (1947), 5418.

⁵⁷ DEA, vol. 4164, file 939-EA-40, Minutes of the Interdepartmental Committee on Immigration, October 17, 1946.

⁵⁸ DEA, vol. 3673, file 5127-EA-40, Government press release, November 7, 1946.

out and that, as a result, no close relatives could be expected to reach Canada before the spring of 1947.

Given the rather low priority that the government had assigned to immigration during the preceding fifteen years, the Immigration Branch was suffering from a severe manpower shortage to staff the reopening of the European immigration offices in addition to the special processing of DPs that was about to get underway in Germany and Austria.⁵⁹ Yet even before the scheme came into effect, External Affairs wanted to expand the categories of first-degree relatives eligible to enter Canada. R.G. Robertson of the Prime Minister's Office informed King that External Affairs believed widowed daughters and sisters, their unmarried children and orphaned nephews and nieces to age eighteen should also be included in the scheme since, Robertson believed, it was likely that the Close Relatives Scheme, "will be regarded as inadequate."⁶⁰ The Cabinet agreed.⁶¹

As Canadian officials had determined in the autumn of 1946, several months would be required to sort through the several layers of military government in occupied Germany to acquire the necessary exist visas for selected refugees.⁶² In addition, every application made by a Canadian sponsor had to be investigated so as to ensure that they could adequately provide for a prospective refugee, to guarantee that they did not end up on the dole. Most important, however, was the fact that Keenleyside had determined that there would be no ceiling placed upon the total

⁵⁹ IB, vol. 443, file, 673931, pt. 12. Memorandum to the Director, January 24, 1947.

⁶⁰ See WLMK, vol. 281, R. G. Robertson to King, February 1, 1947.

⁶¹ See WLMK, vol. 420, Report from the Cabinet Committee on Immigration, January 20, 1947.

⁶² IB, vol. 443, file, 673931, pt. 12. External Affairs to A.L. Joliffe, November 8, 1946.

numbers of persons admitted to Canada under the Close Relatives Scheme.⁶³

After his appointment, Keenleyside was determined to proceed quickly on the immigration front. In a letter outlining some of his major ideas on the displaced person problem, Keenleyside informed External Affairs (a department he had only recently left) that, "it might...be advantageous to Canada if we were to take more initiative in this matter." He added that were Canada to move more quickly on the refugee issue, and accept even a token five to ten thousand people, the country would gain from a number of advantages. First, Canada would "have the satisfaction of being able to say that...[it]...was the first country to make any serious effort to contribute to a solution to this problem." Second, Keenleyside added, "We could select the DPs in accordance with our own ideas as to who would be likely to make the best Canadian citizens." The third benefit would help alleviate some of the increasing criticism of the government at home. By undertaking at least this one initiative, "We would strengthen the impression in Canada that the government is seriously interested in immigration and is acting effectively to obtain a good type of immigrant." Fourth, Canada "would, in fact, be making a real move towards the solution of a very distressing problem and we would get a degree of recognition which would be very valuable publicity for Canada." Besides, Keenleyside added, "Our action might very well indeed lead to other countries taking somewhat similar steps and thus contributing, in turn, to the solution of the problem." Ultimately, the Deputy Minister believed, taking the initiative "would enhance the reputation of Canadians as a humanitarian and practical people."⁶⁴

⁶³ NAC, Cabinet Conclusions, vol. 419, April 23, 1947.

⁶⁴ DEA vol. 4164, file 939-40-1, Deputy Minister of Mines and Resources to Acting Secretary of State for External Affairs, May 15, 1947.

Justifiably proud of his role in launching the country on a new immigration course for the postwar era, Keenleyside recalled in his memoirs that, "Canada...not only became the first overseas country to take concrete action to assist the permanent resettlement of refugees by refusing to wait for the negotiation of a proposed international agreement but for several years it also admitted more displaced persons (we soon learned to call them new Canadians) than all other countries combined—far more, for example, than the United States."⁶⁵ In retrospect, however, Keenleyside's reflections seem to be filtered through rose coloured glasses. Australia, for instance, adopted a far more humanitarian and liberal approach to postwar immigration, particularly with respect to the European refugees.⁶⁶

Many of the tens of thousands of applications received by the Immigration Branch under the Close Relatives Scheme were made by German-Canadians seeking to have their relatives come to Canada.⁶⁷ Of the 30,000 applications⁶⁸ received by mid-1947, many had been submitted by the 50,000 to 60,000 ethnic Germans who had migrated to Canada from Eastern Europe after the

⁶⁵ This was only until 1948 when the U.S. began to implement its ambitious Displaced Persons Act. See Keenleyside, *On the Bridge of Time*, vol. 2, 300.

⁶⁶ As David Corbett argued, "concern for the welfare of refugees was a powerful motive among Australian leaders, no matter how hard-headed, realistic or pragmatic they appeared. Under Labour and Liberal governments Australia accepted 182,000 refugees from the camps of the IRO, compared with Canada's 123,000. Among those whom Australia accepted were people of all ages and conditions of health, some with no prospect of self-support, whereas Canada accepted refugees who were admissible under the ordinary standards with regards to health, occupation and sponsorship by relatives in Canada. Canada waited until 1947, when fear of postwar depression had vanished, to launch her immigration programme, whereas Australia began hers in 1945. See Corbett, "Immigration and Foreign Policy in Australia and Canada," 114-15.

⁶⁷ See Sauer, "A Matter of Domestic Policy?" as well as Gerhard P. Bassler, "Canadian Postwar Immigration Policy and the Admission of German Enemy Aliens, 1945-50," *Yearbook of German-American Studies*, 22 (1987): 183-195. Also see chapter II.

⁶⁸ Dirks, *Canada's Refugee Policy*, 158.

First World War.⁶⁹ Among all the ethnic refugee groups who applied for admission to Canada, the *Volksdeutsche* (ethnic Germans) were unique. With the outbreak of war in 1939, all Germans whether *Reichsdeutsche* (German nationals) or *Volksdeutsche*, were considered enemy aliens and were denied entry to the country.⁷⁰ Moreover, as a member of both UNRAA and the IRO, Canada had initially agreed to the exclusion of all persons of German ethnic origin from all forms of international relief and legal protection available to DPs.⁷¹ However, in May 1947 the government announced that it would permit the entry of *Volksdeutsche* refugees on the same basis as DPs so long as they did not hold German citizenship.⁷² Self-interest was the principal rationale behind this decision, since admitting German refugees could serve for the betterment of the national economy. Many Canadians, after all, were keenly aware of the contributions German immigrants had made to Canadian society, particularly as agriculturalists. The success of the established German-Canadian community as well as the efforts of German POWs during the war was proof of this fact.⁷³ Nevertheless, the issue of admitting *Volksdeutsche* to Canada posed a number of dilemmas for Canadian diplomats and politicians since, on one hand, if the country did not accept these potential immigrants because of the strictures of international agreement, it would appear to

⁶⁹ See "Canadian Postwar Immigration Policy and the Admission of Enemy Aliens," 186.

⁷⁰ In fact, as late as November 1947, under Order-in-Council P.C. 4850, the government re-codified the exclusion of Germans as 'enemy aliens.' See "*A Matter of Domestic Policy?*" 255.

⁷¹ This stipulation was, however, increasingly challenged by Canadians. See the comments of Walter Tucker, MP, as well as those of Anthony Hlynka, MP. House of Commons, *Debates*, vol. II (May 2, 1947), 2703-4, and House of Commons, *Debates*, vol. III (June 30, 1947), 2737-2738.

⁷² Bassler, "Canadian Postwar Immigration Policy and the Admission of Enemy Aliens," 190.

⁷³ See the comments of James Mackinnon, the new Minister of Mines and Resources in the House of Commons, *Debates*, vol. VI, (June 24, 1948). Also see the opinions of R.W. Thatcher in the House the following year. House of Commons, *Debates*, vol. III (December 3, 1949), 2682. The *Volksdeutsche* were also highly regarded by many Canadians for their staunch anti-Communist views.

those on the home front that "effective control over selection and admission of immigrants had passed from Canadian authorities to an international body." On the other hand, if the country went ahead and determined to select these immigrants, it might cause difficulties with the country's allies.⁷⁴

In order to circumvent many of the difficulties in dealing with the IRO and ethnic Germans, the Canadian Christian Council for the Resettlement of Refugees significantly reduced a number of the burdens then confronting the Canadian government.⁷⁵ For example, this denominational ethnic organization began its own efforts to assist in the processing of refugees in the DP's camps in Germany and Austria. In total, from 1945 until the end of 1950, approximately thirty thousand Germans (Volksdeutsche as well as Reichsdeutsche) came to Canada, second only to that of Poles as the largest non-British immigrant group to enter the country. This is quite significant given that Canada remained in a formal state of war with Germany until July 1951. Meanwhile, on the diplomatic front, with the establishment of the Federal Republic of Germany in August 1949, Escott Reid and Arnold Heeney suggested to Pearson that maintaining immigration restrictions against Germans given the new political situation was poor policy, and would cause

⁷⁴ See Sauer, "A Matter of Domestic Policy?" 240-41.

⁷⁵ See Sauer, "A Matter of Domestic Policy?" 243-44, 246. As Sauer demonstrates, the relationship between the CCCRR and the government was both an interesting and a unique one. By encouraging the CCCRR to undertake immigration initiatives the government avoided having to initiate its own program and hence placing itself in a precarious position with IRO officials. This way an effective solution was found to help clear the massive backlog of refugee applications which were stymieing processing efforts. An added benefit, the Director of the Immigration was well aware, was that the CCCRR's programs would 'help things along' at no cost to the government since it would use its 'own facilities, personnel and funds.' By 1948, however, because of the sheer scale of their operations, the CCCRR began to receive government financing receiving a grant of \$100,000 for its 1948 operations. It is interesting to note, however, how immigration, a responsibility for which the government traditionally held sole responsibility, was now delegated, as a matter of political expediency, to a private organization.

more harm than good.⁷⁶

On the bureaucratic front, aware that changes to the country's existing immigration policy would only come about gradually given the difficult task of overcoming the resistance put forth by Immigration Branch officials, Louis St. Laurent suggested to his Cabinet colleagues in October 1946 that an agreement reached with the IGCR in support of the Close Relatives Scheme "would have an immediate practical effect on the refugee problem without altering the existing Immigration regulations."⁷⁷ Besides, he added, "until some estimate could be made of the total involved, it would be difficult for the government to make any further commitments for the admission of others, particularly in view of the serious shortage of housing which existed at the present time." Nevertheless, External's priorities were made clear: "The problem would," St. Laurent added, "be considered again by the government at a later date."⁷⁸ Although the department appreciated the need to balance its foreign policy interests with domestic constraints, it remained determined, one way or the other, to have its position adopted.

In February 1947, two immigration officers reached Germany to establish the centers where officials of the IGCR were to bring sponsored refugees for inspection.⁷⁹ By mid-March nearly 1000 applications had been approved by the Immigration Branch and sent on to IGCR

⁷⁶ DEA, vol. 3688, file 5475-I-40-7, Reid/Hcency memorandum to Pearson, 'Policy Regarding the West German State,' July 22, 1949. As cited in "A Matter of Domestic Policy?" 261.

⁷⁷ DCER 12, (1946), 1026, Memorandum from the SSEA to Cabinet, October 12, 1946.

⁷⁸ DCER 12, (1946), 1027, Extract from Cabinet Conclusions, October 15, 1946.

⁷⁹ Canada was the first country to send an official mission to Germany to arrange for the immigration of refugees. See Holborn, *The International Refugee Organization*, 397.

officials so that the appropriate refugees could be located.⁸⁰ The first group of fifty refugees from camps in the British zone of Germany sailed for Canada on April 4, 1947, and landed in Halifax in mid-April 1947, the first of tens of thousands who would eventually settle in Canada.⁸¹

Another major immigration programme involving refugees began to get underway in mid-December 1946. As a result of the severe labour shortages in several key sectors of the economy, representatives of industry, the Department of Labour and the Immigration Branch began a series of discussions and negotiations to evaluate the prospects of bringing refugees to Canada as labourers. After all, Labour Department officials as well as other government officials had been approached as early as late December 1945 by transportation company officials—who already had immigration agents present in Europe—informing them that suitable good quality workers were readily available in the DP camps.⁸² A sponsored bulk-labour scheme officially known as the Group Movement Plan was therefore arranged, whereby when immigration processing activities began in the spring of 1947 suitable labourers as well as the relatives of Canadian citizens began to be screened for immigration into the country.⁸³ Six processing teams, 4 based in Germany and 2 in Austria, with their headquarters at Karlsruhe, Germany (in the American zone of occupation),

⁸⁰ IB, vol. 443, file 673931, Director's file, March 20, 1947.

⁸¹ Dirks, *Canada's Refugee Policy*, 146. By March 15, 1948, there had been 27,890 applications made for relatives of which 21,743 were approved, resulting in 4,473 arrivals in Canada. See the *Canada Yearbook*, (1948-49), 174.

⁸² See *DCER* 10 (1945), 1265, Pearson to Robertson, December 4, 1945. Aware of his sympathy towards immigrants and refugees, officials of the C.P.R.'s Colonization and Public Relations Department approached Ambassador Pearson in Washington on the same issue in December 1945.

⁸³ Writing at the time, the Minister responsible for the plan admitted that "The government's decision, while based in part on altruistic motives, was based also on the determination that the movement of Displaced Persons should constitute a real contribution toward the development of Canada." See Hugh Keenleyside, "Canadian Immigration Policy and its Administration." *External Affairs*. I (May 1949), 9.

operated in the DP camps selecting immigrants on the basis of skills and aptitudes. In all, three Orders-in-Council were passed to accommodate the Group Movement Plan, P.C. 2180 of June 6, 1947,⁸⁴ P.C. 2856 of July 12, 1947, and P.C. 3926 of October 1, 1947.⁸⁵ Of these arrivals 3,599 went to lumber companies, 535 were employed in construction work for railway and hydro-electric projects, 200 went to textile mills, 200 were employed in foundry and steel works, 778 were employed by mining companies, 1,671 worked as domestics in hospitals and in private homes, while 641 individuals, who brought 459 dependants with them, were employed by various garment companies. In total, between 1946 and 1948, approximately 20,000 persons were admitted under this programme.⁸⁶

The government's initiative, however, was not without its critics. According to the regulations of the Immigration Branch, those refugees who had agreed to come to Canada had done so under the agreement that they would work for fixed wages for a predetermined amount of time.⁸⁷ The most severe critics charged that such arrangements amounted to little more than a

⁸⁴ Upon announcing this Order-in-Council, the acting minister responsible for immigration explained the decision to the House of Commons. "...[these applicants] need not be relatives of residents of Canada. The new order is designed as a further Canadian contribution to the solution of the general problem of the displaced persons.... We had hoped and expected that more rapid action would have been possible in connection with the organization of the I.R.O. and that this would have facilitated the early conclusion of an agreement on the disposal of the displaced persons... We do believe... that it [this Canadian initiative] is a contribution to the solution of this very grave problem and is a recognition of our moral obligation to contribute to a solution." See House of Commons, *Debates*, vol. III, (1947), 3916.

⁸⁵ P.C. 2180 of June 6, 1947, permitted the entry of 5,000 DPs. P.C. 2856 of July 18, 1947, permitted 5,000 additional entries, while P.C. 3926 of October 1, 1947 permitted 10,000 more arrivals. By the end of 1947, in conjunction with the Close Relatives Scheme and regular immigration regulations, a total of 66,990 immigrants had entered the country. By the end of the following year 79,194 refugees had entered Canada. See *Report of the Department of Mines and Resources, Year Ending March 31, 1948*. (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1948), 223, 237.

⁸⁶ The sponsored labour scheme lasted from June 1947 until October 1951.

⁸⁷ The Immigration Branch in consultation with the Department of Labour determined the terms of the contract between the employer and employees. This included calculating the agreed upon rate of pay, itemization of deductions to cover the transportation expenses, type of accommodation in Canada as well as medical and other insurance. See "Migration," *International Labour Review*, 59, 4 (April 1949): 436, as cited in Dirks, *Canada's Refugee Policy*, 152.

policy reminiscent of sixteenth century indentured labour.⁸⁸ The case of a group of 100 single refugee women brought to Canada to work in a small textile mill in Quebec is one which caused considerable uproar in both parliament and the press.⁸⁹ The Toronto *Globe and Mail* which had arguably been the most outspoken critic of all English-language newspapers of the government's immigration initiatives blasted the government, stating, "Instead of a bold large scale plan for bringing in immigrants, the government offers paltry schemes allowing employers to recruit labour on a plan of semi-servitude utterly at variance with Canadian notions of human rights and freedom."⁹⁰ Similarly, yet less harshly, the *Winnipeg Free Press* urged the government to take further action, calling for additional large-scale immigration initiatives. Its June 18, 1947 editorial declared that, "The government has been much too cautious in accepting immigrants. This country needs all the willing hands it can muster. The human misery in Europe resulting from the war affords us a magnificent opportunity, not only to serve the cause of humanity, but to serve ourselves."⁹¹

Other pressures at this time also had a bearing on the immigration issue. For instance, in the House of Commons, the CCF expressed its concerns about the government's immigration initiatives. Clarence Gillis, the MP for Cape-Breton South, stated that "While we are in accord,

⁸⁸ The Department of Labour, however, attempted to ensure that the DPs worked in conditions comparable to those of Canadian workers. The Department also ensured that contracts stipulated that DPs receive the same rate of pay accorded to native-born Canadians doing similar work. See House of Commons, *Debates*, vol III (1948), 5824, 5859.

⁸⁹ See the May 28, 1947 editorial in the *Globe and Mail*, as well as the editorial in the *Winnipeg Free Press* on June 6, 1947. For further elaboration see the House of Commons *Debates* vol. IV (1947), 3668-3706.

⁹⁰ See the *Globe and Mail*, May 28, 1947. Its May 31, editorial further argued that the government was treating the DPs as an economic commodity rather than as people requiring humanitarian programs. See *Globe and Mail*, May 31, 1947.

⁹¹ *Free Press*, June 18, 1947.

from the humanitarian point of view with giving sanctuary in this country to displaced persons, at the same time our first obligation is to see that our own people are taken care of. There is a feeling growing up in the mining, lumbering and railway industries that these people are being used to displace Canadians.”⁹² On the international front, even the Director-General of the IRO expressed strong opposition to the kind of labour scheme that Canada had adopted. Speaking at the sixth meeting of the General Council of the IRO, he charged that such initiatives looked “upon the refugees as just so much labour fodder, ignoring the human element, and taking an extremely short term view of the consequences of their current policies.”⁹³

In general, the Close Relatives Scheme and Group Movement Plan were intended by the government to alleviate many of the increasing demands from both home and abroad. More specifically, they were intended to placate the concerns of distressed families as well as supply industry with much needed labour, with the added benefit of assisting in the international efforts to help resolve the European refugee crisis. Yet ultimately, as many External Affairs officials knew only too well, the two programs did not constitute a new or improved postwar immigration policy.

In January 1947, the Interdepartmental Committee on Immigration met again to discuss the progress of the long-term policy reviews underway by members of the various participating departments. Following a Cabinet meeting discussing immigration policy on January 23, the Prime Minister noted in his diary that approval was given to the principles regarding admission of labourers for primary industries, which, he believed, “is a needed opening of the immigration

⁹² House of Commons, *Debates*, vol. III, (1948), 5777.

⁹³ *New York Times*, May 5, 1948, cited in House of Commons, *Debates*, vol. III (1948), 4570.

door; also some further latitude where relatives are prepared to look after those admitted.” He suggested that the discussion was “very interesting and many sided. Council agreed that no immediate opening of doors should be decided upon as transportation is not available, nor is housing available, but all were agreed that in the long range view Canada would certainly need to have a large population if she hoped to hold the country for herself against the ambitions of other countries and to hold her strength.”⁹⁴ On February 12, External Affairs presented its review to the committee. The department urged the government to do as much as was feasible to help resettle the European refugees and thereby contribute to resolving the crisis. The report prepared by H.H. Carter of the Second Political Division stated:

It is apparent that the problem of these nearly one million persons in the D.P. camps of Europe can only be solved through re-settlement in countries who are willing and capable of receiving them as immigrants. Only a fraction of these people will accept repatriation and their prolonged stay in the D.P. camps will merely further demoralize them. Canada’s interest in this problem derives, therefore both from our position as a logical country of reception rather than from our membership in various international bodies operating in this field....One further factor, of course, is that there is a great difference in the quality of D.P.’s themselves as prospective immigrants...it...[is]... imperative to act quickly in order to meet competition from other countries of reception. Consistent with our internal housing conditions and other such limiting factors, it seems essential therefore that Canada should take the earliest possible action in this field, both for obvious humanitarian reasons, and in order to obtain the best potential immigrants for assimilation as future Canadians.⁹⁵

The next day, according to King, the Cabinet had “a rather long and desultory discussion on immigration problems. A good deal of confusion in the minds of all of us as to where to draw the line and how to draw it in the matter of discrimination between different races and peoples

⁹⁴ J.W. Pickersgill and D.F. Forster. *The Mackenzie King Record. Vol 4: 1947-1948.* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1970). 33.

⁹⁵ See DEA, vol. 3673, file, 5127-EA-40-9, Extract from Memorandum by Second Political Division, “International Obligations Arising from the Refugee Problem.” February 12, 1947. The Department of Labour also submitted its review at this time, suggesting that mass immigration of non-English-speaking immigrants was still not advisable, and further, that the absorptive capacity of the economy hovered around 50,000 immigrants per year.

who wish to come to Canada. There should be no exclusion of any particular race...but a country should surely have a right to determine what strains of blood it wishes to have in its population and how its people coming from outside have to be selected.”⁹⁶ Subsequently, the Cabinet requested the Interdepartmental Committee prepare a draft policy statement on immigration based on all of the reviews conducted on the subject.

Within a few weeks, the Interdepartmental Committee completed the draft policy statement, after which it received the attention of the ministers of those departments participating in the review. It was then, on March 17, that the Cabinet discussed the proposed new immigration policy. “Glen,” the Prime Minister wrote, “had been very secretive about what is to be said on that question and has evidently been planning to make a speech on his own and fight the measure through. I told Cabinet I thought it was perhaps as important as any measure we would have at this session.” Demonstrating his preoccupation with domestic issues, the Prime Minister added further, “It was one over which we are likely to get into difficulty with our own people more readily than any other.” King went on to add,

Fortunately St. Laurent came in while we were discussing the matter and in the course of the discussion said he thought the statement should be made by the P.M. before any debate took place at all. I knew he had in mind the feeling which a lot of our own men have against Glen and the difficulties he will have in piloting the measure. I said I did not mind making the statement if it were carefully prepared in advance but that I could not do more than that. I was not in shape to enter into a debate. I agreed it would be wise to have a general statement made in the light of the world situation. It was then decided that the Cabinet Committee would get together at once and try to have matters definitely framed up. Would have some of the officials assist.⁹⁷

The Prime Minister was still working on the policy statement on May 1, the day it was to be

⁹⁶ *The Mackenzie King Record*. vol. 4, 33.

⁹⁷ *The Mackenzie King Record*. vol. 4, 34.

delivered. The statement was finally approved by the Cabinet that afternoon and shortly after 3.00 pm the Prime Minister read it in the House. As he recorded in his diary, the Prime Minister felt the message was

well received by the Members. Had I given them time, they would have applauded more between paragraphs. I could see the Conservatives were much more interested in what I was saying about getting population; also that other people were greatly pleased at the definite statement about there being no fundamental right which caused us to admit people that we did not think could be assimilated and which would change the composition of our country....Of all the problems ahead of us, at the moment, [immigration question] it is about the thorniest....I am glad that it has now been made.⁹⁸

Order-in-Council P.C. 1628 of April 22, 1948 further increased the number of refugees granted permission to enter the country by 10,000, while P.C. 4079 of October 1, 1948, added another 10,000. This latter Order-in-Council applied to displaced persons residing outside of the camps and to those refugees who had fled from Czechoslovakia following the Soviet backed coup d'état of February 1948. P.C. 4079 came about largely as a result of the urging of Hugh Keenleyside who believed that Canada should allow as many Czech refugees as possible to enter the country.⁹⁹

From this point on, Cold War politics and issues increasingly came to play an influential role in immigration matters. As Keenleyside recalled in his memoirs, the Department of Labour "was at first officially hesitant and unofficially critical" of the prospect of Czechoslovak refugees

⁹⁸ *The Mackenzie King Record*, vol. 4, 34, 36.

⁹⁹ Keenleyside, *On the Bridge of Time*, vol. 2, 304. Keenleyside's interest in gaining as many refugees as possible deepened when, during the summer of 1948, with the United States entering into the refugee assistance arena, fewer displaced persons were demonstrating interest in emigrating to Canada. According to Keenleyside, "The entry of the United States into the field of D.P. immigration will inevitably have a serious effect upon Canadian activities in that area. There is no doubt that for most D.P.s the United States is still the promised land and Canada only a second choice." See DEA, vol. 3673, file, 5127-40-11, August 14, 1948.

being admitted to the country. For example, on June 8, the Minister, Humphrey Mitchell, wrote to St. Laurent, "advising delay and expressing doubts about the practicality of finding places in Canada for 'white-collar workers, civil servants, teachers and the like.'" "Fortunately," wrote Keenleyside, St. Laurent "came down strongly on the side of humanity—and common sense." The soon to be Prime Minister believed that if the Czechs, "were to come to Canada, the sooner they were admitted the better: it would be unfair to these unfortunate people who had already suffered so much for their democratic beliefs to have to remain in the refugee camps a day longer than necessary." Espousing the country's new foreign policy orientation, St. Laurent believed "The increasing threat from the rising tide of totalitarian communism also had to be considered. He believed that these people had demonstrated that they were free men in the fight against communism. A generous attitude toward their admission to Canada might have quite important international political consequences in the Cold War, particularly if the gesture were made quickly."¹⁰⁰

St. Laurent's response clearly demonstrates the rapid evolution of Canadian policy. This is remarkable, because at the end of 1946 Canadian immigration authorities still sought to thwart efforts to accept European refugees. Less than a year and a half later, tens of thousands of refugees were admitted in 1948 alone.¹⁰¹

Altogether, by the end of IRO operations in 1951, Canada had accepted 123,479 refugees. Sixty per cent of these had entered the country under the Group Movement Plan while 40 per cent

¹⁰⁰ Keenleyside, *On the Bridge of Time*, vol. 2, 305.

¹⁰¹ *Annual Report of the Department of Mines and Resources, Year Ending March 31, 1949*. (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1949), 223.

entered under the Close Relatives Plan. In comparison, of all of the 1,039,150 persons resettled by the IRO between mid-1947 and the end of 1951, the United States, under its Displaced Persons Act of 1948, received 329,000, Australia took 182,000, and the new State of Israel took 132,000.¹⁰² International resolve, it was clear, was not only convenient, but was also the only feasible means of alleviating such a large humanitarian crisis.¹⁰³

In the early postwar era, despite the best and concerted efforts of the Department of External Affairs, foreign policy issues and concerns remained, for the most part, overshadowed by the bureaucratic inertia of the Immigration Branch, which resisted changes to the country's immigration laws. Despite the very real dangers to Canadian interests resulting from the European refugee crisis, domestic constraints continued to dominate Canadian immigration policy. The story is, however, one of evolution. Through various piece-meal initiatives governed by the discretionary legislative authority available under Canadian law, by late 1948 Canadian immigration policy had finally been given some "substance."¹⁰⁴

The views of External Affairs' Norman Robertson most appropriately describe Canada's post-war immigration record at the time. In a personal letter to Lester Pearson in late January 1948, in which he reflected upon the country's various immigration initiatives since the entry of

¹⁰² Marrus, *The Unwanted*, 344.

¹⁰³ Indeed, in a retrospective article on the period, Louise Holborn suggested that "In a time when humanitarian issues awakened sharper reactions than in the interwar period, there was an awareness that co-ordination in international action through intergovernmental organizations could do a good deal to shift responsibility, and perhaps even sharp criticism from national administrations....there is also a greater appreciation of how much more efficient it is to operate on an international scale than through purely national efforts." See her "International Organization and the Migration of European Nationals," *International Journal*, 20, 3 (Summer 1965), 348.

¹⁰⁴ See George Rawlyk, "Canada's Immigration Policy, 1945-1962," *Dalhousie Review* 42, 3 (Autumn 1962), 291. That form and substance, it was clear, would remain closely tied to the demands of the national economy

the 4,000 Polish veterans, Robertson believed that Canada's approach to refugee problems was, in general, both "respectable" and "defensible." He was of the opinion that Canada's program, "If followed by other receiving countries in proportion to their capacity to absorb immigrants, will go a long way towards solving the general problem." However, Robertson, who "had a fatherly interest" in Canada's immigration initiatives, also recognized that the country had, "chiefly for domestic political reasons," let far too many bureaucratic obstacles prevent the undertaking of further, more expansive immigration initiatives.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁵ See IB, vol. 648, file A8545, pt.4, Robertson to Pearson, January 26, 1948.

CONCLUSION

Canada's reaction to the European refugee crisis from 1945 to 1948 clearly demonstrates the interrelatedness of immigration and foreign policy during this period. At the time, an intricate balance of domestic and international elements determined the nature and evolution of Canadian postwar immigration policy. However, despite the success of the country's foreign service officers in helping to introduce broader international issues into the national debate on immigration, the formulation and administration of Canada's immigration policy in the immediate postwar years was dominated by a preoccupation with the national economy as well as by the constraints of domestic politics and bureaucratic inertia. Nevertheless, the international element remained an important and influential factor since it was the international context which helped to accelerate the determination of a new Canadian immigration policy. Had the severity of the European refugee situation not existed, it is doubtful whether Canada would have implemented a new immigration policy before late 1948 or early 1949. Moreover, without the escalating tensions of the Cold War, it is likely that sufficient excuses would have been found to continue to delay the announcement of a new policy until the consequences associated with implementing it posed as few political risks and liabilities as possible for the Canadian government.

Contemporary accounts by government officials of Canada's reaction to the European refugee crisis, as well as later recollections of these events recounted in memoirs, depict a Canadian immigration policy that was both appropriate and generous given the prevailing circumstances of the time.¹ The truth is, however, that Canada's immigration policy at the time

¹ See Keenleyside, *On the Bridge of Time*, vol. 2, 300. Also see his "Canadian Immigration Policy and its Administration," *External Affairs*, I (May 1949), 7. The work of John Holmes is perhaps, the most notable exception. See his *Shaping of the Peace*, vol. 1, 100.

was not especially generous. Rather, the country's response was calculating and predicated primarily upon considerations of self-interest. Politicians and government officials certainly spoke of the humanitarian nature of the crisis and Canada's responsibility to the suffering and homeless of Europe, but the country's actions frequently failed to correspond with its lofty rhetoric.

Time and again External Affairs officials reminded the government of its responsibilities to its allies, to helping ensure the stability of the international order and to help end the suffering in Europe. As Norman Robertson acknowledged, Canada did play a part in helping to relieve the refugee crisis. However, given the magnitude of the crisis and the very real threat it posed to the stability of the international order, the government should have responded with less trepidation and with far more initiative than it did. Granted there were, as demonstrated, legitimate concerns with which the government had to contend. It was these concerns, there can be no doubt, which caused the Canadian government to procrastinate. Yet while it is true that a lack of transportation facilities and other obstacles² confronted Canadian officials, political will alone could have surmounted these problems. For example, although difficult, sufficient transport for the government's various immigration initiatives could have been found if it was truly desired.³ Indeed, by late 1947, when the government finally sought to bring substantial numbers of immigrants to the country, transport for them was readily obtained.⁴

² As John Holmes rightly acknowledged, it was to these "legitimate excuses" that government officials "always paid the greatest attention." See *Shaping of the Peace*, vol. 1, 100.

³ See DEA, vol. 4164, file 939-EA-40-2, Keenleyside to Pearson, April 23, 1947; TB, vol. 443, file 673931, pt. 11, Pearson to Robertson, June 4, 1946, as well as DEA, vol. 3673, file 5127-EA-40-9, Internal Memorandum, March 3, 1947.

⁴ In December 1947, the transport *SS Huascarán* (which Canada had received from Germany for war reparations), was renamed the *Beaverbrae*, refitted to accommodate passenger shipping, and joined the *Aquitania* in the Atlantic service throughout 1948 and 1949 under the operation of the CPR. A fourth ship was added to the North Atlantic Service shortly thereafter in February 1948. Furthermore, three U.S. transport ships were also chartered to

The myriad circumstances which culminated in the postwar European refugee crisis were exceptional. Rectifying this situation, therefore, demanded an exceptional response from the international community. Given Canada's staunch commitment to international affairs and multilateral cooperation in the postwar era, the country's somewhat lackadaisical response is disappointing. Canada did not live up to the expectations of those international officials whose responsibility it was to remedy the situation. Given the horrors of the war, as well as the suffering and the substantial threat that the crisis posed to international order and stability, it is clear that Canada did not act 'to the very limits of its strength.'⁵

provide adequate transportation for the first DPs to arrive under the auspices of the IRO. Despite the enormous and normally prohibitive cost, to further alleviate the transportation problem, (and to meet the demands for labour at home), in April 1948, the government took an exceptional step in announcing that arrangements had been completed for the biggest air migration in history. Trans Canada Air Lines was chartered to fly 10,000 Britons to Canada, 40 at a time, in 260 flights between May 1, 1948 and March 31, 1949. See *The Canada Year Book 1948-49*, 173.

⁵ See Pearson's speech before the Third session of UNRRA in August 1945, as cited in Armstrong-Reid, "Canada's Role in the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration 1942-1947," 310.

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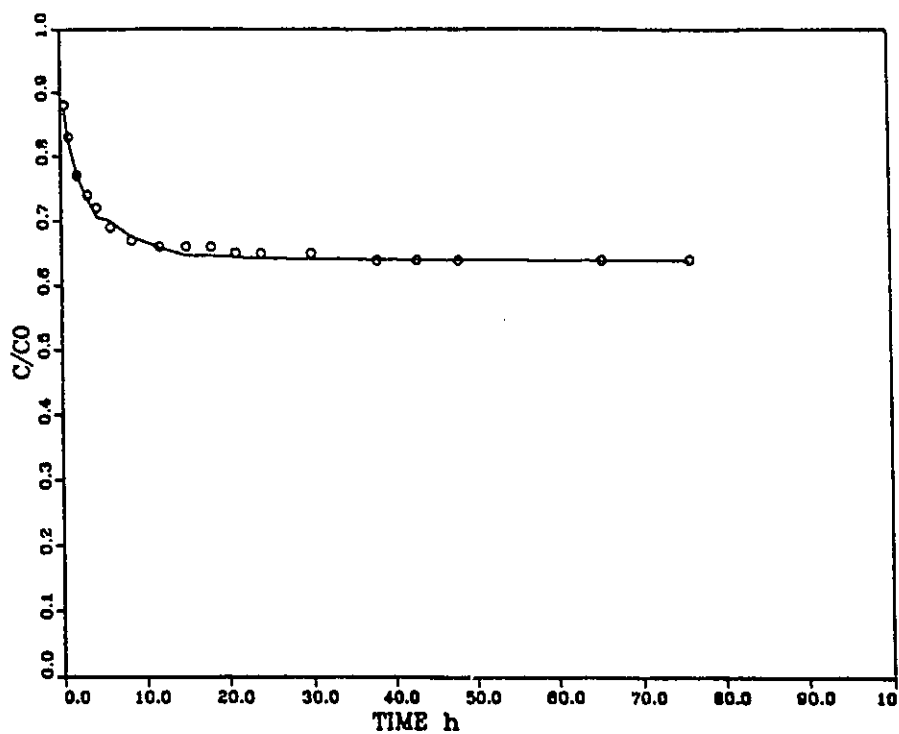
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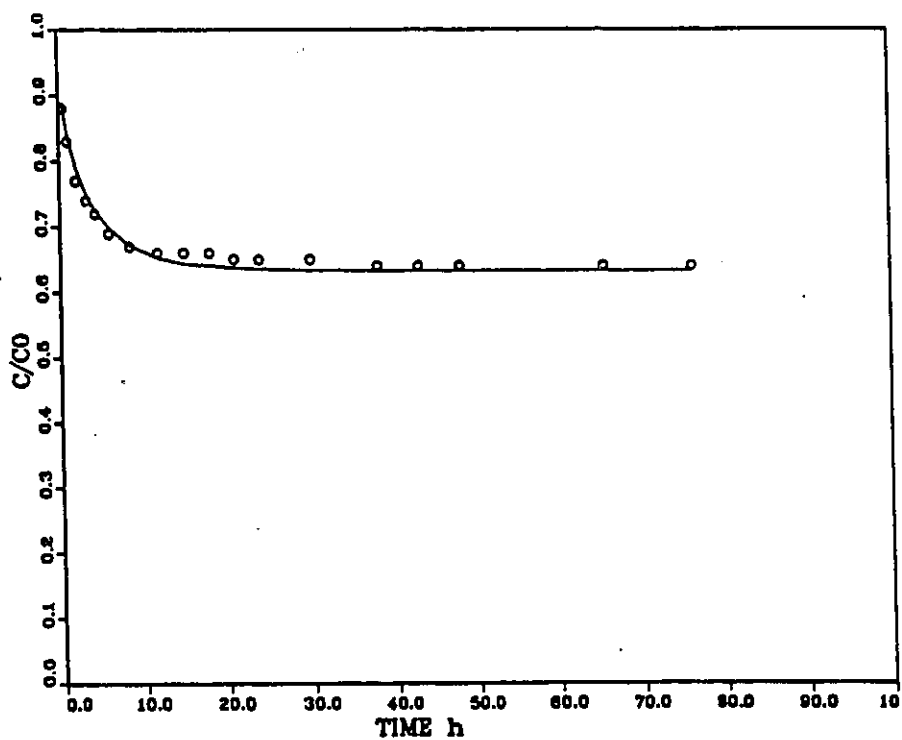
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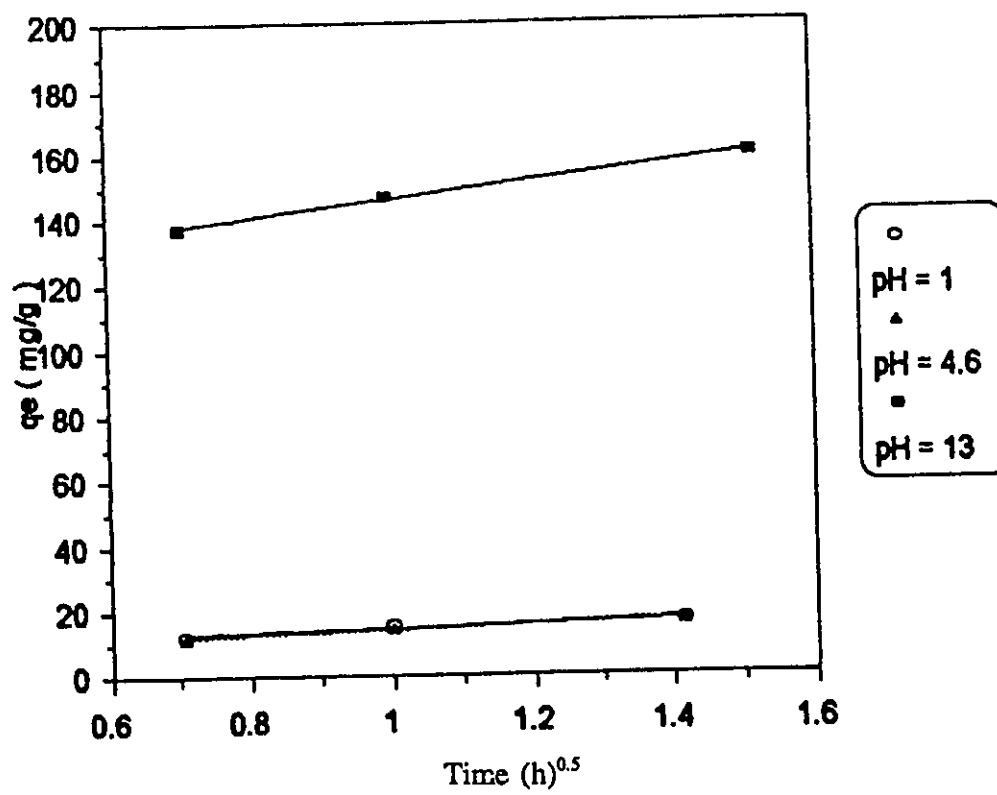


2NP adsorption kinetics on WV-B at pH 13 by
the HSSD model



2NP adsorption kinetics on WV-B at pH 13 by the
Peel's dual rate model model

APPENDIX H



Initial desorption rate of 2NP from WV-B

Effect of PH on Isotherms of 2-nitrophenol on carbon F400

Co = 500 mg / l

#	Ce(mg)	V (l)	B.A.C.	pH=1 qe(mg/g)	pH=4.6 qe(mg/g)	pH=13 qe(mg/g)
1	5	0.518	1.5	170.94		
2	8	0.535	1.2	219.35		
3	9	0.528	1.2	216.04		
4	15	0.477	1	231.345		
5	21	0.478	0.9	253.3378		
6	24	0.477	0.8	283.815		
7	37	0.477	0.7	315.5014		
8	74	0.536	0.6	380.56		
9	98	0.474	0.5	381.096		
10	155	0.534	0.4	460.575		
12	220	0.534	0.3	498.4		
11	283	0.478	0.2	518.63		
13	283	0.474	0.2	514.29		
14	400	0.536	0.1	536		
20	2	0.536	1.5		177.952	
21	3	0.475	1.2		196.7292	
22	3	0.478	1.2		197.9717	
23	7	0.475	1		234.175	
24	17	0.535	0.9		287.1167	
25	26	0.538	0.8		318.765	
26	36	0.534	0.7		353.9657	
27	40	0.473	0.6		362.6333	
28	85	0.518	0.5		420.94	
29	120	0.476	0.4		452.2	
30	180	0.479	0.3		510.9333	
31	275	0.474	0.2		533.25	
33	275	0.475	0.2		534.375	
32	385	0.478	0.1		549.7	
15	170	0.475	1.5			104.5
16	230	0.518	1.2			116.55
17	237	0.536	1.2			117.4733
18	270	0.519	1			119.37
19	295	0.535	0.9			121.8611
39	310	0.518	0.8			123.025
40	335	0.535	0.7			126.1071
41	350	0.518	0.6			129.5
42	377	0.538	0.5			132.348
43	400	0.533	0.4			133.25
44	415	0.478	0.3			135.4333
45	442	0.477	0.2			138.33
46	442	0.477	0.2			138.33
47	470	0.475	0.1			142.5