305.8924071
R7631c
1977
v.9

CLOUDS IN THE THIRTIES

On Anti-Semitism In Canada 1929 - 1939

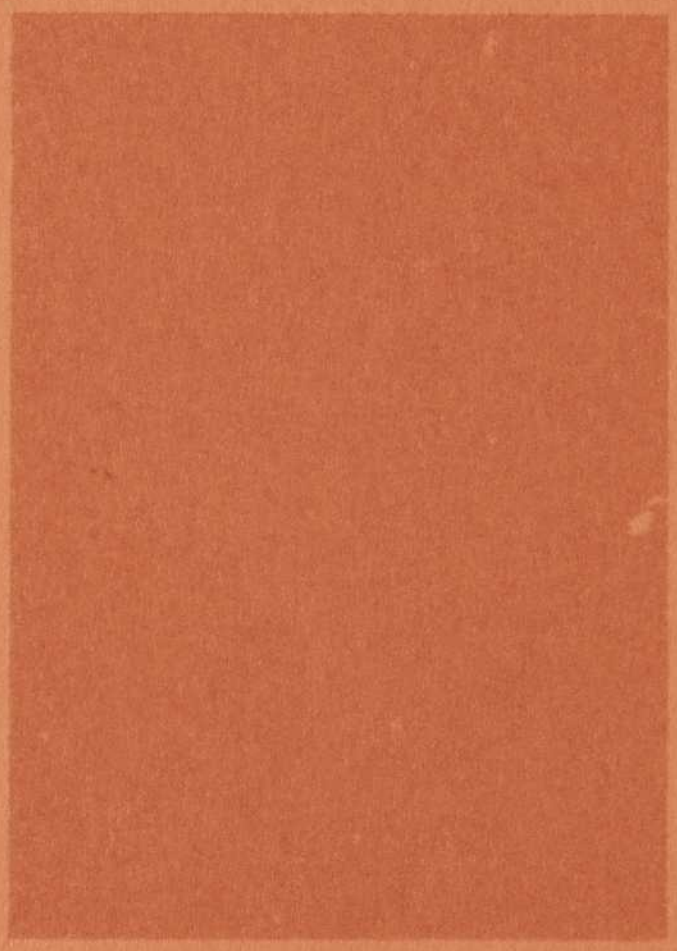
A Chapter on Canadian Jewish History

By
David Rome

Section 9

NATIONAL ARCHIVES
CANADIAN JEWISH CONGRESS

Montreal, 1979



CLOUDS IN THE THIRTIES

On Anti-Semitism In Canada 1929 - 1939

A Chapter in Canadian Jewish History

By

David Rome

Number 9

NATIONAL ARCHIVES
CANADIAN JEWISH CONGRESS

Montreal 1977

0810018

D8100489

CLOUDS IN THE THIRTIES

On Anti-Semitism In Canada 1929 - 1939

A Chapter on Canadian Jewish History

By
David Rome

Section 9

NATIONAL ARCHIVES
CANADIAN JEWISH CONGRESS

Montreal, 1979

DS
146
C3R6
v.9 fs

CONTENTS

REFUGEES KEEP OUT

Agreement with the Railroads — Page 251

- Railways Select Immigrants — 251
- Non-Preferred Countries — 252
- Exiled to China — 257
- Jews Least Preferred — 259
- "Constant Hammering" by Jews — 262

Special Permits — 265

- Mackenzie King Informed — 267
- No Wrongdoing — 269
- The Sponsors of 1928 — 270
- Critic Coldwell — 272
- McMurray of Winnipeg — 276
- "Canada allows only Christians" — 277

Compassion — 279

- Orphans from the Ukraine — 280
- Hershman in the Field — 281
- Consolation Sabbath at Quebec — 282

Fleeing Stalin — 284

- Jewish Colonization Association — 285
- Lyon Cohen's Letter — 286
- Tears in the Minister's Office — 288
- "Such a Rotten Lot" — 293
- Damaging Despatch in Yiddish Paper — 295
- "An Explorer...What's his Name?" — 299
- History as Conspiracy — 300
- Denikin Veteran at Telegram — 301

Thank You 305

Lost Boryslaw 305
Peretz Hershbein 305C
Falk Zolf 306
Jacob Zipper 308
Saturday Night 309
In Poetry 309A

Paul Trepman Tells 310

Racism 314

Assimilation of Races 314
Jews are Immoral 315
Danger to Institutions 316
Climatic Unsuitability 319
Racism while at War with Racism 322
Jews are Illiterate 323
Against Blacks 324
For International Labor Office 327

In the House of Commons - S.W. Jacobs 331

Vineberg Testimony 331
Louis Bloomfield 335
Winnipeg Condition 336
"Immigration Policy Vital" 338
Miss Macphail and Inferior Races 344
Grotesque Orders-in-Council 346
Jesus would be Barred 353
Discourtesies 354
Mass of Contradictions 357
J.S. Woodsworth 359

Hitler in Power 362

Conference on Rescue 363
Vote against a Hope 365
Pearson's Criticism 367
King's Dear Diary 368
Anatole Vanier 369
Devoir from Brussels 372
Action Catholique 374
French Canada 377
Claude Hurtubise 383
Montreal's City Council 384

THE AGREEMENT WITH THE RAILWAYS

As Deputy Minister W.J. Egan explained to the Permanent Committee on Agriculture and Colonization (Appendix 8 to the Minutes of the Proceedings, Testimony and Report on its study of the Immigration Act and its regulations and the work of the Department of Immigration and Colonization, session 1928), contracts are entered into each year with the Canadian railroads whereby these companies recruit, transport and place in Canada farming families, farm workers and domestics from Europe. On the date of this report, the contract covered operations in Poland, Czechoslovakia, Austria, Hungary, Yugoslavia, Latvia, Rumania, Danzig, Lithuania, Spain and Russia. Germany had withdrawn from the program.

According to this contract, the companies placed special salaried representatives in these European countries who had no special interest in the sale of tickets and were not ticket agents and who were well informed on the Canadian condition, particularly on the lands where these immigrants would be placed; for these men were in fact selecting the immigrants. At first the immigration officers simply accepted the people they chose. Of the 30,000 persons whom they approved in one year, Canada's officials rejected only 132.

In effect, the railway companies were the department's agents overseas; as national companies they were expected to cooperate. Their offices had long been established on the continent, and out of necessity, as Canadian national institutions, they had to act conscientiously and seriously and never to lose sight of the need to ensure the nation's interests as well as those of the immigrant, Mr. Egan said..

For an understanding of its discriminatory nature, and for a measure of its effect upon the tragic fate of Jewry prophetically seeking to foil the doom coming upon it, we need to know the subtler working of the agreement between the legislative government and the executive civil service.

In 1923, the Canadian government entered into an agreement with the two Canadian railway companies whereby they were allowed to choose and bring into Canada as many immigrants from the non-preferred countries as they believed could be absorbed by the country. Although these non-preferred immigrants were supposed to engage solely in farming and domestic service upon arrival in Canada, no guarantees were enforced upon the railway companies. One restriction was imposed, however, upon the Canadian railway companies' immigration activities in the non-preferred countries, which was kept confidential. It obligated the railway companies not to accept and bring to Canada Jewish immigrants from non-preferred countries on the same basis as non-Jewish immigrants from those countries. They could accept only those Jewish immigrants from non-preferred countries who could produce a special permit or "letter of admission" issued to them by the Department of Immigration, in addition to a valid passport visa of a Canadian consul or immigration official stationed in Europe.

As Rosenberg reported to the Canadian Jewish Congress, "There is considerable disparity between the principles allegedly governing immigration to Canada as outlined in the Immigration Act, and the actual immigration policy of the Dominion government as practised since 1918.

"The phraseology of some of the clauses of the Act would give the impression that the main limiting factors, as applied to immigration to Canada, are physical and moral fitness, close relationship to persons already resident in Canada, and former and intended occupation of immigrant.

"With the exception of the regulations concerning the immigration of Chinese and Japanese, there is nothing in the Immigration Act or in the orders-in-council concerning Canadian immigration which authorized the introduction of the factors of racial origin or religion as influencing the admission or exclusion of immigrants to Canada...

"Jewish immigrants then came within this third, largest special category even though they may have been born in a 'preferred country' such as Germany, Belgium or Switzerland, or are citizens of these countries. They did not qualify for inclusion even in the second or 'non-preferred' category, although they may have been born in Poland or Rumania, and were able to prove that they always have been farmers and are going to engage in farming in Canada.

"In order to bridge the discrepancy between the de jure immigration regulations as evidenced by the clauses of the Immigration Act and published orders-in-council issued in connection therewith on the one hand, and the de facto regulations which have actually governed immigration to Canada since 1923, I visited Ottawa. Upon making inquiries, I was informed that there was not and had never been any setting up 'preferred', 'non-preferred' and 'special' categories of immigrants.

"It appeared therefore that such statement of policy and regulations were either a 'gentleman's agreement' not reduced to writing, or administrative regulations of the Department or in 'letters of direction' submitted by the Department to its officials in Europe.

"However, newspaper reports of the Select Standing Committee on Agriculture and Colonization of the House of Commons in the spring of 1928, mentioned that the Railways Agreement had been investigated by that Committee, which had subsequently published a report of the evidence submitted before it.

"A situation was created and still exists whereby impartial rule of law was replaced by discriminatory and prejudicial rule by confidential administrative regulations insofar as immigration to Canada was concerned." (memorandum to Saul Hayes)

In his address in Regina which caused much consternation in Ottawa, J. Coldwell, then alderman, said,

"This should be said for the present minister of immigration that, aware of this particular fact, it was thought advisable to have a straight agreement with the railways rather than get around this immigration policy in this particular way; so on March 16, 1927, this new agreement was signed which gave the railways a free hand to bring in all the agricultural workers they could obtain from the southern European parts. A railway dumping policy," he asserted, "seemed to be the policy of the department at present. Before this agreement," he said, "the officials were a little too careful for the railways, but this new agreement represented a surrender on the part of the Department of Immigration to the railway companies."

The bulk of the immigration from the Continent after 1925 came in under the railways agreement.

The categorizing of European countries into preferred and unwanted was put into effect, not by order-in-council or by legislation, but by ministerial decision in 1922 when an amendment to the act altered major emphasis in immigrant selection to vocational, especially agricultural aptitude. Preference to the northern countries had been the practice at least since 1910, but in 1922 it became a decisive element. (Testimony, March 21, 1928) At all times the privileged were admitted even if they did not meet the enacted requirements.

This confidential discriminatory and restrictive regulation against Jewish immigrants from non-preferred countries was never submitted to Parliament for approval, nor embodied in a published order-in-council of the Canadian Government. It was nevertheless enforced during the period from 1923 to 1939, and prevented tens of thousands of Jews suffering from political and economic persecution in those countries, and many of whom subsequently perished in gas chambers and concentration camps, from finding refuge and freedom in Canada.

As the deputy minister of immigration told the Standing Committee on Agriculture and Colonization in 1928, the department officials were there in a great measure to prevent illegal entry, rather than to encourage or place immigrants. In 1922 "it was felt (it was never made public that one was called a preferred country and another was called a non-preferred country) -- it was more or less understood between the parties who were interested in the emigration of people from the continent, that particular order in council (which limited immigration)...was more or less inoperative for the time being" for northeastern Europe. "It was with the Canadian interests, the C.N.R. and the C.P.R. that we worked out the proposition termed the non-preferred countries...The agreement allowed the railways to function for government insofar as type was concerned...They, the railways, appointed a man with Canadian experience responsible to the president of his railway for this particular work. So they were the railway selection officers, and having selected a type, they gave him a certificate which up to this year was a warrant without question that this man was of the physical type with a natural farming ability and experience to do farming in this country."

The arrangement was made "with all the national institutions cooperating with us. It was natural -- it is completely understood now, of course -- without any order in council -- without any agreement, but just in a general understanding and in a general way." Outside the law? Yes and no.

The Deputy Minister of Immigration admitted that it was at the request of the Canadian Government that the classification of immigrants into preferred, non-preferred and special permit groups was not incorporated into an official written or printed regulation, but was considered as a gentleman's (?) agreement between the Department of Immigration and the Canadian railway companies, to avoid any possibility of protest by non-preferred country or group against racial discrimination.

On May 18 Mr. Egan testified, "It was considered that the extension of preferred countries, or a designation of preferred countries in Europe by order-in-council -- which would mean discrimination of certain European countries -- would create a hostile feeling towards Canada on the part of the governments and nationals of non-preferred countries from which Canada desires only farmers, farm laborers and household workers."

There appears to be no clarification of the basis of establishing which countries were preferred and which were not. Indeed, there was something arbitrary, for instance, about placing Germany on the preferred list in 1926, after five years on the penitential bench, as Jacobs put it; ditto about keeping Austrians and Rumanians off the list of desirables. No one examined the proportion of potential Jewish immigrants who might thus have been admitted.

In a sharp exchange before the 1928 committee, Jacobs suggested that his work would be easier if these countries were on the list. Mr. Egan, with unusual indiscretion -- because the minister had just ruled that it was beyond his jurisdiction to comment on these questions -- told Jacobs that though it might be easier for the Montreal member, it would be much harder for Canada.

But the nearest to an explanation came from Mr. Egan: There is no system of governmental administration of the people in general below the line of demarcation as there is above it.

The Hon. M. Forke who was present refused to comment and did believe any suggestions should come from the committee.

Out of a reluctance to incorporate the lists of preferred and non-preferred countries into the decisions of the Council, this practice was carried out by ministerial action rather than by orders-in-council. In due course these principles came to be formulated in 1923 in document 183. (May 18, 1928)

Significantly, the removal of the barrier to these four countries was not made by legislation but by vague understanding. As W.J. Egan, Deputy Minister of Immigration, told it to the Select Standing Committee of the House of Commons Agriculture and Immigration on March 8, 1928, after the order-in-council was passed some six years earlier, "in a very short time, through the request of certain interests, it was felt (it was never made public that one was called a preferred country and another was called a non-preferred country) it was more or less understood, between the parties who were interested in the emigration of people from the continent, that that particular order-in-council which required people of the agricultural type only, to come from the continent was more or less inoperative for the time being insofar as Holland, Belgium, France and Switzerland were concerned; also the Scandinavian countries. Within the last year and a half Germany has been brought in.

"Any man coming from these countries may come into the country if he is mentally and physically fit and able to look after himself. We have as near as possible the open door. Below the German line on the continent are what is termed the non-preferred countries...

"Within a few months of my taking charge I recommended to my minister that for the future...that no more would we grant or allot to ocean transportation companies a given quota for a given purpose. From then on, the position was that the allotment would be divided between the two Canadian national interests, the Canadian National and the Canadian Pacific.

"This is the explanation of what was done in connection with Belgium and France and Holland, Switzerland and the Scandinavian countries -- rather than suggest that these countries were named by order-in-council as preferred."

And again, on March 21, "It not having been done by order-in-council, I suppose it was done by order of the Minister of Immigration; it was a practice established by the executive head of the department, the minister.

"This practice of treating certain countries in the northern part of Europe differently from other parts of Europe further south had been in practice all the time, at least since 1910."

Abraham Rhinewine spoke for Toronto Jewry when he condemned the antisemitic workings of the agreement with the railways. (Canadian Jewish Archives, new series, no. 13, P. 162)

When the C.N.R.'s director of colonization and the officers of the Cunard Line seemed to be unclear as to the ban on Jewish admissions, the ministry set them very straight. (Canadian Jewish Archives, new series, no. 13, Pp. 163-65)

One incident very likely concerning individual action within the ministry favorable to Jews was mentioned by Milton Campbell, M.P. at a Regina meeting. He was apparently speaking of Joe Featherstone when he said that he knew of a man, not a member of parliament, who had suddenly been transferred to some other part of the world. He had not received any bribes, but it was evident that he made money by facilitating the entry of persons of a certain race. I believe he is still in the employ of the department, or another ministry, but he is far away in some corner of the earth. (Regina Leader, Nov. 24, 1927)

The Hon. Dr. M. Edwards brought to light his case as that of the official of the department who had shown too great a liberality towards Jewish applicants.

The day after Mr. Egan assumed the deputy ministry, Featherstone was promoted to commissioner of Chinese immigration. Egan insisted that his attitude towards Jews was not connected with the promotion.

But Mr. Egan insisted that there had not been the slightest suggestion of wrongdoing on the part of incorruptible Mr. Featherstone, honest by every account. Nor had he issued any admission permits himself; it was simply that he had encouraged the immigration of a certain number of Jews who might otherwise not have entered Canada. But the promotion came, Mr. Egan insisted, solely because of his special abilities.

Mr. Featherstone passed away soon after his accession to his new post.

The unofficial designation of preferred and other peoples was old, but it became institutionalized by the order of the minister about 1922 when certain immigration restrictions such as financial requirements were dropped by legislative amendment. It moved from a general understanding, to written communication, at least with the Canadian Commissioner overseas, to print in a handbook of instruction in 1926. As one legislator put it, the system was born out of the wish in the mind of the minister. Some members of parliament spoke uncomfortably of an imaginary line and of a line of demarcation. (Permanent Committee on Agriculture and Colonization Report. Minutes of Proceedings, Witnesses and Report, 1928. Appendix 8, Pp. 45-47)

This report contains, in the evidence of Mr. W.J. Egan, then Deputy Minister of Immigration, given under oath and recorded in that printed report, proof that:

The same measure of fitness or qualification for admission to Canada has not been and is not being applied impartially to all European immigrants to Canada.

"Canada's immigration policy has been administered definitely since the close of the first World War on a basis of 'preferred' and 'non-preferred' areas and a group which ranked even below 'non-preferred' races, and that this was made and enforced by the hands of the Department of Immigration and its staff, with the full knowledge and consent of the Minister in charge of the Immigration Department at the time.

"The Department of Immigration discriminates between non-Jewish immigrants from Poland, Austria, Rumania and other eastern European countries, and Jewish immigrants from the same countries.

"If they were non-Jewish they could be brought into Canada by the Canadian railway companies under the Railways Agreement. If they were Jewish by religion or origin, they could not come in under the Railways Agreement, but they had to secure special permits or letters of admission in each case from the Department of Immigration, regardless of their occupations." (Rosenberg)

There was not the slightest doubt as to the intent of this agreement with the railways.

The Deputy Minister told Mr. Robert Forbes on Jan. 18, 1927 that at the time of the drawing up of the agreement that "aliens of the Hebrew race would not be brought forward." (P.A.C., R G 76, vol.263)

Mr. Black, Director of Colonization, wrote to G.M. Dix, European colonization manager on March 21, 1926,

"There is no doubt that there will be an attempt made by Russian Jews claiming to be agriculturalists to get through under this agreement; but as none of these people engage in agriculture when they arrive in this country, your certificate issuing officers should oblige them to provide proof that they were engaged in the agricultural business in Russia, and that they intend to so employ themselves when they arrive in Canada. We cannot, of course, issue any order against Jews, nor would it be advisable for your officers to let it be known that he was warned against their admission; but when he has any of this race come before him, he should exercise special care." (P.A.C., RG 30, vol. 8304)

On Dec. 27, 1926 he wrote to T.S. Fraser, Division Commissioner,

"My understanding of this matter was not that we had an agreement whereby we were not to take Hebrews, but rather that we were not to take them unless we felt compelled to do so by reason of their definite character of the evidence of their being agriculturalists which they presented. This policy we have been following, I am of the opinion, however, that it would be better for all concerned if we had a definite understanding that Hebrews, whether agriculturalists or not, were handled by your department." (vol. 8309; reply in RG 76, vol. 263)

Indeed Black was reprimanded by Egan in a memo of Jan. 25, 1927,

"Your understanding that Hebrews might be accepted where definite evidence of their being agriculturalists was given, but should otherwise be refused, is not in accordance with the decision at the Department. I note that it is your opinion that it would be better for all concerned if there was a definite understanding that Hebrews, whether agriculturalists or not, were not to be accepted under the agreement, and I may say that this is the attitude of the Department, and immigrants of the race mentioned must not be furnished with occupational certificates. I would mention the fact that a considerable number of certificates would appear to have been issued to Hebrews by your company, and it is evident from the information available that care has not been taken in establishing definitively whether the immigrants were agriculturalists." (RG 70, vol. 263)

In Jan. 1927 the agreement came under review. It was noted that "159 aliens of the Hebrew race were brought forward, of which 52 came under CPR certificates and 107 under CNR certificates. These people were all unquestionably destined to industrial centres and were not coming to Canada to perform agricultural work." (RG 76, vol. 263)

Black was called on to report to an Ottawa meeting on the agreement with the railways. A document from that meeting reads,

"We have to some extent canvassed the situation and have no hesitation in expressing our opinion that there is very little demand in Canada for farmer workers of the Jewish nationality. Our experience shows that, as a general rule, Jews belong to other occupations and are mostly of the trading class. We have, therefore, no hesitation in stating that it would be very difficult, if not impossible, to find suitable and satisfactory placement in Canada for those who represent themselves as Jewish farm workers. We are strongly of the opinion that this class of immigration should be handled entirely by the department." (RG 30, vol. 8309)

To return to Mr. Rosenberg,

"It is difficult to defend this order-in-council from a logical and scientific standpoint, for if carpenters, mechanics, clerks and merchants are undesirable immigrants whose entry must be restricted, they cannot become desirable merely because they happen to have been born in Great Britain or North Western Europe. Moreover, the fact that an immigrant was a farmer in his country of origin does not necessarily mean that he will prove a successful farmer in Canada; nor that he will remain a farmer, and there are thousands of successful British and other immigrant farmers in Canada who never worked on a farm before landing in Canada.

"The Canadian Government entered into an agreement with the Railway and Steamship companies whereby these companies were allowed to select and bring into Canada as many immigrants of the Non-Preferred Group as the companies believed could be absorbed by the country. Although these non-preferred immigrants were supposed to engage solely in farming and domestic service upon arrival in Canada, no guarantees were enforced upon the companies, and if the intention of the 'Administrative Regulations' was to reduce the number of 'non-preferred' immigrants, they certainly did not achieve their purpose.

"One restriction was imposed upon railway and steamship companies by the Canadian Government in their immigration activities in 'Non-preferred' countries, a restriction which will long remain a blot upon Canada's reputation as a democratic and British country. They were informed that Jews living in 'Non-preferred' countries must not be accepted under the terms of the Railway Agreement, but must be in possession of a Special Permit issued by the Department of Immigration. In other words, the Canadian Government did not extend to all bearers of a passport issued by the Polish, Roumanian, Lithuanian, Austrian or other Government the same treatment and regulations, but made a distinction between the Jewish and non-Jewish subjects of those countries.

"If the bearer of a Polish, Roumanian or Lithuanian passport could show the steamship company that his passport was clear of the stain of the words Religion-Jewish he could buy a ticket and be accepted for admission to Canada under the Railways Agreement.

"If the passport did bear the words "Religion-Jewish", then the steamship company could not sell the immigrant a ticket unless he or his Canadian relatives were successful in first securing a permit from the Department of Immigration."

There were quite a number of cases where Polish, Lithuanian and Roumanian citizens were accepted by the companies and brought to Canadian ports where they were detained because, "horror of horrors" -- they were found to be Polish, Roumanian, or Lithuanian Jews instead of being Roman Catholic, Greek Orthodox or Greek Catholic.

The third group specified by the "Administrative Regulations" of the Department of Immigration had no specific name but could be called the "Special Permit" group, a classification even still lower than the "Non-preferred Group."

This "Special Permit" group included all immigrants from Greece, Italy, Bulgaria, Armenia, Syria and Turkey and all Jews no matter what their citizenship or country of birth except those who were born in the British Empire, the "Preferred countries" or the United States of America. Admission of immigrants coming within this "Special Permit" group was only permitted after a special permit had been granted by the Department of Immigration in each individual case. Such permits were very difficult to obtain and were usually granted only to the parents, wives and minor children of persons already resident in Canada. This regulation was not equitably applied even among all those racial groups included within the third or "Special Permit" group; for while a person of Greek, Italian, Armenian or Bulgarian origin who was citizen of Poland or any other non-preferred country could be admitted under the Railway Agreement as a member of the second or "Non-preferred" group, a Polish, Roumanian, Russian or Lithuanian Jew was treated as a member of the third or "Special Permit" group regardless of country of birth.

The ostensible reason offered for this classification of European immigrants was that immigrants from "Non-preferrred" and Mediterranean countries have some inherant disability which does not permit them to adapt themselves as readily to Canadian cultural, social and economic conditions as those from Northern and Western Europe, and that immigrants in the "Special Permit" group have racial characteristics which make them even less desirable than the Eastern and Central European immigrants.

Apart from the fallacies underlying the theories of "racial superiority", there is not one shred of valid evidence to substantiate the charge that Jews or any other groups placed within the "Special Permit" class are inferior physically, mentally, socially or morally to any groups within the "Non-preferred" groups from Eastern or Central Europe, or even to the "Preferred" groups from North Western Europe.

The restrictions involved in the classification of immigrants within the "Special Permit" group were really aimed at the Jews, the one remaining group within that category; thus making Canada the first country within the British Empire in the 20th century to pass legislation to enforce "Administrative Regulations" which result in discrimination against persons of Jewish origin and religious belief.

For the purposes of the agreement with the railways and for the internal workings of the department, classifications of applicants for immigration was by citizenship -- except for the Jewish citizens of the various lands. The Jewish citizens of all lands were classed separately as such, and not to their benefit. As Mr. Coates was told when he asked,

"Would Jews coming from Germany be classed as Jews? -- A. "Yes."

As deputy minister Egan told his parliamentary committee, those who were availing themselves of this privilege, "the people that came under that section, I would say for a while, were Italians, Hebrews, Greeks and a very small number of Armenians."

In regard to the Hebrews, he replied to a question, "there is a constant hammering from one end of the country to the other... There was the usual member (of the Commons), for instance, asking on behalf of Joseph Cohen, whom he knows in his town, and has known for twenty years, if he cannot bring his sister or the son of a sister, or someone of that kind, into Canada. It was all usual."

The dialogue in committee between the Hon. Mr. Edwards of Frontenac and the Deputy Minister W.J. Egan sounds like an excerpt from the Fagin-Dickens or earlier.

Egan: "Yes, the Jewry itself has formed its own association with its branches to take up the work outside of the individual appeal on behalf of other Hebrews...

"Q. Do you know of any organization or firm in Canada with banking arrangements at Antwerp or elsewhere on the continent, who provided money for the Jews so they could show they had a certain amount of money when coming in, and that organization was such that this money was handled over and over again; that is to say, that the company organized for the purpose of getting Jews admitted into Canada would supply them with funds so that they could show they were not penniless or destitute or likely to be so, and that the money, after they had got it, was handed back to the firm or organization and used over again for the admission of others? Was there anything along that line known or suspected as having taken place in this connection? -- A. Years ago. There is nothing to my knowledge within the last five or six years because the monetary qualifications were not required; but years ago when they were required, and the immigrant had to have a certain amount of money, the sub-agents of steamship companies, ticket agents and so forth, would loan money at a certain rate.

"Q. May I ask further? Was there any assumption or ground for the suspicion or belief that where these organizations were actively engaged in this work and advancing the money, they would advance, say, $100, or any other amount, so that the immigrant could show that he had money when he came into Canada, and that the organization exacted from the immigrant several times the amount of money they had advanced to him in order to show that he was not likely to become a public charge, and in that way made a considerable sum of money? Have you any ground for suspicions along that line? -- A. No, because my mind would be disabused of that at once. You are speaking of Hebrews coming in. With all due respect to the smart-appearing one on this side (indicating), I know of nothing to discount the inherent qualities of the Hebrew to hang on to his own; and why he should pay two or three times the amount he borrowed is beyond me. The hard-up fellow perhaps did pay $15 or $20 for that $100, but if he had $100 himself he would have no necessity to borrow for that purpose, although, as a matter of fact, it was $250 which was required.

"Q. I suppose the Hebrews, like people of another nationality whom I could mention, might refrain from making money out of his own as long as he could make it out of somebody else, but when the other well ran dry he might go so far as to make it out of his own. -- A. He did in that case make it out of his own, but I cannot understand him paying $200 for a $100 loan, because if he had the $200 to borrow that $100 with, he could have come along without borrowing.

"Q. But it is possible that they might place him under an application and give him a certain length of time in which to pay back not merely the $100 but $200 or $300 more? -- A. They would have an awful time collecting it from him when he got here.

"Q. I grant you that it would be a congenial occupation to try to collect it? -- A. I think from what I know of the type of men about whom you are speaking that it would be C.O.D. for what he was getting, and they would take no chances on waiting.

"Q. I have asked these questions because in the short time I occupied the position of Minister of Immigration I was assailed right and left by those who were anxious to get these people in and were none too particular as to whether the regulations were followed or not. -- A. I think perhaps it has taken on a different atmosphere. I think it was the Jewish Immigrant Aid Society which probably overcame some part of what you suggested, acting on behalf of their own people, and there has been nothing of the kind in evidence in recent years."

In due course the government found that the immigrants thus favored by the agreement with the railways, as Jews were not favored, were practicing the very same evasions from the socially and economically impractical restrictions envisioned by the officials. Early in 1929, "in a letter to the Canadian railway companies, which are parties to an agreement for recruiting immigrants in Europe, Mr. Egan pointed out:

"Our investigations show that during the period of the railways' agreement, many thousands of immigrants from 'non-preferred' countries (of Central Europe) drifted, almost immediately upon arrival, into non-agricultural work, including industrial employment, in centers of Eastern Canada, thus contributing to the displacement of Canadians and otherwise filling positions that might have been filled by British immigrants. The survey also shows that, the movement of farm labor required this year from the 'non-preferred' countries is less than one-third of the total movement of last year.

"'In view of the above, it has been decided that, between now and May 31, the movement under the railways' agreement shall be reduced to not more than 30 per cent of the farm laborers moved by each company during the last calendar year.'" (Literary Digest, Feb. 22, 1929, P.18)

The Montreal Gazette stated that the report upon which this action was based had been in the hands of government for nearly a year.

It tells us something of the climate in Canadian immigration circles in Canada when we find J.-Ernest Laforce in C.N. land settlement services. "My friend, J.-E. Laforce," as Abbé Groulx called him, was the mediator who brought the nationalist ideologist together with Duplessis with no very happy consequences. It was Laforce who communicated with R.B. Bennett with the intention of mobilizing Adrien Arcand for a Conservative Pary newspaper. (Clouds in the Thirties. 1. 121-22)

SPECIAL PERMITS

One of the mouseholes through which Jews could enter Canada was by permits whereby the minister was authorized to admit at his discretion any person who has satisfied him that his labour or service was required in Canada.

This had been the practice for very long, probably since 1910.

Section 4 of the Immigration Act allowed the minister to issue a written permit authorizing a person to enter Canada... without being subject to the provisions of the act. Under the Order-in-Council 183 of Jan. 31, 1923 these permits were issued by authority of the clause which states that "A person who has satisfied the minister that his labour or service is required in Canada" may be admitted.

This was formalized on April 8, 1926 by amendment no. 534, clause 7.

"Whether a Canadian citizen could secure the admission to Canada of a relative or friend, for whom he was prepared to guarantee employment or maintenance, depended on the racial origin or religious belief of the citizen and the prospective immigrant." (Rosenberg)

If the Canadian and his relative or friend were of the special permit class (Jewish, Italian, Greek, etc.), a special application would have to be made in each individual case to the Department of Immigration -- an application which would almost always be refused unless it were made through a member of parliament, who would thus be made a buffer between a government department which wishes to restrict immigrants of that particular "racial origin" or religion without specifically saying so.

In due course the minister defined the "permits" which thus came under discussion,

"Section 4 of the Immigration Act speaks about the issue of permits. These are permits of one kind, but these we are discussing here are really what we call 'Letters of Admittance.' A permit is only for a stated period of six months or a year at the most. These others, which we have commonly called 'permits,' are really letters of admittance given under P.C. 183 which states that, when the Minister is convinced that any labour is required in Canada which is needed by the applicant, the Minister may then issue a permit or entrance to come into the country. These are the ones spoken of commonly as permits. When a man gets one of those, he has landed, he is in the country as an immigrant and in quite a different position to a man coming in under Section 4 of the Immigration Act...

"Some people imagine that everything in connection with permits is altogether wrong. When you take into consideration the situation as it exists today on the Continent of Europe, where no one is supposed to come into Canada to stay in Canada, unless they are agricultural labourers or domestic servants, and where you have the whole continent to deal with -- although we have certain preferred countries to which we have granted more latitude, but also have the non-preferred countries from where no individual outside of those classes can come into Canada -- it is a rather difficult matter. I want to make this plain to show that permits are perfectly legitimate under certain circumstances. Perhaps, we will say, a man wants to do some particular work, and can employ here no other nationality than Canadian, and is very anxious to get someone in to do some particular work; he has a place for him; he needs him; and cannot find the kind of man he wants at his door, and he makes an application to bring in some particular man for that job; he usually gets the permit if he makes a good case. That is what I call a legitimate permit...

"That is our letter of admittance. We have other cases -- and I want to appeal to the humanity of the audience in a way -- where, for instance, a wealthy man in Toronto or Montreal is carrying on a big business, and perhaps may be a friend of my friend Mr. Jacobs -- he may be a Jew -- who has some poor relative over in Europe who is persecuted and suffering a great deal, some young man. He says, 'if I could get that young man over here, I would place him in my business; it would be well for me; it would be well for him; cannot I obtain a permit to bring that young man over to assist me?' The reply to that often is, 'There is plenty of help in Canada; you can get all the help you want here,' and he says, 'This is a particular friend of mine, he is under very bad conditions where he is, he is suffering greatly,' and the applicant usually obtains the permit. So many people think when they hear of a 'permit' that there is money behind it. There may be in some cases, but outside of lawyers' fees I do not believe there is much money in permits.

"That permit would be issued under P.C. 183."

Immigrants of Jewish origin, with the sole exceptions of British or United States citizens, had to get such permits or letters of admission regardless of whether they were born in, or were citizens of, preferred or non-preferred countries.

The earlier practice in this field is laid out in a confidential letter, March 12, 1927, to Mackenzie King, then briefly in the opposition,(from G.N. Gordon),

"There has been in my mind, something you said about these immigration cases just before I left your office the other day, and I wish to give you these facts.

"Practically every legal firm in Toronto has acted in the case of applications for the admission of immigrants by permit. This includes the best known and respectable firms in Toronto, among whom are some of your close Party friends.

"It has been the custom for many years for those desiring the admission of relatives to pay some person, such as an agent of a steam-ship company, fees for obtaining the passports, arranging for the ticket, and sending money to pay the incidental costs of the immigrant while travelling.

"Later on, the permit system was put into effect, and admission of relatives where employment was found was permitted to some extent. Fees were paid to some lawyers, or others who understood how to present these cases, and these came before the Immigration Department, and persons were allowed admission from time to time.

"Judge W.T. Evans of Hamilton, in a case where a party was sued for failure to return money he had received for services in presenting an application to the Immigration Department, during the time when the Honorable Mr. Robb was Acting Minister, stated that these services rendered were legitimate, and that he (the Judge) when he was practising law had a number of cases of this kind, for which he charged for his professional services, and that it was a proper charge to make for such services.

"I might add that there are a large number of lawyers, who have claims for drawbacks, adjustments of sales tax, and various other matters, for which they charge in presenting their clients' cases to the officials of these Departments.

"Practically every Ottawa lawyer has this class of practice, and if you will permit me to say so, this class of charging for services does not seem to me to be very objectionable.

"That lawyers all over the country have charged for going to Ottawa to see if they could obtain permits for immigrants for relatives, or those who propose to employ the immigrants, is quite commonly known; and is not only lawful, but is within the rights of such lawyers to so act, although I am willing to admit, it is not a very high form of legal practice.

"I would not have taken the liberty of writing this letter, but if you saw the list of lawyers in the Honorable Ernest Lapointe's office, which is kept there for the purpose of making a selection of those who are to be retained to do the work for the Dominion Government, you would find that these well known and qualified lawyers have in many cases been the very ones who have been taking part in this practice before the Immigration Officials, to which you object." (Public Archives of Canada)

By the orders of the minister as of Oct. 19, 1926, permits were issued to members of Parliament, and were limited to cases within their constituency. In point of fact some 150 members of the Commons availed themselves of the opportunity thus offered them.

The deputy minister admitted that "There are some members of parliament who bring me more individual cases, because their constituencies are so constituted that of necessity they are pressed to bring more...I did not accept their word at once for their sponsoring of the conditions surrounding them. I told them that while I had no doubt as to what they had submitted, my experience was that they were not always told the truth by applicants, and that I felt that I must make an inquiry." (May 18, 1928)

Increasingly, between 1923 and 1926, the courtesy of securing such special admission permits was reserved for Senators, sitting Members of the Commons and defeated candidates for parliament, upon their personal guarantees. Some other privileged petitioners of some social position, high posts or great fortunes, such as county judges, were informed of this and advised to follow this procedure. Applicants of a lower class were simply refused. As Mr. Egan put it, we respected the Members too highly to inflict them with some of those who approached us, and we simply refused them. (May 18, 1928)

When Commons member Cahan asked Deputy Minister Egan whether he had heard complaints alleging that M.P.'s had taken advantage of this privilege to obtain remuneration for their intervention in such cases, Mr. Egan confirmed that he had heard of such rumours, but the minister had never received any letters of such complaints.

Mr. Egan also clearly asserted that he himself had had no cause to suspect any wrongdoing in the administration of this division to the effect that M.P.'s extend guarantees on behalf of such admissions with a view to monetary gain.

Nor that such permits were issued with the name of the prospective immigrant in blank, as rumoured. (May 18, 1928)

There had been theft from one or two of the department's European offices, and some fifteen letters had been taken.

When the first holder of such a false letter found that he could not enter the country, that was the end of the affair. Not one person came to Canada on the basis of such letters, Mr. Egan assured the parliamentary committee, though there were many rumours which unfairly reflected on the service. One arrest was made.

Without giving statistics, Mr. Egan intimated that the beneficiaries of the permits system were largely Italians, Russian -- or rather Polish -- Jews, and Greeks.

It might be noted that, possibly as a matter of chance, in the entire record that has come to attention there is not allusion to any known Jewish person involved in any capacity in any form of wrongdoing in connection with permits or any other immigration activity.

"The minister acted contrary to the regulations of order-in-council, 'went behind them.' It was a practice in vogue, and he did it, and not in any isolated cases at all, but in hundreds of cases. It was done all the time. The practice was to disregard the money test, sometimes the passport regulations, particularly in connection with the countries of northern Europe.

"From the international point of view it should not be stated that some countries are preferred as against others. I am making a suggestion that perhaps it should not be broadcast." He admitted to Mr. Cahan that the "department must act outside the law...to cover the countries below the line."

The official return listing those who sponsored applications for special permits, as submitted in the spring of 1928, included 151 parliamentarians and 45 other citizens, of whom 11 are probably Jewish.

This roll of honour of Jewish rescue from holocaust deserves noting. S.W. Jacobs, M.P., secured permits for 143 souls (compare with Gen. Harvey, contractor who brought in 300, or the Hon. W.D. Euler who brought in 208 from Germany); A.A. Heaps, Winnipeg M.P., 85; A.J. Freiman of Ottawa, 33; B. Goldfield, 12; A. Ornstein, 11; B. Weiss, 7; Mrs. Margolese, 3; S. Lepofsky, 2; and S. Berger, 1 -- all of Ottawa; Bernard Rose, 2 and J. Cohen 1, both of Montreal, and T. Garfunkel, 16 and E. Eisenberg, 5, both of Toronto. All this out of a total of 3,292 immigrants thus laboriously loading Canada within two years, 1926-1928.

The attitude of the administration to these applicants was far from warm; also evident from the tone of Mr. Egan's testimony.

"Q. How did those Jews come in? Did they have letters of admission? -- A. A great many came to relatives. Sometimes a man comes in and leaves behind him a large family. Perhaps one-half of those were movements to relatives, people who came in two, three, four, five years and some even eight to ten years ago; that would be the greater movement. The next movement was of those coming, not relatives, but in a special way continental people. Anything in the shape of a cousin is a relationship with them, more especially if they are asking for a favour. In that case they would come only where there was an assurance of employment for them. This may seem strange to you, but it is encouraging to me, that some of them are coming to farm lands bought by the Jewish Immigration Society.

"Q. A cousin or a relative coming to Canada requires no permit? -- A. Yes, a cousin does. Any Hebrew coming in would be on this list because he is not allowed to come in under the relationship. He would have to assure them of employment without detriment to other Canadian labour.

"Q. In looking over this list on page 11, you see the large number I read there of 9,216 of these people. Of course, there are a large number of others from the non-preferred countries. So many of these people are coming in, and yet there is no record? -- A. There is no regular permit to a relative coming in; under the Act, a husband coming to his wife and children is not a matter of permit. I tried to give you the proportion; I would say among the

Hebrew a little more than one-half easily, and the greater part of the others, perhaps 15 per cent, because they were coming in to form groups in a farm settlement, and the balance to assured employment. I said the other day they were mostly Italians, Hebrews, Armenians, and others of that kind...

"They are coming to their relatives, which is within the law, and that is one of the very reasons why we are trying to make these other movements as light or as tight as we possibly can, because we do not want too many to come in who have the right to ask for their relatives.

"Q. They are not like the Chinese -- everybody they meet is a relative? -- A. Try it and see."

When questioned as to existence of a quota of permits granted to each member, the deputy minister, in the slippery language of the department, explained,

"This thing is so large that you would have to spread out a little to make it clearly understood...This is more or less a concession to meet certain conditions which must inevitably occur where you have people coming to a certain stage of life when they are prepared to do something for their people on the other side, and you have to meet it, no matter what your law is, up to a point; and we are directed -- yet you do not want it to become too big an avenue for anything and everything that is submitted, because your immigration policy is bringing enough, and some claim too much, through these particular channels. Therefore if I were to answer the question the way it comes to me -- I want to make this clear, that on the evidence I have that comes to me, for each individual case sponsored by members of Parliament -- you take a member of parliament for a certain district, he will have within his particular constituency perhaps twenty thousand or twenty-five thousand of certain people in a given city. Of necessity he is going to be burdened more with that particular type of man than the man in a country constituency, and he will press individual cases, because he is pressed. But I have tried to keep within bounds, within my judgment, without setting up any quota proposition or anything of that kind, or numbers; and I have had to say, 'No, you have gone far enough, because, if you get your particular people here, somebody else will be making an inquiry;' and a man may come two or three days during the session of parliament, particularly if he is in the eastern division. In that way only has it approached anything like along the lines you are suggesting."

"In a large number of cases, when members of Parliament have sponsored an applicant for admission, such sponsorship was deterring?" Yes, and no. With some members, not because they were of any less merit, but because the conditions surrounding them would, what shall I say, mean the entry of too many people of that particular kind into the country and into city life... After all, you know something of the continentals, do you not? You must have met some of them in your practice...They are as steadfast as can be, when they have it in their minds that they want their particular relative to come to live with them, particularly if they can afford it; and they have gone into that as they did in the past, and the member of parliament is loaded with the task of trying to get it for them...Answering your question, I do not think it would be larger than before, because we were always holding them down." It was further explained that in keeping records of immigrants, Italians, Greeks, Armenians and others were counted, but that Hebrew Russians and Hebrew Poles were counted as Hebrews. A department official who was rumoured to have been "too liberal in issuing permits for Jews...who had encouraged perhaps a certain number of coming who might, under other circumstances, have not come", was promoted to commissioner to China."

The Commons committee dealing with this issue was not particularly happy with the "specially vigorous efforts on the part of certain people to get a large number of Jews admitted into the country." The deputy minister confirmed that "There is a constant hammering from one end of Canada to the other.

"For instance, asking on behalf of Jacob Cohen, whom he knows in his town and has known for twenty years, if he cannot bring his sister or the son of his sister, or someone of that kind, into Canada. It was all usual. Certain parties were very active -- very active -- in promoting the immigration into Canada of Polish and Russian Jews and Jews of other countries, and were very insistent on having these people admitted...The Jewry itself had formed its own association with its branches to take up the work."

Probably the harshest criticism of the railways agreement and the permits system came from M.J. Coldwell.

J. Coldwell, at the time Regina alderman, told the local Sons of England that, while the officials had put up the bars on immigration prior to the agreement with the railways of March 16, 1927, "a regular traffic was carried on at Ottawa of the sale of permits to admit men who were not ordinarily eligible for entry into

Canada. These permits, "he declared, "were sold by members of parliament in Canada for the sum of $100 each. That went on for several years. I am not stating what I do no know to be an absolute fact. It is not hearsay; it is not guesswork. I got that possibly from the highest source in Canada on immigration affairs. These permits were sold, and the bars were let down, and people were allowed to flow in who were not ordinarily eligible for our immigration.

"I know who have sold them," declared Alderman Coldwell, "I know at least some of the members of parliament who have sold them, and I know what the records of the department were under both Hon. Mr. Stewart and his successor. Definitely, I know the names of some members who sold these permits." (Regina Leader, Nov. 24, 1927)

Milton Campbell, member for Mackenzie, who was present at the Coldwell lecture, remarked jocularly that he was shocked to think how much money he had lost while helping people to come to Canada, ignorant as he was of the possibility of procuring the $100 in each case.

"We had heard these rumours in Ottawa but, close as I was to matters in the capital, I could never secure positive proof," he said.

The press disseminated reports of Coldwell's speech "rather startlingly, and evidently sent broadcast over the Dominion, eliciting a carefully worded rejoinder from your deputy, Mr. Egan. When apprised of this, Coldwell wrote Forke,

"You will, no doubt, remember our conversation in this connection last spring when you gave me the information, amongst others, to which I referred the other evening. Our discussion was quite frank and was not of a confidential nature; so that I felt, when my statement met with some question, I was at liberty to make the explanation."

To which the minister responded on Dec. 7,

"I do not recall the conversation, but I wish to emphasize most distinctly that I was at no time in a position, nor did I ever say, that members of parliament were trafficking for personal gain in immigration permits. I do not understand what I could have said which would make it possible for you to place such an interpretation on my statement. If you have any definite grounds for your supposition I shall be glad if you will furnish me, confidentially, if not

otherwise, the names of those who you distinctly know who were in receipt of money for permits procured from this Department."

Coldwell was "exceedingly surprised" by the disavowal, and replied on Dec. 12,

"I have a very excellent memory for detail and, moreover, I believe I have a reputation for never making any statement the truth of which I am not thoroughly convinced.

"Now I state most advisedly that, in discussing the issuance of immigration permits, you gave me a great deal of information of the conditions which existed prior to your ministry, and told me of specific instances where you had refused to issue them because you knew that those obtaining them were going to profit financially from them. You also mentioned the name of a gentleman who had occupied a position of some prominence in our parliamentary life and who represented a large urban constituency, who had obtained permits enough to pay his election expenses.

"Your statements appeared to be so definite and conclusive that I accepted them without question, but with a feeling that I was glad that you were determined to put an end to the practice.

"Since my memory is so clear, and since I told certain friends substantially what you had told me immediately this conversation had occurred, I am quite prepared to give an accurate summary of our conversation whenever it may be necessary to do so. I am, however, of the opinion that it is only necessary for me to draw the above facts to your attention and you will thereupon remember that, whatever you may have found subsequently, you were, in March last, in possession of information which led you to tell me in your capacity as Minister of Immigration that the condition to which I refer had existed prior to your ministry and this Parliament. Further, that the attention of the Prime Minister had been drawn to your determination by one who had been defeated in the elections and who felt himself deprived of something to which he was entitled, but that Mr. King had informed you that you were entirely responsible for your own department."

On the other hand Mr. Forke was disappointed at what he saw as a breach of confidence -- not the first man in political life to live through such an experience. He wrote Coldwell on Dec. 16,

"I certainly never made a statement that I knew of members receiving money for permits. In private conversation with you as a friend I remember repeating some of the rumours I heard in this connection. I hardly expected this to go further. Now as a matter of fact I have no knowledge that any Member ever received money for

permits, and could not make any such statement. As to the rumours I told you of, they were much the same, no doubt, as your friend had heard, and who was very much more guarded in his statements in Regina.

"I regret the fact that you made a public statement that in any way related to a private conversation you had with me."

Before the Standing Select Committee on Agriculture and Colonization, and in the presence of the Hon. Robert Forke, Minister of Immigration, Coldwell recalled that "Early in January, 1927, a man whom I knew in the city of Regina came to me and told me that he was making a little visit to Ottawa; that he knew some of the Ministers at Ottawa, but did not know Mr. Forke; but having followed his career he would like to meet him. He asked me if I would give him a line of introduction to Mr. Forke. I wrote him a letter to the effect that the bearer of the letter was paying a visit to Ottawa where he was desirous of meeting some of the Ministers, and that if Mr. Forke could afford him the opportunity of an interview, he would appreciate it. He came to Ottawa, and I met him some few weeks later -- in February, 1927 -- and I asked him if he had been to Ottawa and he told me, Yes he had. I asked him if he had seen Mr. Forke and he told me, Yes he had, but that he could do nothing with him. I asked him what that statement meant, and he told me that he was down for a bunch of immigration permits which meant a great deal to some of the boys. Now, gentlemen of the Committee, I can assure you of this, that no letter of mine to the Minister was intended to have been used for the purpose of securing permits. I felt very keenly about it; it worried me a great deal.

"It so happened that a few days later it was intimated that I had been appointed as one of the three delegates from Saskatchewan to the National Committee for the celebration of the Diamond Jubilee of Canada, and, therefore, knowing that I was coming to Ottawa, I decided to straighten this matter out with Mr. Forke. The discussion of this question arose out of my going to Mr. Forke's office and mentioning this particular incident March 15, 1927 which Mr. Forke recollected. In that connection Mr. Forke explained to me why he did not sign those permits. The conversation, may I say, was not confidential; it was a conversation dealing with a matter in which I regarded myself as being very vitally interested; a matter indeed, Mr. Chairman, in connection with which I felt that my own honour and reputation was more or less at stake. As I say, I saw Mr. Forke, and he told me why these had not been signed...

"This conversation arose in that way. Mr. Forke told me he had done his level best to stop the issuance of these permits; he further told me they had been abused. I believed him. He said that large numbers of them had been issued previously, and that the records of the Department would bear that out or deny it. He gave me an incident which led me to believe that such was the case...

"He told me that, soon after he became Minister of Immigration, a man whom I understood to be a defeated member of the House came to Mr. Forke with a bunch of permits to be signed. Mr. Forke said -- I remember his words distincly -- that such a request aroused his Scotch temper and he refused. On another occasion Mr. Forke mentioned to me a member who had received a large number of these permits and, as in the former instance -- that Mr. Forke in the conversation previously, as I have to state that incident, had said that when his Scotch temper was aroused he asked this man what these permits were worth to him, and the man told him they were worth $100 each, and he had his election expenses to pay...

"Mr. Forke told me quite definitely that Mr. McMurray had obtained these permits in large numbers; that he had obtained sufficient to meet his election expenses, and Mr. Forke's comment was, 'As you know, Mr. Coldwell, election expenses are large in a city like Winnipeg.'"

For an appreciation of the discussion before the Commons Committee, it is useful to recall that Coldwell's acquaintance with Forke began when Forke, then House leader of the Progressive group, spoke at a public meeting in support of Coldwell, then Progressive Party candidate in Regina.

From a formal statement by Mr. Forke we reconstruct a vivid moment in the permits trade,

"In connection with refusing Mr. Coldwell's friend, I cited to Mr. Coldwell a case where a gentleman had come in -- a young lawyer -- who was not a Member of Parliament nor had ever been in the House. He had a large number of permits. I felt rather annoyed, and just shouted the question across the table -- 'How much do you get for these permits' and without a moment's hesitation, he said '$100.' I said -- 'Do you think that I am so simple that I am going to hand you out permits in the way you imagine it can be done?' I refused to give them to him. I told Mr. Coldwell that."

After considerable wrangling as to conditions of legal privilege under which the discussion was taking place, Mr. Coldwell gave the name of Mr. McMurray, former Solicitor-General of Canada, as the member who was mentioned by the Hon. Mr. Forke.

Forke denied any reference to McMurray. "Mr. McMurray's election was in 1925, two years before I came into the Department, and I knew nothing about Mr. McMurray's transactions with the Department, if any took place, and since I came into the Department I have had no dealings with Mr. McMurray, directly or indirectly.

Mr. Forke added, "If I wished, I could become a millionaire in this department."

Evidence of this situation may be found in the records of the department. Mr. Forke so indicated to Mr. Coldwell; after he noted the number of permits issued, he wrote to his predecessor, Dr. Manion in the Meighen cabinet, who referred him to the records of the period of his own predecessor, the Hon. Mr. Stewart. Mr. Forke proceeded to this examination and found that conditions in that earlier period had even been worse, that permits had been issued across the entire country to persons who made irregular use of them. Permits were issued to persons who, under ordinary conditions, were not admissible to Canada, and these persons paid moneys to those who obtained these permits.

Hidden or open to a degree, the anti-Jewish immigration policy was formulated in a letter from the Canadian Pacific Railway from Hamburg to Mr. Hans Heineman on Nicolai Street in Breslau on March 8, 1938.

"We are sorry to let you know that Canada allows only Christians who would be farmers in the country, and you must get a special permit from Ottawa. Your uncle in Edmonton has to get it for you."

It was a position closely paralleled (surely not by chance) in the United States where Louis Marshall had occasion to complain that the Director of the United States Consular Service was open in his anti-Semitic opinions which coloured his statements to the House Committee on Immigration. In harmony with their director, American consuls abroad reflected their "hatred, contempt and prejudice against the Jews" in their dealings with Jewish migrants (Zosa Szajkowski in American Jewish Historical Quarterly, vol. 57, no. 2, Dec. 1967, Pp. 225-28)

There was actual phobia about Jews flooding the country. A Toronto Member of the Commons, R.L. Baker, formally wrote to Acting Minister of Immigration W.A. Gordon, of Jews he was seeing on the streets of his city, and suggested that his officers might be well advised to check upon these people coming over the boundary line. Mr. Gordon assured him that, "Our inspectional staff on the international Boundary have positive instructions to strictly apply the provisions of the Immigration Act and Regulations with regard to all persons applying for entry to Canada, and the monthly record of rejections at border ports is excellent proof of the fact that the instructions are being carried out." (Aug. 3, 1932, P.A.C. 541782 - Immig.)

Dirks quotes a document prepared by the departments of immigration and of external affairs for the prime minister which deliberately places Canadian attitude and policy in the Nazi racist camp, particularly on the question of saving lives of Jews:

This report, accepted by the government, declared among other things that "There can be no doubt about the depth of sincerity of the people of this country for the victims of religious, political and racial persecution...For the time being, at least, public opinion expects the government to make some appropriate contribution toward the solution of the problem which the Christian and civilized countries now find upon their doorstep. Over the next few months, with seasonal contractions in employment, nothing on a broad scale can be done." What constituted an "appropriate contribution" remained vague and unresolved. The report recognized that the vast majority, but certainly not all, European refugees were classified as Jews. Canadian authorities operated on the rule of thumb that Canada's population should continue in the same ethnic proportions as much as possible. In other words, the percentage of Jews in the total annual immigration to Canada should not exceed the percentage of this group in the total Canadian population. The authors of the memorandum were aware of this unwritten rule: "We do not want to take too many Jews, but in the present circumstances, we do not want to say so. We do not want to legitimize the Aryan mythology by introducing any formal distinction for immigration purposes between Jews and non-Jews. The practical distinction, however, has to be made and should be drawn with discretion and sympathy by the competent department, without the need to lay down a formal minute of policy."

COMPASSION

One of the historic rescue efforts of Canadian Jewry centred on the orphans of war, revolution and pogrom in the Ukraine. Prof. Elias Heifetz, who had been in the Ukraine during the cataclysm, reached America in 1920 with a report on the thousands of children seeking to survive under the animal-like conditions there prevailing. The American government would do nothing.

He turned to his friends in the People's Relief Organization and in the Federation of Ukrainian Jews -- closely related to the Canadian Jewish Congress. But the plan was clearly beyond the capacity of these downtown groups. Belkin introduced Prof. Heifetz to Lyon Cohen, president of the Congress.

Cohen convened a conference on the project on July 11, 1920 and the program was launched with Mrs. Lillian Freiman, L. Hershman, L. Zuker and Gregory Sanders mobilized for leadership.

The committee pleaded with the government to admit 1,000 such orphans (the figure is to ring out and reach through the decades again in 1942, in 1946). The master over life and death, F.C. Blair, secretary of the department of immigration, extended his mercy to 200. The stringent conditions laid down by the government for inclusion in this rescue eventually reduced the number to 150. As if starvation, bacilli and pogromists were not enough, there was the Canadian health service.

The authoritative unsigned report on the project in A.D. Hart, The Jew in Canada, written by Hershman, narrates how a little girl was forced to have a fingernail removed without anaesthesia in Brussels before she was permitted to board ship for Canada!

A letter from Blair set down the formal conditions for the entry of 200 orphans; others will be admitted on the successful arrangements for this first group. "The department does not look upon the movement purely as an immigration problem; the 200 are being admitted on humanitarian grounds. An organization is to be formed to take responsibility for bringing mentally and physically capable immigrants. This organization will arrange to accompany the orphans; arrangements for placement are to be made before departure, and there will need to be some system of 'after-care.'" (Canadian Jewish Chronicle, Sept. 3, 1920)

The horror of the period lived long in Canadian memory; in fact it became an element in the spiritual heritage of the community. For nearly half a century after the 1920's Polly Azeroff was known in the community as a sought after dress-maker-designer and Polly Ehrlich Azar as the matron of the Claremont St. Hebrew orphanage. But their vital role in Montreal society was as the matrons of the institution in the Ukraine where they had cared for the suffering children; they had accompanied them to Canada and followed each of their lives here with the love with which their mothers might have caressed them.

The numbers do not reflect the emotional depth of the community experience. Heightened by the inspiration of Reuben Brainin, who again returned to Canada to help mobilize the Jewry of the country for the cause of the Jewish people, the Jews of the country responded in the measure of the European tragedy. This took the form of frequent and enthusiastic conferences, the profound desire by so many citizens to help, the offers of adoption, the gifts of money and clothing, the directness of this helpfulness. Those who are experienced in social work will recognize that these feelings do not always find a full translation in effective help from the point of view of the person being helped. But the history of a society needs must reconstruct the emotions as well as the count of the deeds.

These sentiments overflowed Canadian Jewry and were shared actively by many other Canadians. We find them as executives of the entire national effort, and in Europe selecting the children and helping evade the classic maze of the officialdoms of a half a dozen governments well organized to hamper rescue of children, adults, soldiers or anyone else.

Although the facilities of other Jewish relief institutions were at the disposition of the Canadian project -- including the People's Relief and of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee -- a Canadian group travelled to the Polish Ukraine to select the children and to prepare them for their new life in the Dominion. Headed by Mr. Hershman, it included the Christian philo-Semite of Hamilton, Ald. W. Farrar and Dr. J. Leavitt of Montreal.

The bereaved children, barely clinging to breath, had to have passports, birth certificates and other documents. But they had to be young enough to have no memories of their parents and of their destroyed homes and towns. This was demanded of the Ukraine children whom Ald. Farrar described, "They have been in Hell. Young children come here with the most heartrending stories. I am made sad from morning until night." Many of them were living in sheds in Rovno and in the open, for space in the three homes set up for them was limited. "Children of perhaps four or five years of age, with features of aged persons, eyes sunken, cheeks nothing but skin and bones, bodies almost skeletons. Most indelibly, a population which faced a posture of utter hopelessness. Women clutching their skirts, their eyes darting hither and thither, filled with the fear their experiences had taught them. Surely, this was the saddest spot on earth."

A third of the children selected were from Novgorod-Wolinsk which had been pogromized and burned fifteen times. Its records had been destroyed and their ashes pulverized and scattered. Where are the birth certificates of the infant orphans? Then, the governments would not permit their railroad cars to cross the countless borders. The orphans were older than stipulated in Ottawa. As Hershman wrote from the scene, "Children born in the Ukraine three to six years ago could not survive, especially if they had become orphans at the age of one or two. Those who survived are the fortunate ones whose parents were spared, and only superhuman sacrifices on the part of the parents saved them."

Hershman's was more than a working team. They were the eyes and ears and heart of Canadian Jewry as they went to the scene of the harrowing over the Jewish communities that had been home. Their reports back to Canada were as impatiently awaited as were the children whom they were seeking out. It was the experience of a nation-wide community. It paralleled Belkin's mission to the Ukraine a few years before and Hershman's earlier voyage to Poland.

Very few of the children they found were fit to pass the physical and mental tests; of the first 1,000 examined only 46 conformed to the requirements set down. In all, 8,000 were examined before 150 could be found during months of heartbreak. "Most of the others are in very poor physical state, some of them maimed and crippled in the pogroms."

It was not until the children reached Vienna that a glimmer of peace and of normality appeared in their lives. Mrs. Freiman travelled to Antwerp to shepherd the children past the immigration hazard and to introduce them to the gentleness of Canadian motherhood. There were times when she was provoked nearly to violence by the harshness of the government's medical men, even after they had reached Canadian soil. In Belgium she washed and combed them and wept, all the time, like a child. She changed their adequate but institutional garments for individual clothing fit for each child, to match or to bring out the colour of their hair or eyes. Hershman never tired of recalling, "the great joy that shone from her smiling face and the flow of tears that stemmed from her eyes in pain over the fate of the one hundred and fifty destitute and friendless orphans who now surrounded her and looked up to her as to a guardian angel."

On Friday evening at dinner with the children "she carried the cup to each child to taste from the Kiddush, and from their eyes flowed a stream of tears that nearly fell into the cup."

Belkin notes that of the 146 children who reached Canada, the first party of 51 left Europe on June 14, 1921; a further group of 104 left Antwerp on Aug. 9 aboard the "Scandinavia". The children were distributed among the Montreal, Toronto, Ottawa, Winnipeg and Saint John communities.

The arrival of the first group at Quebec City -- not seldom the scene of intense Jewish experience -- on Sabbath Nachmu, and the meeting of the children with the local community, with national community leaders and with many adopted parents was described by the press: another Yom Kippur in its awful and decisive significance. The Parting of the Sabbath saw the scattering of the children to their new homes of adoption across the country.

As Figler describes this separation, "The children turned back from the door to her and to Hershman to bid them farewell again. Mrs. Freiman's eyes were swollen, her face drawn from worry and strain. Like a statue she stood there, hugging each child and sobbing quietly. In this weeping one heard a curse against those who brought such a terrible tragedy upon Jewish life."

Belkin notes that the project was carried out without the advantage of systematic social work agencies, unlike the more extensive war orphans scheme of 1948. The basic plan was to find foster parents who would adopt the children. In most cases homes were found for the children; in some $120 was provided annually to help maintain the child.

And so they were all placed in Canadian biographies, many of them since distinguished in medicine, military and other occupations as Canadian citizens. Remarkably, nearly a quarter of the children located relatives in Canada and found themselves in families closer to them than enjoyed by those who remained with their adopting parents.

FLEEING STALIN

Some years later another series of Canadian biographies began somberly. A considerable number of Jews fleeing Communism reached Poland, but found conditions there but little better for them than in the lands of persecution which they sought to escape.

S. Belkin, director of the Jewish Colonization Association, on May 9, 1923 formally brought to the attention of S.W. Jacobs, M.P., the plight of "A large number of Jewish refugees from Russia have been pouring into Poland during the last few years. Many of them, who have secured tickets from their relatives in the U.S., were able to proceed further. A considerable number, however, was forced to remain in Poland for a very long time, some of them having no funds to enable them to join their relative on this side. The condition of those who remained in Poland became desperate when the Polish government ordered them to leave the country within a specified time. Large groups were forced to cross the Russian border, but were met with the rifle fire of the Soviet border guards." (The letter found its way into the records of the immigration authorities, P.A.C. RG 76, vol. 82)

Lyon Cohen telegraphed to Jacobs to be good enough to attend upon the minister of immigration in connection with the J.C.A. request..."The matter is urgent for, unless we can secure the entry of these immigrants, they will be deported back to Russia and certain death." (J.C.A. records, Canadian Jewish Congress archives.)

On July 27, 1923 Mr. Philip Baker of the Office of the Lord Privy Seal, in London wrote to Prime Minister King requesting Canada's "special consideration to a consideration that a number of Russian refugees now in Poland should be allowed to emigrate to Canada." As Dr. Nansen, the League of Nations High Commissioner for Russian Refugees, reported, the position of these Russian Jews who found very temporary refuge in Poland has become acute. The Polish government intends to expel these people, that is to say, obliging them to return to Russia. Canada's cooperation would greatly strengthen Dr. Nansen's position and that of the Polish government against their own extremists. Even a few hundred visas would be of value.

Mr. Baker realized "that the greater part of the Russians who are in danger of expulsion are Jews from the Ukraine, and perhaps the Canadian Government does not wish to receive Jews. I believe that in point of fact they are very sober and hardworking people, and that the whole of their transport and installation expenses would be met by the Jewish organizations which are helping them.

"I believe the refugees, in spite of the miserable life they have led in Poland, are still good workers. Indeed, nothing has been so remarkable as the way in which the refugees, with whom Dr. Nansen has had to deal, have buckled to and shown great enterprise in earning their own living whenever they have had the least chance to do so." (King Papers, Pp. 70447-50)

There was no issue to these representations.

In the fall of 1923 one of its greatest acts was accomplished by the Jewish Colonization Association and its Canadian Committee: the rescue of about thirty-five hundred Russo-Jewish refugees who were stranded in Roumania.

The American Jewish Year Book summarizes the history of the movement in its "Survey of the Year 5685," in vol. 27, 1925, P. 85.

"As for Jewish refugees in Roumania, the Canadian Government agreed to permit the entry of Russo-Jewish refugees domiciled in Roumania at the rate of one hundred a week. The Canadian office of the JCA undertook to 'absorb' these immigrants and to see that they did not become public charges. Five thousand Jewish refugees were expected to be admitted into Canada. By the middle of October, about 2,600 Russo-Jewish refugees had arrived in Canada. The government then cancelled the arrangements and declared that it would admit only a total of 3,000 refugees. In February, 1925, however, the government decided to reinstate the concession originally granted to the Jewish Colonization Association and to admit the remaining 1,700 of the original 5,000 Ukrainian refugees domiciled in Roumania."

An internal departmental document addressed to Mr. Egan, of June 11, 1924, stated,

"In Sept. 1923 the J.C.A. Montreal wrote to the minister asking that there be admitted to Canada weekly 100 immigrant refugees then in Roumania, such refugees having moved from Russia to Roumania, under the guarantee of the Association that they be placed and looked

after in Canada, and not allowed to become a public charge. Nothing was said in the letter of the secty. of the J.C.A. as to the number to be admitted, nor was any maximum set in the reply of the 29th, except that there was to be a limitation of 100/wk. It was not stated for what period this movement was to continue. The persons coming to Canada under this arrangement were to be mentally, morally and physically fit. The literacy test was to be waived for domestic servants. The passport requirements were waived where necessary on the understanding that the immigrants must present whatever documents they had to show nationality and identity." (P.A.C., RG 76, vols. 199 and 82)

At a meeting in Ottawa on Sept. 24 with the Hon. Mr. Robb and with Mr. Black, it was made clear that admission of immigrants was left entirely within the discretion of departmental officers. The candidates for entry would need to pass a literacy test and would be medically examined by Canadian doctors at Bucharest. (Letter from Black, Sept. 29, 1923)

The government waived the occupation test and the continuous journey regulation.

We are fortunate to have the record of that complex humanitarian project from the pen of Lyon Cohen who all too seldom recorded his own such activities. It comes in a rare private letter from Lyon Cohen to the great American servant of suffering Jews, Joseph Barondess (Nov. 7, 1924):

"...Although I perceive a gradual improvement in my health, I have had a number of little setbacks, probably brought about by annoyance over this matter, as well as through getting too deeply interested in communal affairs again, notwithstanding the advice of my physician to refrain from work of any kind. It is for this reason that I have not attempted to write to you before. As I feel a little better today, however, I want to give you an outline of this immigration question, which has been the subject of so much discussion.

"The facts are these:

"In September 1923 the Canadian Committee of the Jewish Colonization Association received a cable from their Paris headquarters, requesting them to try and arrange for the admission of 1,000 refugees from Roumania.

"About that time, a representative of the Ukrainian Ferband of New York, Dr. A. Coralnick, called upon Mr. S.W. Jacobs, our Federal Member of Parliament, and appealed to him to endeavour

to save 5,000 stranded Ukrainians in Bucharest, due to the American immigration restrictions -- the cost of maintenance in connection with the admission of such immigrants into this country to be defrayed by his organization.

"After consultation, Mr. Jacobs and I met the Minister of Immigration and laid the matter before him. After a number of conferences between the Minister, the Deputy Minister and ourselves, a concession, permitting 100 per week of Russian refugees stranded in Roumania to come to Canada, was granted. How far the personal element played in the obtaining of the concession, it might be indelicate to dwell upon.

"There was actually no time limit mentioned but it was taken for granted that the concession was for a year, and was afterwards accepted as a 5,000 quota."

The biographies of these immigrants before their arrival in Canada has entered literature. Hannah Widerman's autobiographical Alte Heim un Kinder Yorn (Montreal, 1960, 144 p.) tells the background of one of these migrants, of their homelessness and of the tribulation of existing in the underground, anchorless universe of the refugees.

From another vantage, the formal Canadian venue, the Commons member for Georges Etienne Cartier told the story of the rescue. These people had fled from Bolshevik Russia and were given a temporary asylum by the Roumanian government.

"When the time came to leave there was no place to send them, but through the efforts of Dr. Fridtjof Nansen, the Norwegian representative on the League of Nations, they were permitted to remain until a place could be found for them. We interviewed the Immigration Department and asked that some of these people be admitted here on compassionate grounds. Otherwise we feared for their complete annihilation. Among these refugees were widows, orphans, young girls, small children and few who had any relatives in this country. The association undertook to look after the refugees and care for them, to see that none would become public charges, and that all would be absorbed into the life of the country and become self-supporting."

H. Wolofsky, publisher of the Jewish Daily Eagle and one of the scores of communally minded Canadians who directed their energies primarily to the welfare of the stricken of his people and to the advancement of Judaism in Canada, recalls this meeting with the Minister of Immigration at Ottawa.

"Jacobs immediately phoned me, and when I came to his office I already found Lyon Cohen there. The three of us decided to go to Ottawa to see the Minister of Immigration and, if necessary, also the Prime Minister.

"The Committee was received by the Hon. Mr. J. Robb in a room at the Chateau Laurier. It became my duty to make the appeal on behalf of the 5,000 refugees, but in the course of picturing the distress of the refugees I was so overcome that the task had to be continued by Mr. Lyon Cohen. He too was unable to finish the appeal and it was necessary for Mr. Jacobs to take up the cudgels on behalf of the Eastern European Jews.

"Jacobs then turned to the Minister and said: 'Do you want me to weep, too?'

"The Minister did not insist. He himself had been brought almost to tears. He ordered the issue of five thousand blank permits, at the rate of a thousand every two months. The committee guaranteed that the immigrants would not become a burden upon the country, and that they would be in good health. The future Canadians did indeed arrive. Many of them have made their contribution to the country of their adoption; their sons serve in the military forces of the land which received them when they asked for sanctuary."

To return to Mr. Cohen's letter,

"As soon as the news was circulated, objection was voiced by many of our own people here that we would be unable to bear the burden of absorbing such a large number of destitutes, particularly as conditions were not good in the country. In the meantime, owing to the urgency of the situation, the J.C.A. began forwarding the immigrants.

"I called an emergency conference of representatives of Canadian Jewish societies at Toronto, in January 1924, for the purpose of mobilizing our communities to help in the work. It was there decided that as the present position in Europe was the result of the American immigration restrictions -- and also on account of the promises of the Ukrainian Society -- American Jewry should be called upon to assist the undertaking."

Cohen's spare diary of those months is full of these preoccupations. He records that on the 15th of Jan., 1924 he left for New York in connection with the immigrants. The following day,

accompanied by Simon Belkin and A.H. Jasby and by Toronto's Rabbi Brickner, he met Rabbi Stephen S. Wise as well as the leaders of the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society, the Ukrainian Ferband and the American Jewish Congress; the following day with the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee. A week later he met with O.R.T.'s Singalovsky on this problem in Montreal.

Again, back to Mr. Cohen's own words,

"You will recall the conference which we held in Dr. Wise's institution on January 16th, at which representatives of the American Jewish Congress, the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society and the Ferband were present.

"I also called, with Rabbi Brickner of Toronto, upon Mr. David Bressler of the Joint Distribution Committee, and you were good enough to accompany me to the meeting of the H.I.A.S., which was specially called to consider this question. After my setting forth the facts, and an eloquent appeal by you, the H.I.A.S. agreed to send us $5,000.00 a month for three months. You will remember my protest at this insufficient sum to meet the heavy undertaking.

"The other organizations in your city could do nothing but give us their moral support."

The day by day reports from the Halifax docks tell of the SS Canada which arrived on New Year's Day 1924 with 256 immigrants. Of these 245 were admitted immediately, 11 after medical examination. Sixty-nine proceeded to the west, 78 to Ontario and 109 to Montreal. Of the latter 24 found homes in the Papineau area; 14 were taken to relatives; 12 by Landsleit. Jobs were found by the committee at once for 15. Five had adequate financial help from American relatives. Eight were placed in a sheltering home, 9 in the orphanage. A fortnight later 102 reached Halifax aboard the SS Antonia. Ninety-seven were admitted at once; 4 after examination. One man died. Twenty-seven went to the west, 20 to Toronto, 7 to Hamilton, 8 to Kingston, 39 to Montreal.

In one of his letters to Barondess urging continued transmission of promised funds for the project, Cohen wrote on Jan. 4, 1924,

"We have already received 450 of our poor fellow co-religionists, a splendid lot of people indeed, including a number of widows with small children. As a matter of fact, if your quota had not been exhausted, these people would now be landing on your shores.

The J.C.A. report of the arrival of the last group in Nov. 1924 is vivid:

"Accompanied by Mr. S.B. Haltrecht, Manager of the Jewish Immigrant Aid Society, and Mr. S.B. Kaufman, Honorary Secretary, Emergency Jewish Immigrant Aid Committee, Toronto, I went to Halifax to meet the last group of refugees which arrived on the 'President Wilson.' The boat arrived in quarantine on November 19th, late in the afternoon, and the immigrants were not able to land before the next morning. Through the assistance of Mr. Charles Zwerling, President of the J.I.A.S. branch in Halifax, we obtained permission from the immigration authorities to go on board ship on the evening of November 19th in order to register the immigrants and commence our work of distributing them throughout the country.

"We spent all night working on the 'President Wilson' where the captain and his assistants gave us every help. I must mention that this group contained a considerable number of large families, and it was a difficult problem to assign their destination.

"When the immigrants landed in the morning some sixty of them were detained after the first medical examination. This caused a delay in our departure from Halifax. As usual, Messrs. Zwerling and Kitz did everything necessary to facilitate the release of the immigrants detained. After the second examination only sixteen were detained for observation. They were all released shortly afterwards.

"In order that immigrants destined to the west should not pass through Montreal and Toronto, where many immigrants have escaped from the train and disappeared in the cities instead of proceeding to their destination, it was arranged that the western group should travel via Quebec directly to Winnipeg. In order to make connections at Quebec, I took charge of the 187 people destined to the west and left Halifax on the Maritime Express on Thursday afternoon, November 20th, leaving Messrs. Haltrecht and Kaufman in charge of the Montreal and Toronto groups which travelled by special train from Halifax to Montreal and Toronto. On the train, I had difficulty with some immigrants who became ill. One of them had a severe attack of kidney trouble and a doctor had to be summoned by telegram at Rivière du Loup. On arrival at Quebec, we took off seven immigrants -- two of them sick and the others accompanying. There, Mr. Sheps, Vice President of the Winnipeg branch of the J.I.A.S., took charge of the immigrants for the rest of their journey to Winnipeg.

"Due to the efforts of Zwerling and Harry Kitz, representatives of the J.I.A.S. in Halifax, none of the immigrants who arrived with our groups were deported and none were detained for a very long period. Even two members who are crippled were permitted to land after Messrs. Zwerling and Kitz intervened in their behalf."

Cohen continues his narrative,

"My letters to Mr. John Bernstein, Mr. Richards and yourself, will bear out how I urged and implored your societies not to lose the advantage of the great opportunity of rescue which our concession made possible. At the banquet to Dr. Wise I also made an appeal for this purpose.

"At the same time, representations had been made to our committee, that because of the concession granted by the Government to bring in refugees, Canadian Jews were deprived of bringing their relatives.

"By the first of May, not more than 1,000 of the allotment had been used, and it was intimated by the Department that the unused quota would be cancelled.

"As we regarded the concessions as a great boon to our people, and being desirous of conserving the quota to its limit, we cast about for ways whereby it could be utilized.

"S.W. Jacobs and I again called upon the Department and asked that a broader interpretation be given to the concession. The Department was not inclined to make any changes, on account of protests received from labour organizations, sectarian societies and others; it was intimated to the Government that the new immigrants were Bolsheviks.

"A suggestion at this time came from Mr. H.M. Levine, a past President of the Baron de Hirsch Institute, and a gentleman well regarded in Government circles, to the effect that he would look after self-paying relatives at no charge to them over the regular steamship rate, and would also help to select the assisted immigrants, to the satisfaction of the Department and at no expense whatever to the J.C.A. This was considered an excellent idea, as unscrupulous agents were circularizing the country in an attempt to fleece the people, by asking them $50 to $100 additional fees for their influence."

Securing the permission of cabinet and of deputy minister was but one of the beginnings of the story. There were other circles of administration: the day-by-day functioning of the apparatus.

On May 5 Cohen went again to Ottawa about Ukrainian refugees held up in Constantinople. "H.M. Levine is being sent to represent the government and the community to select the best immigrants."

Mr. H.M. Levine proceeded from Montreal to Europe to help implement the Canadian commitment. His letters to S.W. Jacobs in Ottawa are a litany of troubles: "Insurmountable difficulties... Certain promises and assurances given me verbally were not communicated in the same spirit to the London office...

"I waited in Paris for Lyon's cable informing me that he had completed arrangements with Robb, Egan and yourself, but when he arrived in London he made the same discovery as I did, viz., no instructions.

"Various cables were forwarded to you and to Egan requesting certain important privileges so as to expedite the completion of the ICA quota. They favoured us by extending the permit to Jewish Russian refugees throughout Europe instead of Bucharest only. This, literally speaking, is a wonderful concession but the limiting of the visaeing to Paris and Bucharest is ridiculous and a contradition to the extended permit. It means that migrants in Constantinople, Danzig and Riga have to come to Paris to be visaed and, should some unforeseen defect or medical cause be discovered, the emigrant is left on the hands of the transportation company without the possibility of returning to the country that he left.

"Furthermore the concession granted me to make a selection of a desirable class from Russian Jewish refugees is simply ridiculous. It is impossible to find the self-supporting class amongst refugees. Hence the reason for requesting you and Egan to eliminate the words 'Russian refugee' and to substitute 'Jewish emigrant'. This would give me an opportunity of making the proposed selection from a desirable class.

"Certain privileges had been given to agents on behalf of relatives living in Canada who have friends and relations in Poland, Lithuania and other European centres, and who cannot possibly be admitted because they are not Russian refugees.

"I trust that this explanation will assist you to put the matter clearly before the proper authorities. I have been in this city for almost three months and cannot accomplish or carry out my trust without these changes.

"Whilst in Bucharest I received your cable requesting me to carry out your arrangements with Schwartz and expected me to live up to the promises made with you before leaving Montreal. I communicated this information to Schwartz, and asked him to bring before the Canadian Commissioner and myself the three hundred emigrants whom he was supposed to have there -- and he could not do so because they were not Russians.

"The same thing applied to the number that I had booked but, when brought before the proper authorities, they did not come under the selection to be made from Russian refugees.

"I am sorry to say that Schwartz was absolutely stranded. He had been kept in Bucharest for several months with the understanding that I was coming to Rumania with all the necessary credentials and power to do almost anything, but, when explaining him my position, he realised that we were both in the same boat and, before leaving Bucharest for Paris, I had to loan him 10,000 lei so he could at least exist. I have just written him that no further extension or privilege has been granted and therefore cannot do anything for him.

"I am empowered to make the selection and give the final visa on paper; that is a wonderful privilege, but that is the extent of my powers. I have written a lengthy and personal letter to Egan and, on receipt of this letter, I would suggest that you compare notes with him and point out the absolute necessity without any serious results or different interests than what was originally agreed to, and would request that final instructions be given to London in accordance with these particulars.

"Referring to a cable received from London that I am not carrying out the arrangements made by Lyon, Yourself and others, of making a fair distribution to competing companies, how can this be done when no passengers have been forwarded due to existing conditions? All the stranded emigrants now at the various European ports have to be brought to Paris, admitted into a new country so as to be visaed. This is not practical.

"I have requested the London office to allow their Bucharest agent to proceed with me to Constanza, which is in Rumania, to visa the passengers from Constantinople, and this has been refused, which means that to endeavour to send these refugees to Canada, they will have to be brought from Constantinople to Marseilles and from Marseilles to Paris before they can obtain their visas. Is this practical? Surely, when placing these facts before the Department, they should clearly see that they are giving us a privilege at one end and putting impossible restrictions on the other, making the whole thing impossible." (P.A.C. Jacobs Papers, MQ 27, Aug. 7, 1924)

Jacobs replied on Aug. 22, 1924, "Things have not gone as smoothly as we all expected on the matter of the quota. Mr. Egan is interpreting our understanding with him so strictly that our work is almost impossible...I did not for a moment believe that he was going to interpret Russian refugees as those who were driven out and unable to return to their country. As we use these words, they have a broader significance, and mean people who are obliged for various reasons to leave their country and to seek a new home here...The shipping companies are giving us no end of trouble, quarrelling over their share.. In my varied experience I have never seen such a rotten lot...

"I actually believe that these people consider that Cohen, myself and others on the ICA are dividing profits in this business. The small shipping agents are worse. They circulate all kinds of stories with regard to us, and I know that my public position has been to a certain extent affected by these rumors. Someone, (I believe it was H.....) sent an anonymous communication to the Department, claiming that our office is making from $100. to $200. per immigrant, and that the sky only is the limit. Copies of this scurrilous document were sent to the Prime Minister, Mr. Robb and several others, so you can see that out of this business I have had nothing but annoyance and bitterness.

"One of the officials of a Shipping Company told me that all your movements in Bucharest have been carefully watched, and that it was reported to Mr. Egan (I think from Europe), that there are certain things which have been done by you which ought not to have been done, -- charging immigrants over and above regular tickets, etc. Furthermore, it is stated that you are travelling about with a man called Epstein, an American ticket agent, who has not a very good reputation, and this is construed here as a proof that the work which you were to have carried out has been made subservient to your own interests. I am afraid your position has been somewhat damaged, and altogether things are not what we expected.

"When Robb returns, as I said before, I am going to have a talk with him, but I feel that I shall require more backing up in my statements, by others of our Committee, and I am impatiently awaiting Cohen's return...

"Egan has decided that the Companies, outside of the Holland-American, shall have 1200 of the quota, these to come forward concurrently with the Holland-American immigrants, but if Mr. Egan insists on a strict interpretation of the original agreement, they will all be in the same box as the Holland-American." (Jacobs Papers, III, Pp. 1003-6)

To continue with Mr. Cohen's report,

"At a further meeting in Ottawa, held on the 11th of June prior to my departure for Europe, it was arranged with the Minister and Deputy Minister that the quota be extended to include self-paying immigrants and Russian refugees at other ports than Bucharest; and Paris was added as a visaing point.

"As the Canadian steamship companies were pressing for some of the business, it was decided at this conference that they be allotted 1200 of the quota.

"It was our intention to allow Mr. Levine from 800 to 1000 of self-paying relatives, and the steamship companies to utilize their ports, which were being maintained by them.

"On my arrival in Paris, after conferring with the heads of the J.C.A., we agreed upon a modus operandi whereby the balance of the Russian refugees in Roumania, numbering about 2,000, were to be forwarded, providing that help to absorb them in Canada was forthcoming from the United States; and I was advised by our Montreal office, that as a result of the conference held in New York on June 22nd, an undertaking was given to this effect.

"In the Montreal office of the J.C.A. applications were being received for the transportation of relatives of Canadians.

"In the meantime, some steamship agents, who were not benefitting by these arrangements, were flooding the Government with false reports. These, I feel, had the effect of making the Department adopt a more restrictive attitude towards our concession than they would otherwise have done.

"The question of the origin of the passports they held and of the destination of the immigrants at the ports having been brought to the attention of the Government, and the fear that our country might be used as a back door to the United States, no doubt largely influenced the events that followed.

"Disputes had also arisen between the steamship companies and Mr. Levine as to priority of shipments. The J.C.A. had also practically completed the evacuation of the refugees from Roumania.

"On account of these annoying factors, and the Government's desire to eliminate the expense entailed in maintaining offices especially for this concession, the Immigration Department, on the advice of the Deputy Minister, who was in Europe, cancelled the quota.

"Your newspapers have so twisted the facts as to make it appear that there was a great scandal and that people in high places were involved. Mr. Levine, who has spent his whole summer in Europe, and has not earned $1 for all his efforts, as none of the self-paying immigrants have come forward, has been much maligned. Some of us have even sacrificed health in the work."

The newspaper report to which Mr. Cohen referred was a grievously damaging despatch in the Yiddish Morning Journal of New York on which there is a memorandum in the records of the J.C.A. (National Archives of the Canadian Jewish Congress)

"The Canadian correspondent of the Jewish Morning Journal reports an extraordinary story which, if accurate, reflects the profoundest discredit -- if not worse -- on the famous ICA -- the Jewish Colonization Association.

"This body, which in the last generation has achieved a high reputation as one of the Jewish philanthropies, appears to have abused in the grossest fashion a privilege which it managed to obtain from the Canadian Government in regard to the five thousand Jewish Ukrainian refugees who are about to be expelled from Roumania.

"According to the correspondent above quoted, the ICA, having persuaded the Canadian Government to admit the five thousand refugees, began to ship them over from Roumania, helping them to the extent of paying half their fare. Later, however, the ICA, running short of funds, declared that the permissions to enter Canada still held good, but that it would not help anyone in the matter of fare. Ukrainian refugees in Roumania had to find their own fare.

"The number of refugees with fare to America was extremely small and that number was exhausted long before the five thousand quota was taken advantage of. It is alleged that the ICA, instead of placing the matter squarely before the public or instead of appealing to the JDC, extended the privilege of entering Canada to anyone who wished to do so, whether or not he was a Ukrainian refugee.

"The motive behind such an act was the desire to save its face, and to make the appearance of having carried out its philanthropic enterprise. This one dishonesty was accompanied by another, involving a rake-off of twenty-five dollars per immigrant for the ICA agent from the steamship line which had been specially favored. The result has been a withdrawal of permits by the Canadian Government.

"This is a matter which demands the immediate investigation of the Jews of Canada. Already one anti-Semitic paper, has taken full advantage of the incident, and has made it the basis of a violent attack on the Jews in general and on Jewish immigration in particular; not failing to expand generously on the theme. If the ICA has actually stooped to methods like these, owing to shortage of funds and to false pride in refusing to make that shortage public, the Jews have every right to know about it. It is true that the ICA, not being elected by the Jews, but representing the old Shtadlonus method, is responsible to no one. But the public has at least the right to protect itself by a disclaimer and by boycott."

For an understanding of the idological background of this harmful press report, we need to recall the political conflict within the Jewish community on the issue of democratic structure of its institutions. The Yiddish press, deriving from the downtowns of the American and Canadian cities, was hostile towards the up-town and its agencies, even when it conceded their value. The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee and the JCA were objects of their frequent attacks.

To return to the Cohen document,

"Three thousand of our co-religionists -- a very large number indeed in view of the prevailing conditions in the world -- have found a refuge. It is my belief that if American Jewry had listened to you and me in our appeals and had come forth early in the year with substantial assistance, the entire quota would have been conserved.

"As it is, we must be thankful for having rescued this number, and if no injury will result from the distorted news which has been broadcast everywhere, another year may bring the opportunity of further relief to those who are still in despair.

" I want to add that, having been largely instrumental, with my friend Jacobs, in bringing into this country these refugees and imposing a burden upon Canadian Jewry, I expect that you, my dear Barondess, who can feel and sympathize with us, will see to it that the promises which have been made by American Jewry will be carried out."

The American H.I.A.S. delegated its Barondess and Cecilia Rasovsky to Canada to assist in this relief action. (M. Wischnitzer. Visas to Freedom. Cleveland, World Publishing Co., 1956. P.115)

As late as Feb. 1925 the government relaxed its restrictions to allow 1300 refugees into Canada, giving preference to those already with relatives residing in the country. (P.A.C., RG 76, vol. 82)

Belkin records that this was used as a precedent later in the year when the Canadian committee of the J.C.A. in October secured "a quota" of 1500 for the year. (P.A.C., MG30, C 119) These were admitted even when the continuous journey clause and certain passport requirements could not be observed.

The project of which Mr. Cohen thus tells us is a complicated but important incident in the Jewish history of the decade and deserves attention if only because it is a rare case of ministerial benevolence which, apparently, did not sit well on the independent power of the civil "service" establishment.

U.S. Jews were called upon, but they were not yet experienced in the vast relief philanthropy which they were to learn in the '40's, and the assistance they extended did not match that given by the French-centered Jewish Colonization Association.

In point of fact, only some 1500 refugees in Rumania qualified under the administration's definitions. Yet the government did not cancel the project at that date. The community in Canada fought for its remaining "quota" of 3,500 Jews to be rescued, a posture that denigrated the term in the department's eyes, though it was an official American term.

This Canadian struggle coincided with that of Jews in many countries to save their distressed refugee relatives stranded in various European lands, now that the American noose was tightening too. For a moment Canada was a land of gleaming freedom of entry on the darkening Jewish geography. Nothing could anger deputy minister Egan more.

One act in this drama was a mirror image of the 1921 Halifax deportation story already told. This time it was the U.S. that held 500 Jews arriving in Nov. 1923 for deportation. Again, Barondess and Freiman and Jacobs and Lyon Cohen. This time Canada was in the locus of Cuba. After the usual sapping pleading, Canada agreed to mercy which, in the event, was not needed. The American opposite numbers of the Canadian men with brass buttons relented, and it was not necessary for the Dominion to give temporary shelter to the menaced ones.

The skies did not fall, nor did the Canadian dollar.

These groups were the first community-sponsored immigrants into Canada. They were to be followed in the event-laden decades ahead by thousands of others. For the initiative, devotion and efficacy of the Canadian community had proven sufficient to become active and useful in the rescue and rehabilitation work which is so much of twentieth century Jewish history.

To return to the movement of Rumanian refugees, the manner of recording their arrival is revealing. We have several versions of their story.

The very wording of the oral report of the deputy minister on this migration movement is revealing of attitudes towards human crises and towards one of the great humanitarians of the world:

"Some years ago, at the request of -- I cannot think of his name at the moment -- an explorer, well known in Geneva -- Nansen -- who had submitted to the Minister at the time, a statement of the conditions surrounding Russian Jews -- members of Jewry -- who were fugitives to Roumania. He put up an appeal, on behalf of the League of Nations, that something should be done to bring a certain number of these people here and have them established, providing Jewry on its own undertaking would assume the responsibility of their after-care under any and all conditions; and that quota was established."

The version of this history as it rankled in the mind of Ottawa is enshrined in a document from "A.D.M." to the Hon. Mr. Gordon of Oct. 4, 1933. It was a decisive letter, for it was intended to inform the minister on the admission of Jews from Germany now under Hitler domination. Indeed, it is one of the first documents on Canadian policy in regard to the admission of Jewish refugees from Hitlerism. It reads in part,

"The efforts to get Jewish quotas into Canada dates back to September, 1923. At that time we were informed that there were many thousands of Jewish people in South Eastern Europe, particularly in Roumania, who were facing starvation, persecution and death. A quota of 5,000 was given and, by the time it had been about two-thirds completed, it became evident that the privilege of belonging to the quota had become a matter of barter, and was being controlled largely by Jewish interests centred in New York. I need not say any more about the quota feature as it stinks to high heaven, and I would like to forget it.

"The Department has been approached many times in past years for quotas for other suffering peoples. The Armenian people, two-thirds of whom were annihilated during the war, have appealed time and again. We did accept two small groups of Armenian boys and one small group of Armenian girls. Various efforts have been made to find an asylum in Canada for Chaldeans or more properly Assyrians. There is at present an approach for an open door for some of the descendants of these ancient people coming from Mesopotamia where they are having trouble with the Iraq authorities."

A history-as-a-Jewish-conspiracy version appeared in the Proceedings of the Royal Society of Canada as late as 1970 (Ser. 3, vol. 8, P. 113) by a member of the Society, a historian of Quebec education, Louis-Philippe Audet of the education faculty of the Université de Montréal, author of Histoire du Conseil de l'instruction publique de la Province de Québec, 1856-1964 (Montreal, Leméac, 1964), in his paper on "La Question des écoles juives: 1870-1931;" this paper was an excerpt from his then forthcoming

volume, L'Histoire de 1'enseignement au Québec, vol. 2, (issued by Holt Rinehardt et Winston in Montreal in 1971, P. 241.)

"Canadian immigration policy, influenced by the demands of the large international Jewish associations, favoured the coming of large numbers of Jewish immigrants.

"During the decade of the 1920's James Alexander Robb, federal minister of immigration, bowing to the pressures of the Jewish member Samuel William Jacobs for the constituency of Cartier, exempted Jewish contingents from regulatory conditions, on the basis of article 4 of the law. In 1923 he signed a permit favoring the admission of 5,000 Jews 'persecuted' in Russia."

He quotes Rumilly, "These immigrants came soundlessly on small ships. They came in old smocks, with poorly tied packages in ships' steerage. Their arrival was unnoticed, and the special permit of 1923 was revealed only after the passing of Robb in a statement by Jacobs." (XII.133)

Similar criticism of the movement appeared in the unspeakable Le Goglu of July 25, 1930 which said that the coming of these immigrants had become known only through Jacobs' tribute to the Hon. J.A. Robb in the Gazette of Dec. 16, 1929. The Jewish legislator had credited Robb with saving these 5,000 Jews from death; added Le Goglu: "at the expense of 5,000 Catholic French Canadians exiled."

Of course the story of a "soundless" movement is a fabrication, magnified and laundered into academic respectability from Arcand to the Royal Society via Rumilly!

The movement was recorded in the press at the time,

The Winnipeg Free Press carried a report on the movement on Nov. 14, 1924 based on information from the local office of the C.N.R. and commented on by the Ontario precursors of Arcand. They were speaking in the sanctimonious terms, not of French Canadian Catholic piety, but in the accents of British imperialism and the patriotism of a war veteran.

In Quebec, as we noted from the New York Morning Journal, the movement was reported -- and misrepresented -- and was the occasion of anti-Jewish agitation.

The Toronto Telegram -- much more acceptable in its Canadian universe than Le Goglu was in Quebec -- published a report on Sept. 22, 1924 from H.S. Morton: "Canada's Immigration Slogan Mocked at by Jews...Where is Jacobs' Pull?"

"Canada's laws are being defied and evaded every time an urban Jew enters." Of the 5,000 who were permitted into the country, it wrote, "This deal is a scandal...It was alleged that these refugees in Roumania were Russian refugees from the Bolsheviks. They were not. They were Russian Jews who left Russia when war started so that they would not have to bear arms. Roumania was only too glad to get rid of them...An influx of Jews puts a worm next to the kernel of every fair city where they get a hold. These people have no national tradition, though they have a racial. They engage in the wars of no country, but flit from one to the other under passports changed with chameleon swiftness, following up wind with the smell of lucre. They are not the material out of which to shape a people holding a national spirit...Jews of all countries should be discriminated against as a race by a poll tax." (Sept. 22, 1924)

Florence Cohen wrote in the Canadian Jewish Review of Oct. 3, 1924 that the Telegram had slandered Jews and Jews' behaviour and evoked the abhorrence of decent people. "The Review remains one of the Telegram's most ardent non-supporters."

When challenged, the Toronto daily explained that the allegations against Jacobs' person were published in ignorance. "A blunder in the composing room" was responsible. But Jacobs' and other letters of protest always "indicate a chronic European inability to understand questions affecting the safety of the British Empire or the life of the Canadian nation." On the other hand, Mr. Morton had served on the front, in air battles against Germany and against the Reds. In Russia he had fought under Denikin! His schooling in anti-Semitism was impeccable.

There is not a scintilla of evidence or even of a rumour of malfeasance of any kind in connection with this Canadian movement by any Jewish person -- although in the climate of the time there developed, on the world arena, a number of rackets fleecing the desperate migrants seeking irregular entry into some lands of entry. Yet there were tragic political consequences to the cloud cast over this group migration.

These negative comments dating back to 1924 affected decisions made a decade later in regard to the saving of lives from Hitler.

Early in 1927 Egan wrote to the Jewish Immigrant Aid Society,

"Referring to conferences in which we have discussed the question of a Jewish quota for 1927, I beg to advise you that certain conclusions have been reached by the Minister which I am now communicating to you.

"1) Numerical quotas have been definitely abandoned. Since the last Jewish quota was agreed upon, regulation known as P.C. 183 has been extended by Order-in-Council known as P.C 534. It is impossible at the moment to say how large a movement is provided for in the amended regulation. Various estimates here place the number quite as high, and some of them higher, than the Jewish quota number of last year.

"You will recall that at one of the conferences the statement was made by two or three of the representatives of J.I.A.S. and I.C.A. that a large movement was not desired, and that a movement of approximately the same number as last year's quota would be about all the Society could properly take care of. During the present calendar year we will, therefore operate under the amended regulation and we will know definitely at the end of the year just what movement is provided for within the regulations.

"2) Refugees without valid passports will, if within the relationship of the regulations, be favourably considered on the undertaking of I.C.A. or J.I.A.S. as last year. Wives and unmarried children, dependents of heads of families admitted as such without passports under any previous quota arrangement will be admitted on the undertaking of the Society which gave the undertaking for the head of the family. (Jan. 3, 1927)

In the course of the intense efforts to validate the "quota" of permits issued to the Jewish community implied in the original grant for Russian-Rumanian refugees, F.C. Blair, assistant director of Immigration, revealed his strong opposition to the entry of Jews. He read to a delegation of a score of Jewish representatives

a memorandum, as Belkin remembers, which he had prepared in February, 1926 for the Hon. Chas. Stewart, the then Minister of Immigration, on the question of quotas. He held the opinion that quotas for permanent admission of immigrants were illegal. Under Section 4 of the Act, the Minister of Immigration was able to issue permits for temporary admission only. Quotas were unfair if given to one race. To grant a privilege and to limit its application to a certain group of people was to help the creation of the idea that laws were made to be broken. The regulations governing immigration to Canada encouraged the admission to this country of farmers and domestic servants. Jewish immigrants were mostly an urban element. To grant a quota to city people was an infraction of our immigration policy as a whole. Besides, many of these immigrants coming to the cities would not stay there and would perhaps go elsewhere. (This refers to the charge of the Department that Jews used Canada as a back door to the United States.)

The memorandum went on to say that quotas had been granted in the past for the following reasons: political, financial and vocal. By the term "political" he said "the Jews have utilized the opportunity and, when occasion had arisen, have taken advantage of the political situation." Under the term "financial" he meant to say "because Jews have been able to raise funds for the purpose, and later endeavor to make it a means of gain." As for the "vocal reasons", he described it as follows: "Because the Jews have been able to organize public opinion in their favor, creating the impression that they are the most oppressed people, deserving special consideration." He concluded by stating that the method of handling Jewish cases through the J.I.A.S. was a vast improvement over what it was before.

Suddenly Egan launched an attack on the J.I.A.S., charging that its representatives did not properly investigate the applications submitted through the society, and that many applicants were charged high fees for services rendered. He further went on to say that the Department was in possession of "thousands of complaints" from both Montreal and Toronto. While it was true that there were some applicants who gave false information as to their relationship to the immigrants and a few applicants even gave false addresses, it did not happen in "thousands of cases." His bringing up this charge indicated clearly the attitude of the senior Immigration officials. As for the complaint that immigrants were charged exorbitant fees by the society; this too was motivated by a desire to find fault and to cancel any privileges. (Belkin, P. 151)

At this fatally decisive moment the resentment which had been brewing for a decade in the hearts of the officials, because a decade earlier they had performed an act of mercy in admitting Russian refugees, who found themselves trapped in Nazi-model Rumania, found vengeful expression. The key word that triggered the pathological explosion was quotas. That word had become associated with that 1923 movement through a minor verbal misunderstanding. It had inexplicably become sinister in the ears and mouths of the powerful Ottawa officials, associated with Jewish conspiracies, and nightmares in which those Canadian knights stood at the barricade defending their country against invading Armenians and pre-historic Chaldeans.

THANK YOU

Of course, statistics tell so incomplete a story as to be misleading, for they do not tell the infinitely varied biographies; they do not tell of the social processes and creativities brought to Canada; they do not tell of future progeny not counted at the ports, of the shaping of the Canadian topography, of its economics, of its political contours. They do not count the wealth that is a human being and his family, his experiences and his memory and his record of these.

Meilech Schiff recalls Lost Boryslaw and his rescue from doomed Europe,

"I was already around thirty years old, and given the general situation -- in the country, in my work, in my personal life -- I began to think seriously of emigrating.

"I naturally thought of going to America, for all the good reasons and also because Mottel was there. But it was not so easy. Since the end of the war America had imposed a quota -- from each foreign country only a limited number of immigrants were taken in each year, and it took years until you got your next. I went to the American consulate in Warsaw to get my quota number, and I began to wait. I waited and waited, but with no results.

"So I decided to emigrate to Argentina. I already had a number of friends who had gone there, and I figured that that was the second best place to go. And anyway, if your goal was to leave Poland in a hurry, as mine was, it really didn't matter very much where you went. My mind was made up and I prepared to take out the appropriate papers.

"Meanwhile a cousin of ours, Malke Siegel, who lived in Montreal, Canada, visited Europe and came to see her relatives in Boryslaw. When we met she asked me what my future plans were. When I told her that I was just about on my way to Argentina she immediately objected. 'Don't go there; it's too far from everywhere. When I get back to Montreal I will send you the papers that will allow you to come to Canada.'

"When I recall this episode today I bow my head for this God-sent woman. And if I were religious I would pray for her soul. She was the life saver of all our family. And time passed and Malke Siegel returned to Montreal and she kept her word.

"A couple of week later I received a permit to enter Canada.

"And so I prepared to leave Boryslaw, my home town. With all the misery and the unhappiness that I lived through in that Boryslaw, I still loved it so much. Every dirty little store, every street, all my friends -- everything was so dear to me. And yet -- I was happy to leave. I was off to a new world -- I had a future, and everybody envied me. Just imagine, going to Canada -- me! But I was very sentimental too. Call me "kvatch" (weakling), but though I didn't show anything my heart beat sadly when I looked at my poor parents. They had suffered so much in their lives and now, in their old age, a son was leaving them, and God only knew if they would ever see him again. Naturally I felt the same way. Would I ever see my parents again?

"But this does not stop you. You have to go on with your plans. The first thing I did was to apply for a passport. I stood before a clerk, an ignoramus for sure. He started to question me: 'Who are you? What is your profession? What is your religion?' I answered all his questions, but when I replied, 'Jewish,' he nearly collapsed. 'Oh,' he said, 'you're the Christ killer.' I couldn't stand this, and I replied, 'Really now, how can a plain man like me be the killer of a god?' That shut his mouth up and he processed the rest of my application quickly.

"I was busy for a couple of months like that, going through all kinds of red tape. It was not easy to get out of Poland at that time, although they didn't want you particularly to stay either! But they knew why you wanted to leave, they knew that you were going to lead a much better life, socially and economically, elsewhere, and they used all their sadistic methods just to make your last months in the country more difficult. But finally I got all my papers in order and I was ready to leave.

"Yes, a couple of days after I had received my Canadian permit, I received a letter from Mottel containing a ticket for boat passage to Montreal. She enclosed a couple of extra dollars for me too. We owe her a lot for all that she did for us.

"The day of departure approached. I packed my things. I said good-bye to a different friend every day. One of my girl friends cracked a joke: 'Maybe you'll stash me in your valise and take me with you?' I on the other hand looked at my poor mother and father and it was no joke. They were old. Lipa was married. Willy was in the army. Usher gave them as much trouble as 'Nachis' -- they lived in fear that he could be arrested any minute of any day. And that left my parents with just the two young girls, Pessel and Chana...

"It was a beautiful, middle of July day. Though it was still early in the morning the sun was already shining brightly. And Genya's brother-in-law came along with two horses and a buggy to take me to the station. He worked as a chauffeur in an oil mine and he was able to do me this favor. Everybody got on the buggy and off we went. It was a one kilometer trip to the station, but it seemed to me that only a second had passed and we were there.

"I began to say good-bye to each person separately. Everybody cried. I tried to choke back my tears in order to show my heroism and in order not to hurt Mother and Father so much. But it did not help. I burst out in a terrible cry and that made me feel much better. The engine whistle blew and I entered the coach, and slowly the train began to move. I can still see them all waving good-bye...

"Alone on the train, I began to cry uncontrollably. By coincidence an old schoolmate was travelling on this same train to Lemberg. He came over to me and asked, 'What is is, Meilech? Has someone dies in the family?' 'No,' I said, 'I'm leaving for Canada for good and I'll never see my parents again!' 'You should be happy that you're leaving Poland,' he said, 'you'll never hear anyone say 'Parszywy Jydic,' lousy Jew, any more. I wish I could be in your shoes.' And he really comforted me.

"It was only years later, with the outbreak of a new war, that we all realized with a shiver the fate that we had escaped without knowing by leaving when we did." (Lost Boryslaw, Memories of a Galician Youth. New York, Vantage, 1977. XII, 162 p.)

For sheer extraneousness and even atonality we bring from the nation's anthology some lines from an essay by the Yiddish playwright, Peretz Hershbein, on becoming a citizen of the frightening western Canadian prairies. The writer evokes the dominion's vastness with its trepidation and excitement, even as he recalls in farewell the warmth that yet had existed in the persecutory Russian pale.

"I drew through Canadian miles, while storm dust yellowed the green of the fields where the pioneer had deserted his home and the bones of fallen cattle.

"I passed through miles of happy surfeit covering the face of the earth, when tractors sang under summer skies. Children of all the nations brought their strong hands and awakened a young, distant and nearby world.

"So, as I draw through Canada now, I see the young future winking at me.

"Cold and distant Canada.

"Nevertheless Jews are drawn to it, one by one, a wholesome assembly, healthy, in love with work, patient men in search of repose. Canada attracted the man who would stretch out his hands towards the distance of the northern breath that forges into steel the young earth for an entire winter.

"It is my sense of rest and breadth that brings me so often to Canada; the great open plains of Manitoba, Saskatchewan, the granite mountains of Alberta. Their magic calls, 'Strike free your roots into Canadian soil.'

"The Jewish environment here is not caught up in the twisting American tornado which turns and scatters pieces of our life into waste corners." (1932 Anniversary Issue of Jewish Daily Eagle)

And again,

"Why does a man need so much breadth? The chick pecking its way from the confining egg is afraid of the spaciousness, and hides under the wings of mother.

"If you ask me whether I am happy to feel at home in Canada, I tell you, too much of anything is not good. Did you ever measure Canada? They say it stretches from sea to sea and its breadth is immeasurable, for the railroads reach to the coasts, but the breadth goes into very winter. Try to say that you are master of such a land. Try to say, In my country; try to say, In my country all people have full rights, that in my country everybody chooses their busybodies, everybody can buy an estate, can send his son to study medicine, even his daughter for law.

"You can say or do anything, call me any name you want, but I am a Jew. And if I want, I tell myself that I am a Jew and will remain a Jew. It is good and warm to the heart to feel sure that even here you are what you have been; and a Jew, when he still prays, says, 'And you shall return to your City Jerusalem in your mercies.' ("A Jew Remains a Jew", in Eagle, 1938 anniversary issue, p.35)

The ancient seafarer's cry of "Land" had distinctively Jewish additional tones in mid-century. Winnipeg's Falk Zolf records them in his autobiographical novel, Oif Fremder Erd (On Foreign Soil).

"The night was slowly extinguishing. The grey began towards a day. The east horizon slowly lit up creeping red-blue. The passengers, tired though they were, had no thought of ending their dance, when suddenly voices, 'Land, Earth, Land, Ground.'

'Everybody turned towards the darkish stain cutting out on the far sky. Now it was joyful, 'Canada!, America!, Canada!'

"Elderly Jews, awakened by the words, tremblingly prayed. Christians made the sign of the cross. Some dropped to their knees. All were seized by joy and fear of the new alien land. 'Canada! Canada!'

"It is the same earth on which your ancestors had sat so long, that spit you out. How can you tell but that new, alien land, where the breath of Bible-Creation hovers, will receive you as its own?

"The raw, monotonous paysage rolls past the window, challenges you to absorb what you see.

"What a vast land it is! How many communities can be created, how many Jewish wanderers floating over the seas can find a plot of land on which to plant a foot, while miles and miles of empty land roll on.

"So a thousand years ago the exiles of Ashkenaz set out to find a new land and found a forsaken steppe. Legend has it that Hebrew inscription invited them, 'Sleep the night here.' With blood and sweat they made their settlements in Poland. And now the shamed children of those pioneers are driven out to find new emptinesses for their home...

"The eyes peer into a wealth of field and forest, hills and rivers, not previously experienced. It cuts deeper into the nearby thick woods, into the rock at its edge, for the slightest hint of a sign of a promise of the home to be.

"Yes, here on this broad earth I shall find bread to eat and a corner for my head. This broad, rich land needs our blood and sweat.

"Between the forests a farmer's hut has smoke coming from its chimney. From a clothesline the wind tangles sheets and sleeves and towels. All together they wave, 'Come, you poor wanderer, hang your shirt near ours; there is plenty of room -- we will swing in the air together, our sleeves in the blowing winds.'

"The train stopped proudly, after imperious clanging at the Montreal station...Children and parents, brothers and sisters, separated for years, were entwined in kisses and hugs; some cried in spasms.

"Soon the conversation turned on immigration, as each one refreshed his memories of his own coming, his pioneering days.

"'What do today's immigrants know of hardship or hunger as we knew them, when we came twenty years ago? We ploughed the earth with our very noses.'

"Another told of the labor of laying the rails for the city's street cars. At night, all fatigued, he ran to his medical classes.

"A third told of breaking sod and clods by hand on the farm, under burning sun or in the midst of clouds of mosquitoes." (Winnipeg, 1945. Pp. 468-503)

Jacob Zipper describes the confusion of his voyage to Montreal. Even on the train from Nova Scotia to Quebec he looks out of the window and is certain that he is still in Europe. The voyage over the sea must have been an illusion.

"Even the Halifax dock had been like a European dock, with barbed wire separating the immigrants from the curious locals. No joy. People are the same everywhere. Except one voice, addressed to no one in particular, about no one in particular, 'Daddy, don't you see? That's him!' We all turn there. But it is hard to tear yourself away from the shadows.

"When we entered the train, faces begin to differentiate. Suddenly a tall thin man appeared, thin and lively, laden with endless packages and cartons under his arms, on his back, hanging from each finger. 'You are Jewish, aren't you? Take one. It is kosher, a gift from the Jewish Immigrant Aid Society. You have a long way to go, to Montreal. They will meet you there. You won't be lost among Jews. Ask about this when you get there.'

"He keeps on moving. Soon the mobile packages are near another immigrant. 'You come at an auspicious time. You won't get lost among Jews. These others, who have countries and governments, no one came to meet them. You can share with them if you wish.'

"The others are jealous of us all the way. There is no one around even to show the way.

"If they would wander over the earth as long as we have been doing, they too will learn to be civilized."

And there is the exhilaration of a free country.

"I waited on the platform with my packs wandering about passing the two hours before my next train. Suddenly a young man came forth. In clear Yiddish he asked, 'A Jew?' 'A Jew.' 'Your destination?' 'I don't know' 'What do you mean?' 'I am going to Winnipeg, in the Governate of Manitoba.' 'Where are you from?' 'From Poland.'

"'If you wish you can sleep over in the Jewish Immigrant Aid Society's home, and rest up from your long trip. Tomorrow you can continue to Winnipeg. I represent the J.I.A.S. Come.'

"Noting the hesitation (heaven knows who he is) he laughed, 'Have no fear; this is not Warsaw.' Soon we were at the immigrants' shelter near the station.

"There young people from Poland, at a long table, playing chess and checkers; others reading. Endless questions showered the newest arrival, mainly on conditions in Poland. Does 'Grabsky's hearse' still range over the small Jewish hamlets ruining community after community? After twelve days of strange French food on the steamer and twenty hours on the railway coach, the Jewish supper was a restoration...

"The first evening in Winnipeg was spent with friends of the editor of the Israelite Press, former political activists of the Poale Zion, the Bund, the S.R., and other socialists and anarchists who had come to Canada after the failure of the Russian revolution of 1905. By now they were doctors, lawyers, dentists and businessmen

On his first morning in Montreal, he was careful to put his passport into his pocket, as he had done every morning of his life on leaving the house.

"'Leave it here,' he was told, 'Nobody will ask you for it. No one cares who you are or where you are going. You only need to know your address. Keep your passport and your landing card. You will need them to become a citizen. That's the kind of country it is, unless you bother somebody.'" (Fun Nechten un Haint. Montreal, 1977, Pp. 141-42, 147)

If good fiction tells essential truth, we can usefully read the character sketch, "Abraham Muscovitch's Michael", of one such survivor of the White Russian massacres who found home and years in Canada to assimilate his childhood experiences. In this story by Elsa Rosenberg in Saturday Night (March 1966, condensed in the Jewish Digest of May 1967, Pp. 55-62) the hero enriches the life of Lucky Lake in Saskatchewan.

In his own manner Canada's great poet J.I. Segal paid his tribute to the Canadian metropolis and brought it into the anthology of Yiddish poetry. So the paraphrased

VIEUX MONTREAL

There is a back lane in Montréal
That once served as city's centre
The grey stones keep flickering in yellow;
A ruined home of God whence
He has moved to white cathedral,
But when I come to pace that street
It seems I hear a thin, thin bell
Dulled behind walls of ashes.

Down the hill, a long House of Life
Small stones, and in their midst
A tall pillar with black stain
Stands an eternal watch.

Far, or not too far, below the port mart,
Tall warehouses, wooden, blind;
A dirty red pennant hangs down,
That is for the wind to engage.

Between narrow streets, walls far away,
A stack from a ship looks out;
A tired mid-day smoke draws out
Like from a wintry house in our old home.

Or his,

LATE SUMMER MONTREAL

Our wooded mountain, our royal mountain,
our Montréal,
Our very great village is milder.
The cars on the shining steel strings
Draw peaceably, quieter.
It is Sunday. All houses are homes,
All windows glow, being washed.

The grey and yellow balconies come
solidly to life
The radios in the well-behaved daytime homes
Pray like miniature pagodas.
They set forth the Bible's prophetic reading
And sing and preach virtue and piety.
The organ gives forth Mendelssohn and Psalms.
And down below, among the poor
At the doorsteps of St. Dominique
Fatigue and eternal need
Remain prostrate in greyness.
Head and shoulders lean on walls
And nod and sleep.
The stone brewery is tightly sealed
Against its great tall steel gates
Only at the rear door portal, yellow and sad,
The electric lamp glows day and night
An alert Eternal Light awake and watchful.

PAUL TREPMAN TELLS.....

Paul Trepman
was born in Warsaw
in 1916

Trepman was raised in Warsaw, but he studied philosophy at the University of Vilno, because policy in Warsaw severly restricted the number of university places open to Jews.

During the Holocaust, he lost all members of his family who were in Poland. He was liberated in Bergen-Belsen as a "political" prisoner. He established the first Jewish newspaper in postwar Germany (in Bergen-Belsen), and was an active member of the central committee of the liberated Jews in the British zone. He later served as a teacher in Canada, and in recent years he has been the director of the Jewish Public Library in Montreal.

. . . . .

After that, they took me for untersuchung.

I came into a room where there were two famous brothers, Willie and Oskar Mauer, volksdeutsche who had been officers in the Polish army. As soon as the Germans occupied Poland these two became Gestapo officers in Stanislav.

Willie Mauer came to the cell to take me to the interrogation. I played dumb, pretending I didn't know any German. I knew that if I said something in German the Yiddish accent would probably give me away. In the room there was also a former sergeant of the Polish police who was working for the Gestapo. He was the

torture specialist. There was also a kind of German presiding magistrate.

The walls were covered with leather to prevent the screams from being heard. They asked me my name, and so on, and whether I knew German. I said I didn't know German. They started to laugh and they made snide remarks; they asked me questions in German, and I said I didn't understand, so I received a flick of Willie Mauer's whip. He had brought a dog along too, and the dog tore my pants.

They wanted the names of my Warsaw underground friends. I told them I knew nobody. This was almost the truth, because I knew only one, and I wouldn't give his name.

Then they brought in a modified bookbinder's press -- the two boards were carved. They put my hands inside and started to press my hands in this thumbscrew. I started to yell and to shout, "Oh Jesu, Jesu!" all in Polish -- my brain was still working.

The dog was biting my neck, and the sergeant was hitting me with an enormous leather-and-iron whip. I was shouting "Jesuniu, help me, Jesus help me," and so on. I kept crying that I didn't know anybody. Then I fainted.

They took this thumbscrew off, threw some water on me, and I was sitting and crying. Willie Mauer left the room. He thought that perhaps I would "sing" more readily to a Pole.

They brought coffee and cake, and I ate the cake and drank the coffee.

This interlude lasted about half an hour or forty-five minutes. They gave me a cigarette, and I smoked.

Mauer came in again, and they started the questions. I told them I didn't know anybody, so they made me take off my shoes, and they started the same torture with my legs. I still have the marks.

I fainted again.

This time there was no coffee and cake -- only a cigarette. Then Mauer put my head into the press, and I thought my whole head was breaking to pieces. Again I cried, fainted, and told them I didn't know anybody. They took my hands again and pressed them, and for the next three weeks I couldn't move my hands. My fingers came out like pieces of paper.

When I was to be returned to the cell, I couldn't walk. Willie Mauer brought me back to the cell in a little wagon, and he kept singing a song, "Es geht alles voruber, es geht alles vorbei" (Everything passes in time). My cellmates fed me for the following three weeks. I couldn't move. I couldn't touch anything, and I couldn't walk.

After three weeks, I was placed in a death-row cell. Why they put me there I really don't know. I was by myself, and I could see the skull over the door with a red mark. I found out later that this was a death cell; at the time I didn't realize it. I was there for four days, and I saw all kinds of writing on the wall, for example, "If somebody is here and he survives the war, please remember I have a sister in Tel Aviv. Please notify her that I was here and I was taken out to be killed." You can imagine how I felt in that cell, all by myself, in the main building.

After four days, they came to me at two A.M., took me out, put me together with prisoners from other cells, and we were brought to the railway station. We were put in cattlecars and shipped to Maidanek. We traveled for three days. They had bought my story; if they hadn't they would have shot me immediately.

Howard Roiter.
Voices from the Holocaust.
Givataim, Israel,
Asurno Press, 1975
Pp. 196-98

RACISM

Although there is nothing in the Canadian Immigration Act, or any order-in-council which authorizes discrimination in favour of, or against, any religious denomination, and although the Immigration Department does not require or publish any statistics regarding the religion of immigrants entering Canada, the evidence shows that in the officially approved ship's manifesto, and even the applications under the British Empire Settlement Scheme and Assisted Passage Agreement, immigrants were requested to state their religious denomination in detail.

From its beginning Canadian immigration policy was racist, not necessarily pro-British or pro-French. When the government began to encourage the North Atlantic Trading Co. in 1889, it was to sponsor immigrants from Germany and Scandinavia, not from southern Europe.

Anti-Chinese legislation dates back to 1885. Anti-Indian legislation in the form of continuous journey provisions dates from 1908.

Anti-Japanese regulations took the form of gentlemen's agreements with the oriental government, an arrangement made in consideration of the respectability of power enjoyed by these Asiatics but not by the riven Chinese or the colonial Hindus.

The "racial origin of immigrants" was admittedly an element in selecting candidates for admission. The Canada Year Book of 1932, issued by the Dominion Bureau of Statistics by authority of the minister, formulates this official policy of discrimination on very questionable grounds.

"Evidently Dr. Brice is at a loss to explain this divergence between theory and fact, and chooses to ignore it, stating 'These remarkable results have been noted so frequently that we have ceased to ask their meaning and have come even to expect them.'

"At another point in his report, he attempts to account for the fact that there are fewer cases of physical and mental illness among the 'less desirable' immigrants by stating that they are almost all manual labourers, and that as outdoor workers they are naturally healthier and 'have learned self help and mutual assistance, since they cannot expect much charity amongst persons alien to them in speech and sympathy.' Dr. Brice makes no attempt to explain how this applies to Jewish immigrants who do not come within the category of manual labourers and outdoor workers.

"Although his reports mention that the Jewish immigrants have not been a burden upon municipal and other government authorities and upon the charities, he chooses to quote from an 'annual report of the Jewish societies of New York for 1901' which makes several remarks concerning 'unwise shipment of Jewish immigrants,' which, to say the least, showed considerable lack of discretion and common sense on the part of the Jewish organization which prepared and published the report." (Rosenberg Memorandum to Mr. Saul Hayes, Oct. 28, 1946, P.2)

Prof. W.A. Carrothers wrote on "The Immigration Problem in Canada,"

"There is danger rather to our political, social, and economic institutions and life. We assume here that Canadian institutions, political, social, and economic, are superior to those of the countries from which these people come. We may hold this view without reflecting disparagingly on the institutions of any other country as they exist in that country. We have progressed sufficiently in Canada as a community to warrant speaking of Canadian standards of life, of justice, of integrity, of fair play, of morality -- both public and private. It is

by these that our would-be citizens must be judged. The Canadian people have decided that Canadian ideals, and Canadian institutions, shall be based on British ideals and British institutions. These ideals and institutions have been tested and tried, and have proven themselves a fit means to enable a people to live together with a maximum of harmony, and to progress both socially and culturally. It is natural that Canadians should look upon any influx of people which might endanger these ideals and institutions as a menace.

"The appropriate method of dealing with this menace is not exclusion, as in the case of the Orientals, but selection and restriction. For some time the policy of selection has been adopted by the Canadian Government with reference to physical, mental and moral characteristics. There has also been a selective policy with regard to certain occupations. There is a growing opinion that the policy of restriction should be applied on a racial basis. The argument for restriction is not based on purely racial grounds, but rather on the danger that, through the admission of too many people, economic and social assimilation will become impossible." (Queens' Quarterly, 1929, Pp.517-31)

This racist approach was bolstered by a remarkably voluminous literature of nordic or Anglo-Saxon superiority which fed on many religious, patriotic and pseudo-scientific sources. Typical of scores of such publications was George Winter Mitchell's "Canada -- Saviour of the Nordic Race" which concludes,

"Canada alone possesses all the conditions necessary for the preservation of our white civilization; but to attain this high destiny she has need of the severest immigration laws, the wisest use of eugenics...." (Canadian Magazine, vol. 61, June 1923, Pp. 138-40)

In his critique of Canada's Immigration Policy (published under the auspices of the Canadian Institute of International Affairs in 1957), Professor David C. Corbett observes that "Selection (of immigrants) on geographic lines is only another way of selection according to race and culture.

"Our prejudices are stronger toward some foreigners than toward others; Canadians, whatever may be their general level of prejudice compared with that of other people, seem to show their strongest prejudices against Oriental immigration, and probably also against Negro and Jewish immigration."

The implications of the department in the Yellow Peril racism, which hit at peoples with whom Canada or the Empire never warred -- while properly welcoming, in peace time, Germans with whom Canada struggled twice within two decades -- are of course well known. Not only "yellow" people such as the Japanese and Chinese were thus excluded with violence. Racially white people such as the Hindus were denied admission.

The immigration offices were the first Canadian bureaus to shatter the concept of British imperial fraternity and to withdraw recognition from British citizenship by treating such citizens who were black in colour as if they were American or otherwise alien and disavowing common ties of allegiance.

"Where there is any considerable immigration into a democratic country, the racial and linguistic composition of the immigrants is of great importance. Canadians generally prefer that settlers should be of a readily assimilable type, already identified by race or language with one or other of the two great races inhabiting this country, and prepared for the assumption of the duties of democratic Canadian citizenship. Since the French are not to any great extent an emigrating people, this means in practice that the great bulk of the preferable settlers are those who speak the English language -- those coming from the United Kingdom or the United States. Next in order of readiness of assimilation are the Scandinavians, Dutch and Germans, who readily learn English and are already acquainted with the working of democratic institutions. Settlers from Southern and Eastern Europe, however desirable from a purely economic point of view, are less readily assimilated, and the Canadianizing of the people who have come to Canada from these regions in the present century is a problem both in the agricultural Prairie Provinces and in the cities of the East."

Beyond its general exclusionist approach, and the discretionary provisions which made possible all types of arbitrary practices militating against the candidate for Canadian residence and ultimate citizen, Canadian law was openly and covertly racist.

David R. Hughes and Evelyn Kallen, in their Anatomy of Racism: Canadian Dimensions (Montreal, Harvest House, 1974. Pp. 137-39) describe the control of population in effect in Canada through limiting migration, particularly of peoples categorized as Orientals and blacks, especially before 1953.

"The inclusion of the notion of 'climatic unsuitability' in the Immigration Act furnished the legal justification for barring people from Third World countries (with presumably hot climates) -- notably Blacks.

"During the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the Canadian Immigration Act contained a number of special regulations specifically designed to restrict Chinese and Japanese immigration. In 1886, a federal head tax was imposed on Chinese immigrants entering British Columbia. From 1898 to 1903 the head tax increased from fifty dollars to five-hundred dollars per head.

"In 1907, Canada entered into a 'gentleman's agreement' with the government of Japan restricting Japanese entry to an initial maximum of four hundred families per year, later reduced to one hundred and fifty families. No such pact was possible with China because of the continuing high level of anti-'Oriental' prejudice. Chinese immigration was perceived as a major 'problem'. By 1903, the Canadian parliament passed a new law requiring every 'Asian' (except those covered by a special treaty or international agreement) to have two hundred dollars in his possession upon arrival in Canada. When this deterrent proved to be no more successful than the head tax, the Chinese Immigration Act (sometimes colloquially referred to as the 'Chinese exclusion act') was passed, forbidding entry of Chinese, under any conditions in 1953," (a decade after the world war against racism!)

Existing discretionary powers were so far-reaching that Louis Rosenberg was able to state "that immigration to Canada is in actual fact not regulated by legislation contained in the Immigration Act or other acts passed by the Parliament of Canada, and specific clauses contained therein, but by confidential administrative regulations and letters of direction issued from time to time by the minister in charge of Immigration, or the Deputy Minister or Director of Immigration acting under his authority, and

"That such regulations are not made public in the ordinary course of events but their existence only becomes known as the result of investigation by a Select Standing Committee of the House of Commons."

And, further, in "the Annual Report of the Department of Immigration and Colonization for the year ending March 31, 1924, it is stated that 'the existing regulations are framed and applied with the object of making easy the entry of those classes and races suited to and required for, the settlement and development of Canada, and preventing the admission of those mentally, morally, industrially or otherwise unfit.'

"Regulations designed to prevent the admission of those mentally, physically or morally unfit will, of course, meet with unanimous approval. Approval of regulations designed to prevent the admission of those 'industrially' unfit or undesirable will depend upon the viewpoint and opinion of groups and individuals within Canada.

"Contrary to the statement contained in the Article on Immigration on page 151 in the Canada Year Book, 1940, regulations which discriminate between the citizens of any country on 'racial' grounds are not and cannot be compatible with the fundamental principles of a democratic country such as Canada.

"This policy and the practices which it covers have never been repudiated by the Department of Immigration

and the policy was still in force after 1931 as is evidenced by the statement on Page 194 of the Annual Report of the Department of Immigration for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1941, reading as follows, 'Canada, in accordance with a generally accepted practice, places greater emphasis upon race than upon citizenship.'" (Memorandum from Rosenberg to Saul Hayes, on Immigration to Canada, May 17, 1946)

The arbitrary character of migrant administration is illustrated by Rosenberg,

"Of the 36,582 immigrants of non-British but 'preferred' racial origin who entered Canada in the period from 1931 to 1943, the majority were neither farmers, nor the wives or minor children of persons already resident in Canada, and according to the strict interpretation of the terms of P.C. 695 were therefore not admissible to Canada; yet they were admitted either with or without special Letters of Admission issued by the Department of Immigration."

Even after the Second World War Rosenberg drew attention to Section 38, subsection (d) of the Immigration Act which authorizes "the prohibition of immigrants belonging to any nationality or race...because such immigrants are deemed undesirable owing to their peculiar customs, habits, modes of life and methods of holding property, and because of their probable inability to become readily assimilated or to assume the duties and responsibilities of Canadian citizenship within a reasonable time after their entry."

Mr. Rosenberg points out that "This subsection was originally inserted to prevent the recurrence of the admission of groups such as the Old Colony Mennonites and Doukhobors, who live in communal settlements, refuse to permit their children to attend Canadian public schools and to learn English, and refuse to serve in the armed forces when called upon to do so.

"This is a dangerous clause, and could be used to justify discrimination against immigrants because of 'racial' origins or religious belief." (cited by Saul Hayes in letters to Constance Hayward, May 31, 1946)

"Even after the fall of France, before Russian and United States entry into the conflict, while Canada and Britain were nearly alone with their backs to the wall fighting German racism, the official report of the Canadian Immigration Department stated, without any awareness of shame, that 'Canada, in accordance with the generally accepted practice, places greater emphasis upon race than upon citizenship.'" (Z. Warhaftig. Uprooted, Jewish Refugees and Displaced Persons after Liberation. New York, Institute of Jewish Affairs, 1946. P.166) For the law stated, to quote Warhaftig's summary, that "the immigration of persons belonging to any nationality or race...may be prohibited if they are unsuitable with regard to climate, industrial, social, educational, labor and other considerations; or because they are deemed undesirable by virtue of their peculiar customs, habits, mode of life, methods of holding property or their probable inability to readily assimilate."

With all the innocence of the insensitive, J.A. Calder, Minister of Immigration, explained the literacy test to Mr. Jacobs on May 12, 1919,

"I recognize that the literacy test alone is not sufficient to determine who are and who are not desirable immigrants. I am quite prepared to admit that energy, ambition and industry are most essential qualities in a new settler. Other sections of the Law are drafted with the object of providing for the exclusion of those, who while able to read, may not be desirable on other grounds. While the Bill was in committee, the clause dealing with the literacy test was amended giving the Minister discretionary powers as to the application of the literacy test to certain persons and classes.

"The Jewish people living under free institutions are law-abiding and anxious to support the enforcement of law and order in the country of their adoption. The persons whose entry to Canada is prohibited by the paragraphs of sub-section 6 of Section 3 of the Bill, are those whose revolutionary tendencies would make them dangerous in this country. The United States Government has for some time had in effect very similar clauses and I think you will not find that Jewish people have been discriminated against by the application of the United States Law.

"The Law as it stands does not differentiate between nationalities or races, but provides authority under which the Governor in Council may exclude immigrants on the ground of nationality or race.

"It is considered necessary that the Governor in Council shall have authority at a time like this to exclude or otherwise, on the ground of nationality, race, occupation, etc. The Law as it stands contains a very similar provision in that it mentions 'race, class, occupation or character'." (Public Archives of Canada. Jacobs Papers. Pp. 509-11)

This virtual hounding of black applicants for entry -- even after they had legally come to Canada -- is a shameful story dating back to the nineteenth century, making our Jewish history pale by comparison.

This ill treatment of people who were being literally burned south of Canada -- the word actually exists in the dominion records -- was occurring illegally, for there is not a word about negro exclusion in the law. It was very flimsily covered by a mellifluous hypocrisy, a concern about how they could stand the cold weather.

The sorry figure of F.C. Blair, persecutor of Jewish immigrants, figures in the negro story as early as March 1911. Three years earlier W.D. Scott formulated a strict circular to his immigration agents in the U.S. ordering them to keep destitute negroes out. Some of his representatives -- at Boston, Baltimore, in Arkansas, Montana, Oklahoma, etc. -- had been too lenient.

Files in the Public Archives of Canada (R.G.76, vol. 192, file 72552) spell out this shameful story, only somewhat mitigated by the freedom fact that this same government preserved and opened this record for a freer generation of Canadians. In this record which, in all fairness, only mirrors the prejudice rife against negroes across the country, Scott was joined as early as 1911 by F.C. Blair who sadly imprinted his name in Canadian Jewish history.

This is, of course, not the occasion for telling this sad story. But if only to make meaning of our words and to illustrate the nature of this phenomenon in personal sense, we can glance at one paper among many like it.

Rev. Will H. Hurt (the name was not chosen by Bunyan) wrote from Wewoka, Okla. on Oct. 6, 1919 to Mr. J.S. Crawford, of Kansas City, Miss., one of the more humane officers of the Canadian service,

"I have look for a anser from you, for sum time; well I have got about ten families coming, if it were so I could I would do a grate wirk for my pepele. But if I cant get too Bee a leader for them, I will Bid them good for I am Bound for canada and cant Stay away.

"I am goin looking for a free Home where I can Bee at rest, Farm and make a liven at Home, you ask me what Is.

"My intenton for goin too canada well I will tell you the truth the first. I am deprive of life liberty is american. Second, our women is not treated rite at all. third, we have no Schools that is eny count. forth, I am tyird raising cotton and the other man get it all, and I get nothing. fifth, I wont too change govement. I am tyird of this one. six, I like your law Better they are good. Seven, I cant onen no land here. 8 I wont too live in peace if I can for god sake. ninth, you see now my reason for not wanting too stay in this cuntry and all good men is Just like me. so I will take eny or sine eny paper as too Becom a Setlar or a British Subject.

"Address all maile too Wewoka, Okla,
R.F.D. 2 No. Box 36
Rev. Will. H. Hurt

"when I get ready I will write a week ahead so you can fix every thing for my trip. Cend me a fue papers and I will give them too my frends. good By."

In terms of sheer formal literature, as one reads these letters and the urbane responses, one is horrified at the contrast in education and in development. That the higher race should be appealing to the lower!

Colour racism and discrimination by religion was accompanied by a discrimination based on class interests. Anti-alien feeling was accompanied by antagonism to certain nationalities in the interests of class warfare -- not often on behalf of the ruling class. Readers familiar with the American colour experience will not find this novel.

In Canada this came to the fore prominently during the Winnipeg general strike of 1919, a largely Canadian and British phenomenon.

Nevertheless the Winnipeg three daily newspapers carried large paid advertisements calling on the government to deport the undesirable alien and to land him back in the bilgewater of European civilization from whence he sprung and to which he properly belongs. The Meighen government did indeed amend the immigration act to permit deportation even of British citizens charged with sedition. (Norman Penner. Winnipeg, 1919, Toronto, Lewis & Samuel, 1973, Pp. XVIII-XIX, 4, 8, 169, 219-20)

Among those threatened with deportation were A.A. Heaps, Louis Rosenberg, S. Almazoff and Sam Blumenberg, who was permitted to leave Canada for the U.S. rather than be deported to Europe.

One Verenchuck, a naturalized British subject, who could not be deported or even tried for lack of evidence, narrowly escaped railroading into a lunatic asylum by the crown.

Jewish bitterness at the government's restrictive policy was illustrated in 1926 when the Jewish Daily Eagle, consistently Liberal without review for decades, decided to support an unknown Conservative challenger for Jacobs' seat, "relying on the pledge of the Conservative leader that he would sponsor a more lenient immigration policy." (Figler)

In his deeply felt unanimity there was a tiny near-exception, that was sociologically significant, of a breach that was to become more important in the years ahead.

Belkin reports that the Jewish Social Democrats qualified their support of the regulation of immigration to Canada by insisting that this be done so that the trade unions should not be opposed. In 1919 this came to be expressed with such Jewish support on Social Democratic motion that "assistance to, and protection of, the interests of the Jewish masses immigrating into Canada be given in conjunction with (under the direction of) the existing general labour organizations in Canada." (Pp. 93-94)

The possibilities of Jewish immigration under such conditions, if they had been accepted, were, of course, and are, clear.

We have here a reflection of the conflict between vital Jewish interests and the policies of the labour, anti-alien groups. With these Jews the resolution of the conflict is clear.

We also have here the anti-Zionist policy of some European ideologies which insisted that Jews should not emigrate from the Russian hell hole but remain to fight the evil on the spot.

The statistics of Jewish immigration from overseas summarize the successes and count some of the effort. They do not describe the familial and intimate feelings of the thousands who found freedom and the agony of scores of thousands who did not.

Years later the Jewish community was fighting widespread racism in the migration policies of the western world. In a war-time memorandum to the governing body of the International Labour Office meeting in Montreal, Saul Hayes, director of the Canadian Jewish Congress, wrote,

"Discriminatory restrictions against immigrants based upon ethnic origin or religion, although repugnant to democratic principles and practice, have played all too prominent a part in the immigration policy of some countries. A particularly unjustifiable practice has been that by which, under administrative regulations, citizens of European countries who are of Jewish ethnic origin have not been admitted as immigrants into some countries under the same conditions as other citizens of the same countries who are not of Jewish origin....

"It has become a practice in some countries to use innocent-seeming requirements such as literacy for the purpose of excluding indirectly immigrants who are otherwise qualified. Arbitrary tests applied by immigration officials are an example of such objectionable practices... We would also recommend that the laws of each signatory country concerning migration should set out fully all conditions and regulations governing immigration and emigration, and migration should not be subject to confidential administrative regulations and directives unknown to the public generally and to the immigrants concerned; that each signatory country establish a permanent tribunal for the hearing of all matters arising under the migration laws within that country; that the proceedings before this tribunal be recorded in a system of published reports; and that appeal should be permitted from the decisions of that tribunal to the regular courts of the land."

Mr. Hayes suggested that, "in the cases of refugees who are victims of religious or racial persecution, the usual technical restrictions, such as those requiring immigrants to possess proper passports and continuous passage or prohibiting assisted immigration, should be waived; the status of enemy aliens should not be applied to those citizens of enemy lands who had fled them to avoid religious and racial persecution; an international migration committee should be set up to furnish documents of identity, like the Nansen passports after the last war, to displaced persons and other victims of religious, racial or political persecution; that habeas corpus, the rights of appeal to the courts and other legal instruments of protection in existence in each country be made available to immigrants who land or who arrive in its territorial waters; and that child immigrants be admitted upon the guarantee of relatives or of approved welfare agencies or organizations for the protection of immigrants in the countries of immigration...

"Because of the conditions resulting from the recent World War, it has become impossible for many refugees and displaced persons to secure birth certificates, police certificates from their original homes, and renewal of passports which have expired. Continuous passage from the country of origin to the country of immigration has in very many cases become an impossible condition for many immigrants, and this requirement should be dispensed with." (P.3)

IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

The outstanding Canadian figure in this vast Jewish struggle for the lives of Jewish children, women and men was Samuel W. Jacobs. (B. Figler. Biography of Sam Jacobs. Montreal. 282 p.; Canadian Jewish Archives, new series, no.5, Pp.XI-XIII)

As his younger associate Philip Vineberg, Q.C., recalled for the Jewish Historical Society in Montreal in December, 1965,

"Sam Jacobs was not the popular or even the unpopular kind of Jew of his day. He was not the kind of Jew who was destined to represent in the Parliament of Canada.

"At a time when almost all Jews were necessarily immigrants, he had been born in Canada, in 1871, near Lancaster, Ontario. Unlike the electors who put him into office, his mother tongue was English. It is true that he came from a family devoted to Jewish traditions, but these were expressed in Anglo-Scottish accents. The non-Yiddish background he had was very different indeed from that of the Jews of Cartier whom he was one day to represent and who were, at that time, still mostly clustered in remote European ghettos.

"Sam Jacobs' parents were not like most parents in the Jewish community, merchants, small scale manufacturers, craft workmen or tailors. They were in the horse dealing business. It seemed to be an ancestral occupation. Deep into the 1930's we had voluminous, if not too profitable, files in our law office dealing with all the sundry permutations, combinations and travails of horse trading in its manifold operations.

"Of course, the firm was naturally concerned with all of the troubles of the entire Jewish community as it then was. Few of them had anything to do with corporate enterprise.

"One of his abiding interests in parliamentary activity was his passionate concern for the rights of French Canadians. He was himself a member of a Cartier crying out for the rights of French Canadians in Quebec. In many ways he was a more competent spokesman on their behalf than members of their own grouping itself.

"I can recall a campaign poster in one of the elections in Cartier, 'Pour l'autonomie du Québec votez: Sam Jacobs'. It sounds strange today but you know he meant it. He meant it because he could see the French Canadian through Jewish eyes, and seeing them through Jewish eyes, historically minority and persecuted eyes, he could understand them better.

"One day he was deeply disturbed by the suggestion that had been made, on the immigration issue, that many Jews were illiterate. He took great pains to point out that they might know little English because they had just stepped off the boat from Europe, but they had a vast heritage of intellectual and cultural wealth. They were far from illiterate. He reminded his Commons audience that the parents of Abraham Lincoln were illiterate, but he said, 'Look at the children'. He foresaw, and you can see it in Montreal today, that no matter how illiterate in the English language the parents were as they arrived, no matter how difficult it might be for those whose tongues were trained in Yiddish to grasp the subtle nuances of the English or French language, the educational system of the schools would provide a young, forward grouping of people in the next generation who would be fully and fluently English speaking and, in many cases, French speaking too. Sam Jacobs was the link between the old and the new. In appearance, he had all the Victorian dignity and Edwardian courtliness of an earlier age.

"His rapport with his electors was also unique. To them also he wasn't a typical Jew. At election meetings in Prince Arthur Hall, just east of 'Main' Street, most of the speeches were in Yiddish -- a language in which Sam Jacobs could only manage a few words. Nonetheless, he commanded awesome respect. Perhaps those people were wise enough to see in Sam Jacobs, the older man, a vision of their children, of their future.

"The passionate objective of his political life was immigration. After all, that had attracted him to the Liberal party in the first place. At the time of the Kishineff massacres, in an era of history now long forgotten when the slaughter of a few hundred Jews would still excite some attention, Sir Wilfrid Laurier in addressing a meeting in Ottawa had once said: 'The doors of Canada are open to persecuted Jews -- let them come and help us build our country.' They were. We did.

"But the doors weren't always so widely open. They creaked, they groaned and they shut tight at every opportunity. From the moment he was in Parliament until the moment he died, Sam Jacobs fought year after year, submission after submission, to bring to fulfilment Laurier's promise of an open door for immigration. He ceaselessly sought entry for those Jews whose children and grandchildren you know.

"First when he was in opposition he was roundly scoring the Borden Government because of its narrow attitude on immigration. But when Mackenzie King came to office, and he was on the government side, Sam Jacobs was no party lackey. He found the attitude of the Liberal Government not much better. On frequent occasions, he said so in the House. His public utterances are only a small part of the picture. In the office, hordes of people would be there, every non-Parliamentary day.

"The electors of Cartier came from areas of the world where the administration was hostile to the wellbeing of the people. Everything had to be sued for, virtually, on bended knee. Lucky the Jew who found a receptive ear into which he could pour his troubles. These people, whatever lands they came from, traipsed down to the Jacobs & Phillips office in the Power Building on Craig Street pleading for admission of a wife in Bialystock, a daughter in Kovno, an uncle in Minsk. Whatever it might be, Sam Jacobs had to help. Day after day in the hundreds, and in the thousands, there were demands for immigration. Not only did Sam Jacobs speak of it in the House, but far more effectively he attended to it personally. More often admissions were obtained one by one. The office dealt with them in never ending succession. As I look back on it now in terms of public service, if you'll allow me to say so, there were, apart from time consuming efforts, considerable expenses, telephone, long distance calls, wires, stenography. No immigrant was ever charged a penny for fees, or disbursements or services of any kind; no community organization was ever charged a cent, and no community campaign was ever conducted to defray the expense. It was Sam Jacobs and Laz Phillips who were paying the bills for the services which they were rendering.

"There are many people today who can recall, either in their own case or amongst members of their family, the results of these efforts and reflect upon what would have happened to them had they not been admitted to Canada.

"Our legal correspondents in Miami Beach include a firm called Broad, Cassels and Horowitz. The head of the firm is Shepard Broad -- well known member of the Jewish community of Miami Beach, President of a bank, President of an insurance company -- talented, prestigious and prosperous. One day when I had the good fortune to be in Miami Beach -- Shepard Broad invited my wife and myself to dinner at his home. It is beautifully set on an island. After a sumptuous meal, we went out for a walk. Along what avenue did we walk? Broad Avenue -- named after Shepard Broad, whose vision, imagination, courage and determination had been responsible for the erection of this Broad Causeway. On the other side was a memorial commemorating the time when, as mayor of the community, one Shepard Broad had been responsible for the installation ceremony.

"I looked at him and said 'well, Shepard, you're a pretty big man around here aren't you.'

"He put his arm around me and he said, 'I owe it all to you'.

"Many years earlier, the same Shepard Broad, as a young boy, had disembarked from a ship in Montreal. There wasn't a single piece of paper except a little tag pinned on to his threadbare coat reading, I suppose, 'Schmuel Brodinsky' in Yiddish. There were no admission papers, no passports, no laissez-passer, no visas. Under those circumstances, he was promptly placed in the immigration jail and booked for deportation back to Europe. Laz Phillips took 'habeas corpus' proceedings to stay the deportation. Sam Jacobs took his usual steps in Ottawa to get this young immigrant into Canada. He did, with the ultimate consequences of which I speak. There were indeed, though less spectacularly, thousands of parallel cases. The most constructive of all the many services rendered by Sam Jacobs was undoubtedly his work in immigration which was the source, in such a large measure, of the current Jewish Community of Montreal." (Congress Bulletin, June 1967, Pp.4-5, 8)

A younger associate, Louis Bloomfield, recalls,

"The government was openly antisemitic. They wouldn't let Jews in. I'd go with Jacobs to Ottawa to help on cases, and then see the lineups -- sometimes 200 -- of people seeking to help relatives. They would sit in offices for hours and hours. I'll never forget it. And Jacobs, never a penny did he ever charge for such cases." (Lou Seligson in Canadian Jewish News, Oct. 6, 1978, P.9)

Soon after World War I in May 1919 Samuel W. Jacobs, M.P., formulated the basic tone of the Jews' migration problem -- a condition that was to endure for nearly thirty desperate years. He was replying to a telegram from H. Lyons, Canadian Jewish Congress delegate from Rosthern, Sask., about "the conditions under which Jews live in eastern Europe."

Jacobs reported on his efforts on May 7, "At the present moment, with the returned soldiers problem upon us, it is difficult to handle the situation as we could have liked; but in the circumstances, I think that those who are in favour of a more open door policy have done the best that is possible." (Public Archives of Canada, MG 27, III,C 3, vol.2, Pp.748-49)

This was the tension: on the one side, the Jews impelled by current reports and equally realistic forebodings on the vital fate of their people; on the other hand, the domestic concerns of uncertain personal and national economics -- soldiers, jobs, depression -- and an inherited disinterest in the lot of others. The leaders of the community seeking to inhabit the chasm between the two universes, to communicate across the abyss, to articulate the prayerful wishes of some 100,000 immigrated Jews, doing the best that is possible under the circumstances.

M.J. Finkelstein wrote Jacobs from Winnipeg on Dec. 7, 1921,

"When I returned from the East I felt so annoyed at the warped viewpoint of Messrs. Black, Blair and Little (of the Immigration Department) with reference to Jewish immigration that I made up my mind that it was my duty to assist in the defeat of the Government candidate in North Winnipeg, although personally Dr. Blake has been a very fine fellow. Mr. McMurray, who is a college chum of mine, was chosen standard-bearer of Liberalism but no one really expected him to win. The contest seemed to be between Dr. Blake and Russell, the labor candidate. It seemed to be a foregone conclusion that Dr. Blake would win handily, but during the last two weeks I went out into the Jewish portion of the constituency and raised the immigration issue. The result is that on election night the returns show that in the English speaking portion of the constituency Dr. Blake has a majority over McMurray, but in the Jewish section Dr. Blake has been snowed under, thus giving the victory to McMurray.

"I feel very keenly over this immigration question and I trust now that our party is in power that the whole matter will be adjusted; but it seems to me that the first step towards putting the Immigration Department on a proper basis would be the substitution of other officials for the three I have mentioned above, because these three men have ideas which are certainly anti-semitic. Mr. Blair has gone to the extent of writing letters in the Jewish papers of this City in order to justify the stand of the Meighen Goverment in excluding Jewish immigrants.

"In pleasant contrast to the views and actions of the three Immigration officials at Ottawa it is most gratifying to note that our Commissioner here, Mr. Gelley, and his chief assistant, Mr. Kramer, are men of broad-minded liberal views who have always done everything possible to ameliorate the conditions of the poor immigrants and to give the regulations a liberal interpretation."

Jacobs had written in a similar vein to Herbert J. Samuel of Winnipeg on Oct. 20, 1921,

"Without wishing to enter into the political aspect of the Immigration question, I would say that nothing can be expected from the present Government in the way of amelioration in the stringent regulations now in force.

"Within the past months, the screws have been put on more tightly than ever, and the intention of the Government is practically to prevent immigration of our people from the Ukraine, and generally, from Eastern Europe, without regard to the eligibility or desirability of individual immigrants.

"We have every reason to believe, however, that the Government will go out of power on December 6th, after which, something can, and I am sure, will be done by the new administration. Consequently, I think it would be well to do nothing in the meantime, in the way of mapping out a programme for your general meeting, until we know what takes place on December 6th. Should this Government be returned, it is all up with Jewish immigration to Canada, as I am satisfied that everyone in the Department is strongly and bitterly opposed to our people, since Mr. Calder left the Department. I am, however, an optimist, and believe that the darkest hour is before the dawn, and am confident that things will right themselves in a few weeks."

In the absence of a Canadian Jewish Congress or other representative institutions, it became the function of Samuel W. Jacobs to be the voice of Canadian Jewry, in the House of Commons as elsewhere for two decades on this crucial matter.

His effectiveness in this role was a function of the complex forces within parliament and within his own party. **These tergiversations** over the years are skillfully analyzed in Belkin's record of Jewish immigration into Canada.

As Jacobs wrote to G.N. Gordon of Peterborough on Sept. 9, 1925,

"The immigration policy of the government in this part of the country is the vital question, and in fact throughout the Dominion the Government is going to be judged by its immigration record."

It was not only Jewish migrants whose interests were at issue. The Montreal Board of Trade had its own Canadian concerns which they expressed by resolution on May 13, 1922, and conveyed to Jacobs. He responded on the 26th to J. Stanley Cook,

"...as private members' day is now being utilized for Government orders, it was impossible to bring my resolution up for debate. But I intend to speak on the Budget when what I had to say previously can be incorporated in my Budget remarks.

"You will note that the Government has abrogated several of the Orders-in-Council which were objectionable, but so far as I am concerned, matters have been made worse by the new regulations, which declare in a substantive way that immigration to Canada is prohibited for the present except to farmers, farm labourers and female domestic servants, and no person can go aboard a vessel without having obtained a visa from a Canadian Agent stationed at Atlantic sea ports on the other side.

"Inasmuch as the Government is not encouraging immigration except for the class mentioned, naturally the agents on the other side will insist that people destined for city labour, skilled or unskilled, will not be permitted to come forward.

"I am far from satisfied with these regulations and intend to raise a debate in the House on our whole immigration policy, which I think is not in the interests of the country as being too restricted and narrow."

During the first war migration had been closed off by world conditions. It was simply not re-opened to the earlier free condition with the end of combat.

The March 1919 session of the Canadian Jewish Congress already found this problem one of its major concerns. Probably under American pressure the Canadian government kept the doors ever less open, ever less opening.

On April 23 the Hon. J.A. Calder, Minister of Immigration and Colonization, moved to extend the number of prohibited classes of immigrants; to establish a literacy test, to exclude those unable to read; to reject enemy aliens.

S.W. Jacobs argued in the Commons,

"Under the Liberal Administration of this country, from 1896 to 1911, we had a vast immigration.

"The foundation of the prosperity of Canada was the immigration which came in at that period. Whatever may be said about Sir Clifford Sifton, no one will deny that his policy of immigration was the right policy at the time, and that if we have had this large immigration into the country it was entirely due to his foresight.

"I would judge that the test whether immigration would or would not be satisfactory to the country would be the reports from the various penitentiaries, insane asylums and houses of correction. By reading these reports we can judge whether immigration is or is not proper for the country. I have not the figures from the institutions before me, but I think I can state without fear of contradiction that the figures will show quite clearly that this country is relatively ahead of any other country on this continent in regard to the small number of people detained in these institutions.

"I think you will find that the population in the insane asylums is very much less than it is in the United States, in England or in other countries per capita. So it is with regard to the jails and penitentiaries.

"Speaking for my own particular race, I can point with pride to the Montreal jail, where you will find not a single person of the Jewish race at present incarcerated. The poor chaplain, who has been paid a small stipend of $300 or $400 fears he is going to lose his position unless something is done. So it is in regard to the St. Vincent de Paul penitentiary.

"The open door policy to which the minister referred incidentally is one which I think ought to commend itself to the people. Canada is not at present in a position to pick and choose. We must absorb into this country very large numbers of immigrants before we can begin to pay the interest on the debt which we have upon our shoulders at the present time. So long as we can assure ourselves that the people brought into this country are law-abiding citizens, healthy, and able to take part in the work of developing the country, that is all we require.

"Whether they come from alien countries, or from other countries, amount to little. It is of no significance to this country. The alien enemy of today will be the friendly alien of tomorrow and possibly the friendly alien of today may become the alien enemy of tomorrow.

"I doubt very much, from the point of view of international law, whether, when we have made a durable and lasting peace with the countries with which we have been at war, we can legally say to the peoples of those countries: You cannot come into this country because at some time in the past you were our enemies. It seems to

me that so soon as peace has been signed we have no longer any quarrel with these people and we cannot, on the ground that they have been alien enemies in the past, refuse to allow them into this country or bar their entrance.

"The Government is making a serious mistake when it presumes to legislate to keep out people from different countries simply because their habits before they came here are not quite the same as ours. We ought to encourage them in every possible way, not only for their own sakes.

"I am reminded of a story told me some years ago by Commissioner Coombes, of the Salvation Army. He instanced a case in London where a man, the back of whose shirt was badly torn, used to carry crippled people across the street in wintry weather. Commissioner Coombes congratulated this charitable individual, but received for reply:

"'That is no charity at all. While I carry them across the street they warm my back.'

"It is our duty to teach those people our laws and customs in order that they may become good Canadian citizens. We may not be very successful with the parents, but through our public schools we can reach the children; the second generation will develop into citizens as good as many of those who belong to the so-called better class.

"I have only to cite a case in the history of my own race. You will remember that when the Israelites left Egypt they escaped from slavery and they wandered forty years in the wilderness. Not one of those who left Egypt was permitted to enter the Holy Land, but their children did, and the Bible tells us these made good.

"The same thing applies in the present day. You cannot expect to do very much with people who come into this country in the matter of changing from the old manners and customs of Europe; but with our magnificent public school system we can teach the second generation our Canadian social life, and they will develop into citizens as capable and efficient as the descendants of those who have lived here many generations.

"Another clause to which I intend to take serious objection is that which provides for a literacy test. It is wrong to debar a man from this country because he cannot read. If that rule had been applied in the United States in the time of Abraham Lincoln, Lincoln's own father and mother would have been debarred from entering the United States because they could not read.

"We want all the immigrants we can get. If a man is respectable, industrious and honest he should be permitted to come into this country; if he is unable to read, that is not his fault, but his misfortune. In the remote parts of England, Scotland and Ireland, the countries from which you expect to get the best class of immigration, large numbers of the people of the older generation cannot read.

"We know the difficulties under which people labour in Europe. Many men have not had a chance to go to school and learn to read or write; they have been ground down by poverty and heavy work almost from the days when they could scarcely walk. Now, when they want to improve their position and come to a new land, they will find they cannot come here on account of this misfortune of being unable to read.

"The House should not concur in any legislation which makes a distinction as to entry in Canada between the man who can read and the man who cannot."

Jacobs' motion to strike this clause from the measure was voted down 75:37.

In the debate Mr. Cronyn of London, Ont.,cited "an authority" to the effect that 25% European Jews were illiterate.

Mr. Jacobs responded,

"I know probably as much about Hebrews as Professor Fairchild. In my experience covering quite a number of years -- and I have been the president of the largest Hebrew Philanthropic institution in Canada -- there never came under my review the case of a single Jew who did not know how to read his own language. In fact, such a thing is absolutely impossible. I cannot understand why those figures should have been given unless it be that these Jewish people coming from various countries were unable to read the language of the country from which they came. But I question whether, if the test were put to them with regard to their own language, they would be found unable to read that language.

"An impression has gone abroad that I have strenuously opposed this section because it is going to debar Jews from this country. I have no such idea at all. My object is rather to assist others who, not so fortunate as the Hebrew people, have no injunctions of that kind in their religious cults."

In a close, economics-oriented analysis of immigration Charlotte Whitton relegated "the recent forced emigration from the pogrom areas of southeastern Europe" to a footnote, for "the religious factor has practically disappeared today" as an impelling force of emigration. ("The Immigration Problem for Canada," in Queens Quarterly, vol. 31 May 1924, Pp. 388-418)

He was being carefully watched. Rosaire Morin noted, "Deputy Samuel Jacobs was continuously receiving discreet favours for Jewish immigrants." (L'Immigration au Canada. Montreal, Editions de l'Action nationale, 1966, P.12)

Jacobs disputed with Miss Agnes Macphail, "one of the most uncompromising opponents of immigration of what she calls the inferior races from middle Europe. What is it in middle Europe which makes a person belong to an inferior race? The fact that they cannot speak English, surely, ought not to make them an inferior race. I could give you many instances of people who are quite superior who were never able to speak English. Her objection to them seems to be that they wore sheepskin coats. Well probably the lady's esthetic desire to see people arrayed in nice finery may cause her to object to sheepskin coats; but the fact that a person wears a sheepskin coat, in my opinion, is not something which ought to debar him from coming into this country." (Hansard, June 5, 1922)

"We must get immigrants from wherever they want to come. We must invite them to come into this country and when they come here, let them do what they feel they are capable of doing. We have in the city of Montreal to-day sixty or seventy thousand people who came to this country a few years ago, who were practically thrown on their own resources. They did not walk around the streets looking for work. Work was found for them by those of their people who came earlier. They engaged in the textile trade and, if to-day the clothing industry is the third largest industry in the country, it is largely due to these foreigners who made that industry what it is, not only in Montreal but in Toronto and the other large cities. In the metal trade they have made a success. They have gone into the tobacco industry and of every line of industry which they have entered they have made a success.

"Do you not think people of that kind are an asset to the community? These people could never have gone on farms because they were not accustomed to life on the farm. They made a success in the city because they were accustomed to live in the city. I have no objection to people taking up farming, because I believe it is one of the basic industries of the country; but to tell a person that, unless he is willing to go on a farm, he cannot be permitted to come into this country is a shortsighted policy on the part of the government, and something which I am surprised to learn this Government is endeavouring to put into effect. I hope that these orders-in-council will be very shortly relegated to the waste paper basket.

"This matter is of such vital importance to thousands and tens of thousands of people in this country to-day, that I felt it was absolutely necessary for me to bring it to the attention of the House. I have been flooded with telegrams, letters and petitions from all parts of the country relating to this Order-in-Council. The minister is a very kind-hearted man; a most kind-hearted man; he cannot bear to think of these people being brought to our shores and then being deported; so he declares that they shall not come here at all. It is like the story of the man to whom a poor devil appealed for alms. He pressed the button for his butler, and said: 'Kick this man out; he is breaking my heart.'

"When I heard that the question was about to be discussed by a sub-committee of the Cabinet, I made certain representations that I should like to be heard; but no doubt, in the stress of the business of the session, the matter was overlooked; and the first I knew about it was that an Order-in-Council had been duly passed."

When Parliament assembled in the spring of 1921, S.W. Jacobs, K.C., M.P. took occasion to address the deputies during the debate of the speech from the Throne.

This was one of the great speeches Jacobs made in the House of Commons, in which he severely criticized the "selective immigration policy" and the restrictive Orders-in-Council. "We have on the statute books," Jacobs said in his speech of March 3, 1921, "Orders-in-Council respecting immigration which are the most extraordinary and grotesque that it is possible to imagine sane people to enact. I make this statement advisedly and shall show you what some of these laws are."

As a first instance, Jacobs dealt with the requirement of a continuous journey: "If the immigrant comes direct from the country of his birth, he will be permitted, under certain conditions, to land in this country; but should that man and his family have left the country of his birth and gone to England, and have lived in England say for fifteen or twenty years, brought up his family under English customs, and taught them English ideas and the language of that country -- if that man attempted to land in Canada with his wife and family, he would be barred from entering the Dominion because he didn't come directly from the country of his birth." "I am not saying this as a jest, Mr. Speaker, it is not something from a libretto of Gilbert and Sullivan, or from Alice in Wonderland; it is an Order-in-Council of the Department of Immigration."

Jacobs then attacked the Order-in-Council which provided that immigrants should be in possession of a minimum of $250 on landing in Canada, in addition to a railroad ticket to his destination. "But, if the man is coming to relatives who are worth, say half a million dollars, and who are prepared to give bonds to the Government that he will not become a public charge, it is not sufficient," said Jacobs. "This man may use his $250 for living expenses and he may afterwards become a public charge, but that is of no consequence to the Government. If he lands with $250, that is sufficient; but no matter what bonds another person is prepared to give, or what bonds his relatives are prepared to give, he is not permitted to land without the $250."

Jacobs also dwelt on the way discretionary power is exercised by the Government: "In times when there is little work, people are permitted to land in Canada, but under what conditions do you think? There is a special regulation that the party landing must give security that he won't work, and that if he is caught working, he is taken by the scruff of the neck and sent out of the country. This in a country of 7,000,000 and capable of maintaining within its borders at least 100,000,000." He mentioned the fact that as a result of the war, Canada had a national debt of 2¼ billions of dollars, on which 7,000,000 people had to pay interest. "If there were 14,000,000 people in this country, they would be paying the same amount of interest and the burden upon those who are now in Canada would be half of what it is at the present time." He then said: "We are not doing these people such a great favor when we permit them to come into this country, we are simply giving them an opportunity of paying part of our debts."

Finally, Jacobs thought that the policy of "keeping out the strangers" had been mainly inculcated into us during the time of war. "We are afraid of strangers. We are told: 'Keep this country for the Anglo-Saxon people.' Well, if the country is to be kept for the Anglo-Saxons, why don't they come? I venture to say that when we are paying our debts, we do not ask ourselves the question where the money has been collected -- whether collected from Anglo-Saxons, from Poles, or from French; we pay our debts with their money.

"This policy of keeping out desirable people on such trifling, trivial, pettifogging grounds is not worthy of the Government. It is the policy of 'He is a stranger; heave half a brick at him.' We have an idea that because a man does not come from England, or Scotland, or Ireland he is thereby not fit for a good Anglo-Saxon to associate with. I want to tell this Government

that in adopting such a policy they are making a very serious mistake; they should not select people because of their origin; they should select people for what they are. If a man and his family, present themselves for entry into Canada, if a man selects this country from among all others in which to bring up his family and to live and die here, it is the duty of the Immigration officer to see whether such people are likely to make true and proper citizens."

His persistence overrode personal, partisan and political considerations. Indeed, before the stone wall his unremitting constancy was almost self-defeating. The very predictability of his fresh wit directed for the one cause of life-saving made unlikely a sudden reversal of national, bi-partisan policy. His readiness to turn on his own party on this -- and other -- principle made it less likely that he would become the first Jew in a Canadian cabinet, a trust he was clearly capable of discharging except for failure of blind partisan talent.

What could the political future hold for a man who could say of his newly triumphant fellow Liberals (May 15, 1923):

"We had expected nothing from the (Conservative) government, and we got what we expected. But at the present moment when we have here in 'the seats of the mighty', on the treasury benches a galaxy of all the talents of the Liberal party, I must express my surprise and my astonishment that we are simply following in the way of the Philistines. Nothing is being done at all.

"I feel like the father about to chastise his child. It pains me more than it does the child. It is not a very pleasant matter for me, a Liberal of many years standing, to get up and snipe my party and the minister from my seat in the House. But this is something that transcends party, this is a national problem.

"I feel very strongly upon the question of immigration. I have discussed immigration ever since I came into the House. I have delivered what I might claim to be my annual address on this subject to the House ever since 1918. So far my words have fallen on deaf ears; I am a voice in the wilderness. But I trust that in time the government will see that this is a matter which vitally affects every person in this Dominion; and that, unless we awake to the seriousness of the situation, we may find ourselves before long in the shades of the opposition -- I was going to say, which we shall fill so acceptably, but which we did fill for an entire decade. We will find that our kingdom will have been taken from us, and that some persons considered more worthy to reign in our stead will be occupying the government benches.

"I want to tell my hon. friend, the leader of the Progressives that if he is prepared to accept my policy on the immigration question, I will go over to his side of the House and support him on that question. In fact, in order to show how seriously I look upon this matter, I will go so far as to join the Labour group in the other part of the Chamber if I found they would do something for immigration."

Two years later, on Apr. 23, 1925, he repeated:

"I have been a voice crying in the wilderness. There is no one to give me support on this question in this chamber. I am in a class by myself. I have promised my support to any party in this House, or any party outside of the House who wants to get in, who will give their adhesion to a policy of this kind, and so far no one has come forward. The only member who at all approaches my view in this respect is my right hon. friend the leader of the Opposition.

"The fact remains that when he was in power for a number of years nothing was done. The present rules and orders-in-council and regulations are those which were put into effect during his regime.

"Now he is prepared to do something. Whatever a man hath will he give for his political life. I am rather dubious of these death-bed repentances, although I have very little choice. I know that the party in power at the present time are not prepared to do anything, although I give them my support. I have threatened and urged and gone almost beyond the limits of endurance, but so far nothing has been done; and, so far as I can see, nothing is going to be done.

"I have held out the olive branch to the hon. leader of the Progressive party. I am willing to follow him. I am willing to follow the Labour Party, small though it be.

"As for me, I have always given my support, such as it was, to the party in power; but this matter of immigration is one which transcends politics, political affiliations and party friendships. I always will, while in this House, advocate the open door in the matter of immigration, because I feel it is in the interests of the country that we should have a proper immigration policy....

"I am in favour of allowing into the country every healthy white person who is able to make a living. Why should not such a man be allowed to come into the country? He is going to help pay our debts, and surely he is about the most welcome person we can get just now.

"The policy of the present government on immigration is like the wisdom of God; it surpasseth understanding.

"For nineteen days, ever since this debate started, I have waited in vain to hear some public man rise in this chamber and advocate some kind of immigration policy. But nothing has been done; and feeling that nothing would be said during the entire debate, I felt it my duty to rise and make these remarks, some of which, to a certain extent, are distasteful to me to make.

"Every man who comes to this country and who is ready and willing to work can find work to do. That is why those people who come from continental Europe, ignorant of our language and of our customs, are able to find work. They are willing to put their hands to anything. That is why they are a better element in the community than those whose only qualification is that they can talk English and think they own this country..."

Jacobs and A.A. Heaps were shocked to hear George H. Corbett tell the parliamentary committee on Agriculture and Colonization in 1928 that Montreal hospitals were refusing service to immigrants except in emergency cases, in accordance with a municipal regulation. It does not seem to be very Christian, he commented.

If the public wards of hospitals are not open to immigrants they were better closed completely, Jacobs said.

In reply to a question from Jacobs, Corbett attested that immigrants constitute a very small portion of the burden on philanthropy; some six percent in Montreal. But arbitrary city and provincial rules forbid use of public funds for their relief.

Corbett told of the British Immigration Society refusing to act for immigrants who became ill, and the Irish Protestant welfare group recommended the deportation of such of their compatriots.

Jacobs commented, this is not the case with Jewish societies. (Proceedings, French version, Pp. 592-93)

Both Jacobs and J. Cohen said that many immigrants in trouble -- unemployed, arrested as vagabonds, released prisoners, abandoned children -- land on their doorsteps. Cohen said that these calls upon humanity cost him more than the indemnity he was receiving as parliamentarian.

But this vigilance was unavailing. Immigration was being cut off early and severely.

A tour of European centres by the Canadian deputy minister of immigration in 1921 "did not do any good; Belkin notes (P.125) officers of Jewish organizations on the continent found him unfriendly to Jewish immigrants."

In 1928 S.W. Jacobs had reason to write to the deputy minister of immigration, J. Egan, in this tone:

"As you are aware, the stringent rules recently put into effect regarding immigrants have made it practically impossible for any of ours to come forward. Either these rules are most unreasonable or we have been permitting, in the past, people to come into this country who never should have been allowed in, and many of whom ought to be in lunatic asylums.

"Our experience with Jewish immigrants, as you know, has always been satisfactory, and it would be preferable for the Department to declare openly that these people are not to be allowed in the country, for reasons which are not given by the Department, rather than that subterfuges should be resorted to in order to keep them out of Canada.

"This whole question of Jewish immigration, I think, should be frankly and fully discussed, so that we may know where we stand. This would be better all round, as it would save Members of Parliament and Departmental officials a great deal of trouble, and would at once put an end to the immigration of our people.

"Both Mr. Heaps and myself intend to have a full discussion with the Prime Minister on his return, and our attitude to the Government will be largely determined by the decision which he and his fellow-Ministers adopt.

"Our usefulness as Members of the House, you can understand, is at an end if steps taken on behalf of our people are blocked, as they appear to be, by the present stand of the Government.

"You will, of course, understand that the responsibility for this is not being placed at your door, as we clearly see that outside influences, over which you have no control, appear to be made the dominating reason for the Government's present decision.

"My own district contains more than half of the entire Jewish population of Canada, and unless something is done for my people, and to a lesser degree this applies to Mr. Heaps' division, the sooner he and I will retire from our present position, the better all round." (Jacobs Papers in Canadian archives, Pp. 1390-91)

"I am going to say something which will probably surprise my friend, the Minister of Immigration, and that is that, under the rules of the Immigration department, the founder of Christianity would be debarred from coming into this country. He could not come in, and none of the apostles could enter this country. None of the founders of the early Christian church could enter Canada under the present regulations of the department.

"There are in the case of Jesus of Nazareth -- I am saying it with all respect -- four orders-in-council which would prohibit him from coming in here. There would be first, the order relating to the non-agriculturist class. Carpenters are not permitted to enter this country coming from that district, and then he would not have a proper passport; he would not be travelling by a continuous journey; and he would have no relatives in this country. Those are four orders-in-council which would prevent him from coming in.

"Michael Angelo, although he built St. Peter's at Rome, could not enter this country, because we do not want architects or carpenters from Latin countries. If he came from Iceland and could build an icehouse, we could use him. If Mr. Mussolini wished to come over and make a bid for the leadership of the Tory Party he would be debarred by the Minister of Immigration from coming in. We heard it stated in the last election: Canada wants a Mussolini. But my friend the Minister of Immigration stands like an angel with a flaming sword at the gate and would not permit him to enter. And so all along the line."...(P.167)

Another time, "For the last ten or twelve years I have delivered in this chamber my annual immigration address. So far I have convinced no person but myself, and it strikes me that ought to be a gentle hint to leave the work to more capable hands. Still, I belong to a somewhat persistent race and I feel that perhaps as parliaments change, the seed may fall on fertile soil and I may be able to make at least one convert in the course of time."... (p.168)

Several letters in the Jacobs Collection in the National Archives of the Canadian Jewish Congress reflect the relationships with colleagues in the House of Commons.

On Oct. 10, 1921 Jacobs had occasion to write to Minister of Immigration J.W. Edwards.

"On Friday last I made an appointment with the officials in your department for an interview with you on Saturday morning at eleven o'clock, when I was told that you would be in Ottawa, and could see me. I attended in Ottawa and in order to do so was obliged to leave on Friday evening to keep the appointment.

"I waited an hour and a half in Mr. Blair's office, as you were engaged with other callers, and it was only at a quarter to one that I was told that you were obliged to catch a train, and left the office without seeing me.

"My visit was to discuss the proposed deportation of two or three immigration cases. These cases I felt were deserving of favorable consideration, and in order to prevent the immigrants from being sent aboard the vessel, I was obliged to ask for writs of Habeas Corpus to keep them here, which involved an expense of four or five hundred dollars, which of course could have been avoided had I been able to see you. Outside the personal inconvenience of my trip to Ottawa, and the expense of a considerable sum of money, I must confess frankly to a feeling of annoyance that you should have felt called upon to treat with such scant courtesy a fellow member of the House, and I am sure you will agree with me that I am only doing right in expressing my feelings to you direct. Our relations in the past have been uniformly most pleasant, and I think it is due to me that some explanation be given of what I must consider as cavalier treatment."

We can guess at the response of the minister from a note to him from Jacobs on Oct. 18,

"The only rejoinder I have to make to your letter of the 14th instant is that the comment which I made while waiting to see you, when I was told that Mr. Boyce, of Carleton County, was in conference with you, was that I feared that you were both discussing the victory at the Boyne. If a comment of this kind is sufficient to give you offence, then I must say that the new position to which you have been called has caused you to lose your sense of humor which I thought you possessed, and if my remarks gave you offence I can only most humbly and abjectly apologize."

Of course, all these activities were no way to win the friendship of the Liberal Party. The exclusion of the very capable Jacobs from the cabinet was a cause of widespread political scandal.

Nevertheless when Lyon Cohen wrote Mackenzie King on Jan. 15, 1930 that, in view of the position of the Jewish community, it was no more than just for Jacobs to be given a ministry, the prime minister replied five days later that, in accord with the desire of our Jewish friends to gain more in the way of recognition in public life, Mr. Cohen's letter would be brought to the attention of the colleagues of the prime minister.

Indeed, anti-Jewish pressure in this field was so powerful in the U.S. (in the words of Marshall to Zangwill: "Immigration and Bolshevism are looked upon as convertible terms") that well established sectors of American Jewry felt impelled to deny that they were acting to increase the inflow of Jewish immigration.

In Canada there were no such inhibitions, and the Jewish community was united in its rescue and immigration effort. Jacobs' hopes that another political party in power would handle applications with more understanding were not to be fulfilled. As European Jews continued to seek escape to such countries as Canada, an impenetrable curtain of paper prevented rescue from the clutches of European torturers. Today the grammar of the regulations which prevented their coming across the Atlantic makes sickening reading. Exclusionary regulations seem to have been made up as they went along, not without the knowledge of the highest levels of government. At one point

there were no Canadian officials in place to "process" applicants; immigrants fleeing crushing poverty did not have hundreds of dollars to show the officials; many were not admitted to join their relatives in Canada because this would sever them from their families overseas; they were not always travelling by direct route from their homes in war shattered Europe; being made to run around the doctors' offices, they were found to be winded; self-confirming diagnosis of emotional instability.

To quote Prof. Thomson, "Canada's immigration regulations are a mass of contradictions and evasiveness, reactionary in theory and inhuman in practice...It is obvious that the workings of Canadian policy in regard to refugees and immigration lie to a great extent in the arbitrary hands of the immigration officials."

By and large failing in influencing immigration policy or law, the Jewish community directed its efforts towards case work, pleading, wheedling, begging for the rescue, the lives of individual migrants and families; sometimes groups of migrants. Thus Jewish history in the dominion becomes fragmented into family history.

S. Jacobs had to intervene on behalf of four stowaways in Quebec City.

Immigrants sentenced to deportation were so desperate that some jumped from the ships taking them to their doom, to swim to Canadian soil. Appealing for one such recaptured "criminal", Jacobs exhausted all his legal arguments to no avail. Then he told the commissioner of immigration, "Don't you really think that this man deserves a break for his love for free Canada? You should even give him a medal for being a good swimmer." The commissioner laughed and extended mercy.

Belkin notes that when Charles Stewart, friend of S.W. Jacobs, was named minister of the interior, Black soon found himself not deputy minister of immigration but director of colonization of the C.N.R. Jacobs was not totally uninvolved in this transfer and Black never forgave him.

During the transition, Belkin notes, very restrictive orders-in-council further narrowed the gates of Canada for the Jewish wanderers. (P. 127)

Calgary M.P. Dr. G.D. Stanley was informed by the local branch of the Jewish Immigrant Aid Society of the needs for the admission of their kin. Dr. Stanley communicated these resolutions to the deputy minister of immigration who responded on May 22, 1931,

"We have received similar Resolutions from other parts of Canada.

"In these Resolutions request is made for the admission to Canada of parents, children up to the age of 21 years and prospective brides of Jewish residents of Canada; and while the purpose of their Resolutions is appreciated, yet I think Jewry as a whole in Canada fully realise that the present regulations have been put into effect for the purpose of controlling immigration to meet existing conditions in Canada. I know the Minister feels that there would be no justification for changing the law.

"Raising the age to 21 years in the case of children, would simply mean increasing the number of persons in Canada seeking employment, and this is a situation we desire to avoid. In the case of parents, in spite of all that may be said, ninety-five per cent of such cases develop into a question of employment which is, of course, objectionable at the present time.

"Please advise the Calgary Branch of the Jewish Immigrant Aid Society that our Minister is not unmindful of their suggestions, but he is unable to favourably consider their request."

Contemporary Canadian anglophone expression on the immigration problems of Canada is a remarkable confusion compounded of British loyalism, invalid economics, suspicion of other peoples almost proportional to their mileage from England, racist fear.

One healthy expression came from J.S. Woodsworth, not yet a political figure, who noted in 1924 at the National Conference of Social Work,

"Let me reproduce a few paragraphs that I wrote some years ago. How little of what we write stands the test of the passing years!

"Too often our 'Canadianizing' efforts have contributed directly to the undermining of the foundations on which alone true character is built. Destroy filial respect and reverence and love of the homeland, and what have we to work on?

"We have in practice taken for granted that our standards were the only and final standards. If the immigrant has not in all points measured up to our standards, we have considered him as an inferior. We have then attempted, either somewhat arrogantly to assert our own superiority, or set about with missionary zeal to make him conform to our type.

"Some of the immigrants have been more concerned in making homes than in making money and we have called them unambitious. Some have given considerable time to participating in musical and dramatic performances and we have called them shiftless and lazy. Some have clung to the religion of their fathers and to the association of the homeland and we have called them superstitious and unpatriotic. Some have wished their children to retain a knowledge of their mother-tongue and we have denounced them as reactionary and un-British.

"This attitude, which has too frequently characterized the patriotic and religious efforts which we have made on behalf of the immigrant, accounts in no small measure for our failures. Let those who set out to 'Canadianize and Christianize' the immigrants remember that there is room for other and perhaps higher Canadian types than those which predominate either on our streets or in our houses of parliament; that there is reason, too, for other types of Christianity than those which prevail in Canada in this year of our Lord nineteen hundred and seventeen.

"'God has many bests,' as a wise teacher once put the truth which we are emphasizing. In the garden of Allah grow many varieties of flowers -- each perfect after its kind. All cannot be judged according to one standard. If ever we in Canada attain a national ideal, it must be big enough -- catholic enough -- to give a place to the highest and best which each class of immigrant brings to this country.

"More than missionaries we need interpreters -- those who can mediate between the Canadian and the newcomer, who can present to the newcomer in an attractive light the best which we have developed in our social and national life, and can, on the other hand, sympathetically present to the Canadian the needs and possibilities of those who are casting in their lot with us.

"In our nation-building, plenty of good material lies ready to hand. We need the wise master-builders who, understanding the value of each class of material, can fit each piece into its place in the ever enlarging structure." ("Immigration Legislation and its Administration as it Bears upon the Problem of Assimilation in Canada." Pp.92-101)

HITLER IN POWER

The war came on the Jews long before it came to the Anglo-Saxon world. The Sons of Israel were at war without the benefit of a State of Israel. The Jewish victims were agonizing, and Jewish communities and institutions were doing what they could in an environment which discouraged intensity and active sympathy.

Canadians -- and others -- averted their eyes, after turning the keys, in full knowledge of what was happening. Before the first shells fell over Danzig and Warsaw, the concentration camps in Germany and the horrors of the Austrian union were on the public record and had been detailed in the press of the west.

The leaders of the Jewish community sought to place the German situation in its true colours before the Canadian public. They sought to defend the democratic image in Europe and in Canada. They sought to counter the ocean flood of libel and of lie. They sought to answer the accusations against them in press and in pulpit.

In spite of this hostility about them, they kept vigourously urging the admission of refugees, each one of them possibly the last who may get out.

The Jewish Committee on the Settlement of Refugees could score but meager success.

While the torture camps in Germany and the pursuit and persecution of desperate Jews were proceeding into a developing holocaust, such papers were determining life-or-death decisions in government departments barring the admission of the fleeing.

As the crisis for the Jews in Germany deepened, Jacobs drew the attention of R.B. Bennett to the concern of the Jewish community.

On Apr. 1, 1933 Jacobs received a telegraphic report from the prime minister,

"For your personal information I have to advise that we have been closely in touch with the European situation, and it is represented to me from the highest quarters that the principal reason for the immediate boycott is because of foreign attacks on Germany, and that the announcement of one day only boycott is to be followed by a truce if foreign attacks cease. Understand the heads of the Jewish organization in London have seen the German ambassador and are announcing that they are not sponsoring boycott of German goods or conducting public campaign of attack. Utmost discretion should be used, as anything calculated to amount to interference by a foreign country with internal differences in Germany between her own citizens makes it more difficult for minority citizens. The situation is very delicate and I am sending you this personal message for your own guidance and, for obvious reasons, not for publication. (P.A.C., Jacobs Papers. Pp. 2608-9)

A.A. Heaps, Jewish M.P. from Winnipeg, was as persistent, as is evidence by his letter to Jacobs of May 26,

"In reference to our phone conversation of this morning, I have this day seen the Premier and it is doubtful if any interview can be arranged next week as he leaves for Europe on Thursday or Friday next. He suggested you take the matter up with Mr. Gordon, Minister of Immigration.

"I will try to see Mr. Gordon if at all possible, and notify you of results. I will phone Mr. Freiman contents of this letter." (Jacobs Papers, P. 2650)

By May 23, Benjamin Robinson, president of the Jewish Immigrant Aid Society of Canada, wrote to S.W. Jacobs,

"Appalled by the plight of the German-Jewish refugees who continue fleeing in increasing numbers from Hitlerite persecutions, the Executive of the Jewish Immigrant Aid Society of Canada is considering the possibility and feasibility of relieving distress through the absorption of a portion of these refugees.

"For this purpose, an all-Canadian Immigration Conference has been called for Sunday, 10.30 A.M. of May 28th, 1933, at the Mount Royal Hotel, Montreal. We feel that your presence at this Conference is absolutely necessary." (On the letterhead, the Deuteronomy reminder in Hebrew and English "For you have been strangers")

The day after this conference Jacobs telegraphed to S. Factor, M.P. from Toronto,

"Delegation re German refugees interviewing the Hon. Mr. Gordon at Ottawa to-morrow. Can you come?"

He wrote similarly to A.J. Freiman on May 29. (Jacobs Papers)

At the end of June, Lyon Cohen, Jacobs and Robinson reminded Mr. Gordon,

"You will remember the visit of the delegation consisting of representatives of the Canadian Committee of the Jewish Colonization Association and the Jewish Immigrant Aid Society of Canada, who placed before you the position of Jews residing in Germany against whom discriminatory measures of the most brutal and humiliating character have been instituted by the German Government since the taking of office of Chancellor Hitler.

"It was pointed out that these far-reaching repressive laws make it quite impossible for many of them to remain in Germany, and that it has become necessary to seek new homes for them.

"The sympathy of Governments who abhor racial persecution is sought for these unfortunate people in various parts of the world where they will be able to live peaceably among other peoples; and to that object, it is requested that a limited number be permitted to come to Canada. They would engage in occupations for which they are fit, and will not become a factor in the labour market. There are numbers of professional men and merchants who have been uprooted by this calamity which has befallen them, and who, we believe, could bring their knowledge and experience for the benefit of our Country.

"It is recognized that, at this time, no one wishes to accentuate the labour situation by the immigration of any large body of new people. Those who will be brought over will be taken care of by our organizations, and we undertake that they will not become a charge on the public. We have, in the past, demonstrated our ability to provide for immigrants who have been brought in under our auspices, and the Government has not been troubled in any way.

"Under these conditions, and having regard to the limited number whom we are seeking to bring out, may we request that early action be taken so that their suffering might be mitigated.

"Knowing how generously Canada has responded to former appeals, we look to your favourable consideration of our request." (Jacobs Papers, Pp. 2675-76)

The going was hard from the beginning even for the distinguished Jewish parliamentarian. On Sept. 20 he wrote Rabbi M.N. Eisendrath of Toronto,

"Confidentially, I may say we are endeavouring to obtain an interview with the Prime Minister in order to urge upon him the necessity of taking some action in the interests of humanity, but it is a most difficult matter to round him up, because of the plethora of work which he is handling, just now, all the most important character. I did try on Monday, when in Ottawa, to see his secretary, but even this was impossible. I am hopeful

however, that sometime next week we may be in a position to meet him, and I shall advise you by wire so that, if you wish to come down, you may do so. (Jacobs Papers)

From the very beginning of international consideration of the problem of German Jewish refugees, the Canadian government made clear its opposition to any effective program. Even as the League of Nations was considering naming a commissioner to deal with this problem, W.A. Riddell, Canadian permanent representative to the League, voted even against the expression of a hope that the nations which had not yet accepted refugees might open their doors; he voted against the League inviting member nations to provide work for such refugees and to cooperate with the commissioner. (Le Devoir, Oct.6, 1933)

As W.A. Riddell, Canadian Advisory Officer to the League of Nations, reported from Geneva to Dr. O.D. Skelton on Oct. 17, 1933,

"I thought you might be interested in the action taken by the Fourteenth Assembly regarding assistance to refugees coming from Germany, and I therefore enclose a copy of the resolution on this subject which was finally adopted.

"The first resolution seemed to the Canadian Delegation to place rather definite obligations on the Members of the League to provide employment for German refugees, and it was therefore decided that I should make a statement in the Second Committee explaining that, in view of the present unemployment situation in Canada, it was impossible for the Canadian delegation to assume any such obligations as assisting these refugees to find employment in Canada. As there was a good deal of opposition to the first draft, it was finally very considerably modified." (P.A.C.)

The Immigration Department commented to Dr. Skelton on Dr. Riddell's reports.

"It is quite apparent that a strict administration of the existing immigration regulations will not offer any solution, so far as Canada is concerned, of the problems of Jews or other refugees.

"The immigrants admissible from the Continent are, - (a) wives and unmarried children under eighteen years of age, joining family heads established in Canada, and (b) agriculturists with ample funds to begin farming in this country.

"Once a refugee has left Germany and gone to live in some other country, the passport difficulty is likely to arise as well. The admission of any immigrants not holding proper passports or not belonging to the two classes above mentioned, involves an Order-in-Council authorizing admission, notwithstanding certain provisions of the Immigration regulations.

"The matter of admitting refugees is of course a matter of Governmental policy. Neither the regulations nor conditions prevailing here are favourable to granting the request. We have a considerable file of papers on which there are many protests from organizations and individuals in Canada against a movement to this country of German Jews reported to be coming our way." (Nov. 6, 1933)

As M. Peters wrote on war's eve:

"The facts are that the Jews are Europe's most suffering population. Yet the horrifying persecutions by the Hitler gang in Germany, the catastrophic poverty which reigns among the Jews in Poland -- all this has had no effect upon those who stand at the helm of Canada's government. Neither justice nor mercy has moved them to permit several more thousand Jews to make their homes here." (In Jubilee Book of the Russian-Polish Hebrew Sick Benefit Association. 1937. P.10)

Additional testimony to King's indifference to the fate of Hitler's victims comes from one of his foremost civil servants and ultimate successor to the prime ministry, Lester B. Pearson.

In his review of Canada's policy towards Israel, he recalls that in King's view, after having stated his support of the Balfour Declaration of 1917, "there was no need to do more about a purely British problem, even when the problem was made tragically more serious by Nazi persecution. Then came the war and the massacre of the Jews, and the postwar question of what was to be done with those who survived and were displaced persons. In Canada we remained cautious." (Mike, the Memoirs and Diaries of the Rt. Hon. Lester B. Pearson, vol. 2, 1948-57. Scarborough, New American Library of Canada, 1975, P. 239)

The Canadian decade is marked by one effort after another to organize, on the most practical and conservative basis, groups of refugees.

U.S. practice was not in marked contrast. Even during the years when the country was fighting Nazism, it allowed an average of 5,000 Jewish victims of Hitlerism -- about the population of an American high school -- to immigrate each year.

I. Abella and H. Troper report,

"Almost every French-language newspaper had warned the government against opening Canada's doors to European Jews. As Le Devoir put it: 'Why allow in Jewish refugees?... The Jewish shopkeeper on St. Lawrence Boulevard does nothing to increase our natural resources'. And this statement was mild compared with vicious anti-semitic utterances appearing regularly

in such papers as La Nation, L'Action Catholique and L'Action Nationale. Many French Canadian politicians spoke out -- both within and without the confines of Parliament -- against Jewish immigration. These Liberal members, in particular Wilfrid Lacroix, C.H. Leclerc and H.E. Brunelle, led the anti-refugee onslaught. In a speech in the Commons several months later, Brunelle denounced Jews as having caused 'great difficulties' wherever they lived.

"King confided to his diary: 'We must... seek to keep this part of the Continent free from unrest and from too great an intermixture of foreign strains of blood...' Nothing was to be gained, he believed, 'by creating an internal problem in an effort to meet an international one'. Allowing Jewish refugees into Canada, he told his Cabinet, might cause riots and would surely exacerbate relations between the federal government and the provinces. Any action permitting an appreciable number of Jews to settle in Canada would, in King's mind, undermine the unity of the nation. This was no time for Canada to act on 'humanitarian grounds'. Rather, said the Prime Minister, Canada must be guided by 'realities' and political considerations." ("The Line Must be Drawn Somewhere: Canada and Jewish Refugees, 1933-39")

No sooner did Hitler assume power, than the Ligue d'action nationale forwarded a resolution, on June 5, 1933, to the Federal Government protesting any Jewish immigration in these terms: "That the Canadian borders be kept completely closed indefinitely in these days of general unemployment which weighs so heavily on the national budget; that the government of Canada remain perfectly inflexible before Jewish pressure of any kind, national or worldwide, so that no complaisance be shown in favour of an element accused of Marxism and Communism by Germany, and which in itself cannot be an asset for Canada, being by its faith, its customs and its character unassimilable, a source of division and dispute, and thus of weakness for the Canadian people." (P.A.C. R.G. 25, Immigration, vol. 1661, file 342-1, June 5, 1933; Devoir, June 6, 1933)

This letter was sent by Me. Anatole Vanier, one of the leading spirits of the antisemitic movement that traces back to his presidency of the Association canadienne de la jeunesse catholique early in the century. Vanier was an alumnus of this movement, and it was from there that he turned his vigorous energies to the Ligue des droits de français (become the Action française). He was secretary of the sponsoring league and aggressive contributor to the important review of the same name. Notably he conducted the column "A travers la vie courante" and published a programmatic article on"L'Immigration, les fonds publiques, et nous" in the 1927 issue to mark the sixtieth anniversary of confederation.

Susan Mann Robertson notes that at a time when his mentor Chanoine Groulx was refusing a virulently antisemitic article for his Action française, Vanier wrote in the Almanach de la langue française a vicious article, "Les Juifs et nous" (Almanach 1923, Pp. 126-28). According to Vanier, Jews were an obstacle to the realization of French Canadian ambitions. He called for a Canadian Drumont to reveal the Jewish presence in commerce, industry, banking, finance, the professions and politics.

Me. Vanier, later professor in the faculty of the social sciences at the Université de Montréal, was secretary general of the Quebec Action française throughout the 1920's. (Susan Mann Robertson. L'Action française: l'appel à la race. She cites letters from would-be contributor P. Chabot to A. Lévesque and to Groulx, Feb. 5 and 27, 1927)

The pages of Action française are replete with his correspondence with the public powers, especially those residing in Ottawa.

Groulx recalled that it had been Vanier's provocative articles that had forced the authorities to remove the name of the chanoine from the direction of Action française.

This, nevertheless, only increased Abbé Groulx' admiration of Vanier whom he calls, "a patriot and a man of belief who cannot divorce his religious faith from his service to his motherland and his nationality."

After the passing of Action française Vanier published two articles, "L'Antisemitisme"and "Les Juifs au Canada",in its successor, Action nationale (vol. 2, Sept. 1933, Pp. 5-24, and vol. 3, no. 2, Feb. 1934, Pp. 85-87)

In the latter article Vanier appeared frightened of the prospect of Jews from Germany coming to Canada.

"Which of our ministers has assured the Canadian people that he will oppose the indifference in the cabinet in regard to the German Jews who want to make their way here? Quite aside from Jews, whose inassimilable character always renders them undesirable, the frontiers of Canada should be barred to all comers. Is it?"

Vanier set forth his views in the spring of 1939 before a rally at the Monument National convoked by the Société St.-Jean Baptiste on the theme of immigration.

"Theoretically, immigration can be a good thing for a new and sparsely settled country. But we must remember that it is a delicate matter which can have gross consequences. Let us not forget that people bring with them ideologies which find expression in customs and aspirations. These customs and aspirations may be good; they may be less good, or they may be evil; and if we take an accounting of what the immigrants have brought us since the opening of the century, it seems easier to add the liabilities column than that of the assets. So we note the customs of the Doukhobors, the leftist ideas of the querulous migrants from central Europe, full

of class warfare and of political upheaval. I even see hidden pearls such as the law discharging the bankrupt imported here through the persistent efforts of Mr. Jacobs, a law which was an attack on our traditional conception of honesty in business. I do not see what I can put in the assets column.

"We are faced with an aspect of the problem: should we admit, under pretext of humanitarian feeling, inassimilable Jews whose very numbers create an unsuspected pressure in the face of European persecution?

"I sympathize deeply with the Jewish race. But, in the light of the persecution they now suffer in Europe, if it were to be known that Canada offers them entry, even partial entry, we would risk being drowned by them in our own country within a year or two...

"The prime minister stated that the government is not prepared to open the gates of Canada to all comers; nevertheless, this will not prevent him from studying with due sympathy the situation faced by the refugees. The appeals of Mr. Heaps seem to force the leaders of the cabinet into more rapid activity than do the pressures of our national societies, still to come. However, behind Mr. Heaps there are only 158,000 Jews in Canada, according to the census of 1931. Does the secret of the forces arrayed against us lie in the joinder of English gold and Jewish gold, or in the divisions of Canadians in the party interest?...

"If you wish to be informed of Canada's participation in foreign wars or of Jewish plots, it is not at Ottawa that one should seek light but in London or Prague. The nature of Canadian democracy is strong on this point." (Devoir, Apr. 14, 1939)

Vanier's letter had been sent before the first Jewish démarche in Ottawa in regard to Germany. For it was on the 20th of June that Jacobs, Lyon Cohen and (later Judge) Benjamin Robinson wrote to the Hon. W.A. Gordon, minister of immigration, referring to an earlier meeting with him.

His negative response, notes Belkin, was discouraging.

At the very moment that the Jews were attempting to flee the torture chambers of Dachau, very important Canadian newspapers published reports, that they must have known to be untrue, about conspiracies to flood this country with refugees -- and called such an action, if it existed, undesirable.

The Devoir printed a story about a Brussels meeting which raised some $35,000,000 for the migration of 700,000 German Jews, many of them to Canada and to South America, (June 1,2,6,7 and 15, 1933), and about a similar conspiracy in Prague. (Sept. 22, 1933)

The Devoir"reports" indicated that the most desirable of the Jewish emigrants -- the capitalists, investors, indispensable skilled workers, etc., -- will remain in Belgium.

This was the occasion of an anti-immigration campaign. The Patriote would not get off the theme. On June 15 it headlined, "Canada does Not Want these Jews." On the 22nd, "Jewry's Hold on Quebec; a Symptomatic Increase of the Jewish Element; How to Stop the Entry of the German Jews into the Country whom the Belgian Zionists Want to Send Us."

The Central Council of National Catholic Unions in Hull passed a resolution. "The coming of these Jews would create deplorable conditions in the country and would be dangerous from several points of view." (Patriote, Aug. 3, 1933)

By now Bourassa was gone from the Devoir he had founded and Georges Pelletier had succeeded him. We read him at his mildest on June 2, 1933,

"Whatever we may think of the Jews in Germany or elsewhere, one fact is certain: We must very carefully watch our trans-Atlantic and our rail shipping companies who are always lurking for sources of income, who must by now be in contact with the Hirsch Institute or the Zionist centres in Europe about this movement.

"Do we need this immigration? Is it desirable? Do we not have too many immigrants from everywhere who came here as to an inn, and who cause problems and serious difficulties from the social and economic point of view, not to speak of others? Of what value is this assisted immigration of urban elements with questionable advanced social tendencies, whether Marxist or Communist? Would we not be more like masters in our own home if we said whom we want here and whom we do not care to receive, whatever is the racial origin of those whom they want to impose upon us from overseas?" (June 2, 1933)

As the pressure of the desperate fleeing Jews mounted with the rise of Hitlerism, the antagonism of an authoritative press towards the victims revived after nearly a decade of relative quiet. L'Heureux was one of their spokesmen.

Eugène L'Heureux added his comments in Action catholique in regard to these "anti-Christian immigrants of Bolshevik mentality": "It is not yet proven that Hitler lied when he said that the Jewish emigrants from Germany are agents of communism." (Editorial, Oct. 26, 1933: "At the Tip of the Pen")

"There is no question of ill-treating anyone, but it would be wrong to bring here those of whom other peoples are getting rid." (Oct. 26, 1933)

"Even after they are naturalized they think like Jews, act like Jews, Judaize national resources, favour Jews against others, and strive ever to remain Jewish, even unto their descendants." (Editorial in Action catholique, Aug. 31, 1933: "The German Concordat")

Three years later he reaffirmed more boldly, "It is not too much to say that the Jews driven from Germany by Hitler are very likely to be communists." (Editorial in Action catholique, March 26, 1936: "The German Jews.")

In an editorial on "A Prosperous Year; For the Practice of National Solidarity," he cites the Jews as "one example out of a thousand: there is the solidarity which permitted a handful of impoverished Jews who arrived less than a century ago to organize sufficiently to falsify the numerous majority richly endowed with historic rights.

"Of these Jews, we would have it clearly understood: far from despising them, we set them as an example to be followed in several ways, particularly in their national solidarity."

This is cited not, for an instant, to ignore the intention of an anti-Jewish boycott in the words of L'Heureux. It is to note the slight difference in tone from his editorial of several years earlier, when he cheered the Hitler-Vatican concordat. (Aug. 31, 1933)

As J. Dorion, one of the founders of Action catholique, saw the situation, it was the Germans who were right in defending themselves against the Jewish aggression and exploitation. This defence was not as severe as the financial boycott of the Jews, and never went to the point of ill treatment. But the Jewish protests in the United States and the anti-German publicity only demonstrate the Jewish power over the press. "You cannot touch them but within twenty-four hours the entire world is alarmed. The same is true in our country. Some excessive comments in some discredited sheet, and we are faced with legislation which would inflict dictatorship upon the press of the nation." (March 28, 1933)

The Devoir hoped that the June 1933 decline in immigration would continue.

"This would prove that the plan launched at Brussels at a Jewish meeting to send thousands of German Jewish immigrants to Canada has not yet been put into practice.

"Let us not, however, be lulled into a dangerous tranquility. A movement such as that is not organized within a few weeks. At last reports those making these plans were raising considerable sums for the mass migration to Latin America and to Canada. They have set up a Jewish economic federation in London on a world scale. The two plans are related without any doubt. And American Jews are a part of this, according to a London dispatch which states that Samuel Untermeyer, lawyer for high finance in New York, is one of the master craftsmen of this federation. It cannot but interest itself in the migration problem." (Quoted in Action Catholique, Aug. 3, 1933)

Like later false alarms, Messersmith's successor as Antwerp U.S. consul, James E. McKenna reported to his superiors that the Jewish migration agencies "decided to set aside $20,000,000 for the special use of Jewish immigrants now in Poland and perhaps in Russia, to enable them to emigrate to France to the number of 6,000 or 8,000, and possibly to Canada to the number of 2,500."

What is remarkable about this story, which is unfortunately false, is that it allegedly came to Mr. McKenna from Ezra, the Jewish relief organization. (National Archive, R.G. 59, 860C 56/147, cited by Szaikowski, "The Consul," P. 11)

This was taken up by Anatole Vanier, of the Ligue d'action nationale, who appealed to the federal government to "keep the frontiers of Canada completely shut at this time of general unemployment; that the government of Canada should remain perfectly inflexible before Jewish pressure, national or international, and that no indulgence be shown towards an element accused by

Nazi Germany of Marxism and of communism and which can never become an asset to Canada because it is unassimilable and a source of civil strife and division by its very faith and customs; and therefore a weakening element for the nation." (Public Archives of Canada. R R 25. Immigration, vol. 1661, file 342-1, June 5, 1933; Devoir, June 6, 1933)

The alleged Brussels meeting to organize Jewish immigration into Canada evoked hostile resolutions from the Société des artisans canadiens français from Hawkesbury, from the Municipal Council of Becancour Parish at Nicolet County, from Douglas East in the Gaspé, from Ste. Anne de Pocatière, from St. Damiens of Buckland County, from the Town of Coaticook, from Jonquière Parish, from the Association des hommes d'affaires of Lachine, the Club ouvrier St. Marc, the Ottawa diocese of the Unions nationales catholiques ("the grave dangers which infallibly flow from the coming of so many Jews here"), and its Trois Rivières secretary (which adopted the wording of the Ligue des intérets nationaux).

The Quebec City Council petitioned Ottawa to close the doors of the country against refugees from Germany, "for Canada is likely to be among the first which would interest them...It is in the interests of the two mother Christian races of this country to prevent the entry of non-Christian persons."

On the motion of Aldermen Rodolphe Deblois and Arthur Drolet the city council unanimously voted that the coming of a large number of German Jews forced out of Germany would give rise to a state within a state as they were not easily assimilated. (Canadian Press despatch from Quebec, Aug. 26, 1933; Canadian Jewish Chronicle, Sept. 1, 1933)

Other resolutions evoked by European reports of organized migration from Europe came from the Cité de Lévis, the Cercle Laporte of Sherbrooke, the Chevaliers de Carillon of Granby. The Hon. H.H. Stevens transmitted the anti-Jewish resolution of the Association de la défence ouvrière of Montreal.

The Association canadienne des voyageurs du Canada wrote to Premier Bennett on June 12, 1933 in this context,

"We wish to express our complete opposition to any Jewish immigration to Canada and to request that none be accepted.

"Apart from the fact that there are thousands of unemployed in the country, the Jewish race is undesirable for several reasons, among which are the following: the Jews are not assimilable; they entered this country under false pretence in the past claiming that they would settle on farms; they overcrowd the cities and they grab possession of them." (P.A.C. Immigration Department,files F873651)

It told the government that Jews are entering Canada illegally through St. Pierre-Miquelon, and Ald. Henri Auger of Montreal placed the number of such illegals at 150.

When the association received a reply from the department in English, L. Lorrain, chef du secrétariat, protested, "We regard it as ill will or fanaticism on the part of the commissioner,or simple ignorance of one of the official languages of Canada." (Nov.6, 1933)

The Laflèche Branch of the A.C.V. du C. at Trois Rivières supported the Montreal letter with friendly notes to several ministers.

"We know that,personally, you do not want Jews any more than we do; however, we are taking the liberty to write this letter to you to let you know that we are of the same opinion on this point."

A meeting representing 1000 French Canadians convened at the Montreal Palestre national passed a motion in the same sense.

The Federated Associations of Catholic Convents of Canada, representing "the élite of French Canadian society", met under the presidency of Cardinal Villeneuve, Archbishop of Quebec, on June 24, 1933, and resolved to inform Prime Minister Bennett that "We all know that the Jew is an anti-Christian and anti-national element.

"They request the Canadian Government to remain unyielding before any Jewish or other pressure, whether national or worldwide, and to prevent any favour being extended to an element which was accused of Socialism and Communism by Germany, this country having enough to deal with foreign elements which are encouraging, or wish to encourage, political and social revolution in this country.

"In conclusion they ask that energetic measures be taken against the indirect issuance of entry permits to Canada to a class which Germany and other European countries wish to get rid of for the reason that it would be a cause of disorder and revolution."

The presence of the archbishop (later the cardinal)in this context is a challenge to the historian. Elsewhere, too -- as in the Quebec synagogue case, and in the entire violent campaign against the Jews carried out in his diocese on his authority -- he figures as responsible for much anti-Jewish evil. Yet from all reconstructions of his person by those who were close to him he emerges as a gentle,considerate person not given to hatreds or incitements.

The Association ouvrière du nord of Montreal promised, "We shall begin a campaign against the Jewish immigrants who bode us nothing that is good in any manner." (Letter to the minister of Immigration, June 23, 1933)

Mr. Delpo of Montreal supported the National Action League in its protest. "Are our morals already not corrupted enough with those godless and lawless foreigners?" he asked Acting Prime Minister Sir George Perley.

Citizen A. Bachand wrote the minister,

"For the last 4 months, 121 Jews entered Canada. It means that 121 English or French Canadians will come on direct relief, because you can be sure that the Jewish manufacturers will give them positions.

"Jewish merchants are a liability in all countries, and they disorganize the Christian merchants by false advertising and frauds of all kinds, and stealing 60% of their customers.

"I suppose you know very well too that these 121 Jews will be Liberals, not Conservatives, and that they will not become farmers. They may say so on their entry declarations but after a couple of months they will leave the country for cities.

"If Canada needs immigrants, it is better to have them come from England."

The Edouard Section of the Federation of Labor Clubs decided that any immigration into Canada of Jews from Germany would be detrimental to the laboring classes of the Dominion, and proposed that a letter be sent to the central council of the federation, outlining the St. Edouard Club's stand in the matter, and that a similar letter be sent to the Minister of Immigration at Ottawa.

The Gazette of Aug. 30, 1933 reports the meeting: "Brown caps and brown shirts were much in evidence at the meeting last night, as was the Fascist salute."

The Ligue des intérêts nationaux, Br.24 of Bellerive, of Hawkesbury and of Beauharnois wrote the government that Jews and all non-Christians are generally elements of disorder: they prevent our people from reacquiring our legitimate activities. They ask the minister to refuse entry to these anti-Christian Germans.

The petition from Maniwaki Branch was submitted by Armand Lavergne.

The municipality of Bowman, P.Q., wrote on January 20, 1934, that among the immigrants there may be communists and atheists; the greatest number of communist leaders in all countries are Jewish.

Maxime Raymond, M.P. supported the resolution of the City Council of Salaberry of Valleyfield,

"The situation in some European countries is favourable to the migration to Canada of persons of antichristian, socialistic and communistic and even bolshevist tendencies;

"Some European organizations have stated through the press that they intend sending to Canada those undesirable elements being expelled from certain countries where they are considered as dangerous;

"Whereas Canada is a country of order, and a Christian country which should be protected against the invasion of those who may endanger its Christian and national character as well as its national conditions and traditions;

"Whereas the unemployment crisis has not yet come to an end in this country, and that any immigration, of undesirable and dangerous elements specially, would tend to make it worse and more durable and to cause serious trouble;

"Whereas the best population stock which Canada may desire is that of its own Christian origin;

"The Council of the City of Salaberry of Valleyfield request the Government of Canada, and the Minister of Immigration particularly, to prevent the entry to Canada of any immigration which is not an addition to the Christianism of this country, or of any immigration which may be a cause of disorder through its socialistic or communistic tendencies, or of any immigration found undesirable by other countries."

Legislator Raymond was reassured by the department that the exclusionism was being properly enforced. (Oct. 28, 1933)

It is helpful in situating this correspondence to note that Me. Raymond, M.P. for Beauharnois, (1883-1961), as a youth pupil of Abbé Groulx, was to lead the Bloc populaire in 1942.

His sentiment was echoed by the De Lorimier section of the Chevaliers de Colombe, conseil 1989 of Chicoutimi; the Section Immaculée-Conception of the Societé St.-Jean Baptiste of Montreal.

The resolution of the Frelighsburg Ligue des intérêts nationaux dated December 4, 1933, opposing Jewish immigration was on a mimeographed form.

There is a remarkable unanimity of tone, a monotony, in the far-flung opposition to the immigration of Jews into Canada during this decade.

Whereas in other matters -- in clerical hostility, in the Sunday observance agitation, etc. -- there is pretentious disclaimer of antisemitism (enough to justify a claim of respectability), this bon ton now evaporates, and city council, editors and liberal politicians speak with the voice of Joseph Ménard. The headlines in Nation might have been borrowed from the Patriote which Paul Bouchard otherwise despised.

Action nationale, a revival of the old Action française, petitioned against the project, ("A Patriotic and Economic Duty," July 6, 1933)

Action nationale raised doubts about the accuracy of Canadian census figures regarding the Jewish population. The Devoir published a projection which foresaw 4,000,000 Jews in Quebec in the year 2100. "We speak of a mass immigration of Jews into Canada. But it is already here." (Oct. 19, 1933)

Clearly there was organized opposition and an active campaign against acceding to the Jewish pleas. This was voiced in scores of resolutions and in thousands of letters. The Order of Jacques Cartier placed immigration, l'Achat chez nous and the dissemination of Le Boussole among its major concerns.

The province-wide campaign to secure similar resolutions from other municipal corporations did not do well at Piedmont, as we learn from the Canadian Jewish Chronicle of Feb. 23, 1934:

"It seems that the time-worn and threadbare resolution, which has been going the rounds of all cities, towns and hamlets, found its way to Piedmont, and the aldermen were requested to act upon the 'threatened invasion of the 700,000 Jews who are about to enter Canada.'

"Things did not go well with the resolution, for Mr. B. Goldberg, a Jewish farmer in that vicinity, undertook to enlighten the people about the hoary fabrications upon which the resolution is built. Piedmont redeemed itself by voting aginst it, in spite of the frantic appeals against Communism and anti-Christianity."

The following May a delegation from the Confederation of Catholic Workers of Canada asked Prime Minister Bennett to keep German Jews out of the country. (American Jewish Year Book.)

A French-Canadian Catholic voice of warning against the threat of Hitler and of Hitlerism went remarkably unheeded.

La Relève, under the direction of novelist Robert Charbonneau and Paul Beaulieu, published a passionate appeal, "Compassion for a Catholic Youth" which focused on the anti-Christian nature of events in Germany, by Claude Hurtubise, (no. 2, 1934) who was later to become a leading publisher in the province.

In the antisemitic climate evidenced by the anti-refugee sentiment, Hurtubise stirred no Catholic prise de conscience.

In the fall of 1933 Ald. Henri Auger, who represented St. James on Montreal's City Council, supported by Mr. Quintal, introduced a motion opposing immigration into Canada because of the unemployment conditions, since "certain classes of persons, mostly refugees from Germany and Central Europe, are preparing to migrate to Canada... such immigrants are mostly communists and propagandists of anti-Christian ideas; ... their entry would undermine this country's Christian traditions. The most efficient way for Canada to keep its Christian traditions intact would be to prohibit the entry of refugees or immigrants from Central Europe, Germany or Russia who profess communist or anti-Christian ideas." (Devoir, Oct. 20, 1933)

It was glad to report (Sept. 27, 1933) the support Jeunes Canada was giving Ald. Auger's resolution in city council against Jewish immigration into Canada.

Gérard Filion of Jeunes Canada, who was later to become director of the Devoir, supported Ald. Auger on immigration. "We consider the Jews undesirable. We do not intend to make Montreal a centre of international Jewry or the refuge of individuals whom other countries hold it wise to dispense with."

"We have no right to expose Canada to immigrants considered undesirable by the countries of their adoption because of their subversive doctrines," Mr. Auger said. He referred to the press reports about plans being developed in Belgium to direct many immigrants to America following the expulsion of communists from Germany. "While the promoters of bolshevism and of irreligion are multiplying their activities, and the city must spend considerable sums to control their efforts -- this is no time to accept an immigration that will only multiply the evils we suffer." He noted that churches in the city and in the province have been destroyed under mysterious circumstances, and ascribed this to anti-Christian and bolshevik forces. His proposal evoked a parliamentary game of amendments by Joseph Schubert and Léon Trépanier opposing the antisemitic intent of the motion; the latter a distinguished historian and a former president of the Société St.-Jean Baptiste, was accused of inconsistency, he having in the past advocated the Achat chez nous. There were counter sub-amendments. (Trancrède Fortin)

The Auger motion referred to current unemployment which arises from the arrival of thousands of immigrants, and noted that groups of individuals and certain classes of persons, most of them refugees from Germany and from central Europe, are preparing to come to Canada; these immigrants, whom some groups are bringing to Canada, are for the most part communists and propagators of anti-Christian ideas; the most effective manner of maintaining the Christian tradition of Canada and to improve the present crisis in employment is to forbid the entry to this country of refugees from central Europe, Germany and Russia who hold communist or anti-Christian ideas. It therefore petitioned the minister of immigration to reject any proposal to permit such immigrants to enter Canada.

Mr. Auger elaborated, "We have no right to expose Canada to immigrants not desired by the lands of their adoption because of their subversive ideas...

Committees have been formed in Belgium and in France to direct these migrants to the Americas.... the Quebec and Lévis city councils have adopted similar resolutions. This is no time for preachers of bolshevism and of irreligion to multiply their activities or for the city to spend large sums to control them or to accept a wave of immigration that will only increase the ills we suffer from. Churches have been destroyed at St. James, St. Louis de France at Valleyfield under mysterious circumstances, which indicate bolshevik and anti-Christian activities. Only those who hold anti-Christian and communist ideas would vote against this motion, which is directed only at communists and opponents of Christianity."

The Trepanier amendment did not dare to go any further than to propose more simply that: "In order to maintain Christian traditions and to improve the present critical employment condition, all immigration into the country should be banned."

(Earlier Auger had sought to censure the city for appointing a Jew to make a study of unemployment.)

After heated discussions about eliminating the anti-Jewish references, the anti-immigration resolution passed with only one joining the Jewish aldermen in opposing it.

Quebec's Action catholique supported Auger,

"In spite of all the anti-Hitlerite propaganda which covers the world through Jewish influence and pressure on finance, one may still ask whether this man is as black as described, even if we disapprove of some acts of the German reformer.

"In spite of all that is said of German policy at this time, it remains to be proven that he is lying when he says that the Jews who left Germany are communist agents. This is a matter discussed less frequently than questionable aspects of German policy.

"Our country can get along without agents of communism.

"What our country needs is not new Jews, even if a powerful organization would make us believe we need them, but a social and an economic restoration based on Christian principles which we have set aside under the pagan inspiration of the twentieth century."

"There is no question of ill-treating anyone, but it would be wrong to bring here those of whom other peoples are getting rid." (Eugène L'Heureux, Oct. 26, 1933)

Alderman Schubert noted the close links between the Auger motion and Hitler's policies. "For some years there has been an intense antisemitic campaign in Montreal, particularly in some newspapers. But for these papers and but for the resolutions of some so-called patriotic societies, this motion would never have been submitted. It stems from the same sources who a year ago had the courage -- if courage it be -- to criticize city council for engaging a Jew to study American remedies against unemployment; half of whose recommendations, I am glad to observe, have been adopted and the others are under study."

After heated discussions the anti-immigration resolution passed with only two joining the Jewish aldermen in opposing it.

The Canadian Jewish Chronicle commented (Nov. 17, 1933),

"It would be difficult to find a group of city leaders who could excel the City Fathers in Montreal for intolerance and bigotry.

"The resolution which aimed at barring immigrants who are Communists and disseminators of anti-Christian ideas had more supporters than originally thought. While the objectionable clause was finally deleted, the City Council of Montreal created for itself the unenviable reputation of being a nest of anti-Semitism. Apart from the three Jewish aldermen who put up a gallant fight, one lone voice was added in defence of our people, that of Alderman Trépanier.

"We are not blind to the concerted effort being made in the province by underhand forces to arouse the populace to a frenzy against our people. The original resolution has been going the rounds from one city to another."

The Patriote, which published this statement on Oct. 19, called Auger "a true patriot" because the immigrants are anti-Catholic and Communist." (Nov.2, 1933)

Mrs. Lita Rose Betcherman notes that three years later, in 1936, while Minister of Colonization in the Duplessis cabinet, H.L. Auger hired Joseph Ménard, publisher of Le Patriote, after this anti-Semitic periodical closed temporarily. (The Swastika and the Maple Leaf. Toronto, Fitzhenry and Whiteside, 1975. P.86) Ménard's printing shop produced the government publication Le Colon. L'Autorité wrote that Auger had never concealed his sympathy for Le Patriote.

Following the tactics employed in the anti-Jewish economic boycott campaign, the hostile propaganda avoided mention of Jews; the talk was of the unemployed; (in the boycott propaganda the talk was about protecting the corner grocer who habitually supported such charities as the St. Vincent de Paul). But the meaning was clear to all.

BNQ
000 323 785