

# **“The Simplest and Cheapest Mode of Dealing with them”: Deportation from Canada before World War II**

by Henry F. DRYSTEK\*

Recent studies on labour, the political Left, and immigration have created the impression that the deportation policy of the Canadian government was designed to control radicals and to expel surplus labour. This study, by tracing the evolution of the policy from its inception in the 1870s through to the late 1930s, presents a different view. The deportation policy reflected the conservatism of a society reluctant to accept the realities of an emerging urban, industrial world. The determination of the middle class to resist the cost of adequate social services contributed to the deportations, especially during periods of economic recession.

Des études récentes sur les travailleurs, la gauche et l'immigration au Canada ont suggéré que la politique suivie par les autorités fédérales visait à contrôler les éléments radicaux et à expulser la main-d'œuvre excédentaire. En retraçant l'évolution de cette politique depuis son instauration dans les années 1870 jusqu'à la fin des années trente, nous proposons ici une interprétation différente. La politique de déportation reflétait le conservatisme d'une société réfractaire aux réalités montantes du monde urbain et industriel. Les déportations s'expliquent, surtout en temps de récession, par la ferme résistance qu'opposèrent les classes moyennes à l'imposition de coûteux services sociaux.

To deport “the undesirable alien and land him back in the bilgewater of European Civilization from whence he sprung and to which he properly belongs”<sup>1</sup> and “to clean the aliens out of this community and ship them back to their happy homes in Europe which vomitted them forth a decade ago”<sup>2</sup> are phrases which have been used to characterize the strong nativist sentiment in Winnipeg during the General Sympathetic Strike of 1919. Furthermore, it has been asserted that the government in Ottawa “introduced an ‘Act to Amend the Immigration Act’, which was one of the least debated and most hurriedly passed pieces of legislation in the history of Canada”, so as to meet these demands.<sup>3</sup> An authoritative study of the Winnipeg Strike states that four “foreigners were summarily deported”.<sup>4</sup> A

\* Department of History, Carleton University.

<sup>1</sup> Norman PENNER, ed., *Winnipeg 1919: The Strikers' own History of the Winnipeg General Strike* (Toronto: James Lewis & Samuel, 1973), p. xviii.

<sup>2</sup> Donald AVERY, ‘Dangerous Foreigners’; *European Immigrant Workers and Labour Radicalism in Canada, 1896-1932* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1979), p. 84.

<sup>3</sup> David J. BERCUSON, *Confrontation at Winnipeg: Labour, Industrial Relations and the General Strike* (Montreal: McGill — Queen's University Press, 1974), p. 163.

<sup>4</sup> Kenneth McNAUGHT and D. J. BERCUSON, *The Winnipeg Strike: 1919* (Toronto: Longman, 1974), p. 80.

pamphlet published in 1920 by the Winnipeg Defence Committee, however, and which has since been reprinted, claims that after many delays the four men were brought before an immigration board of inquiry and only one was deported on a charge unrelated to the strike.<sup>5</sup> Despite the confusion over the facts in this case, as well as in a number of other instances, there has been a general impression that the aim of the deportation policy was to rid Canada of political and labour radicals.<sup>6</sup>

More recently, in his study of continental European immigrant workers in Canada between 1896 and 1932, Donald Avery has suggested that deportations were also used by the government to expel surplus labour. He observed that deportations were used most frequently during economic depressions and concluded from this that Canada "in practice" followed the German *gastarbeiter* policy where "an expendable labour force takes its problems away with it when it is re-exported".<sup>7</sup>

Neither of these two views of deportations has been seriously tested. On closer study it becomes evident that the 60,000 deportations before World War II bore more relation to the inadequacy and parsimony of social services in Canada than to political repression or to a labour policy. Since social services, in general, were inadequate in Canada, there often were pressures by local governments to deny these services to recent immigrants. The federal government refused to assume any responsibility for providing the needed services and resorted to the most expedient solution — deportation.

## I

The deportation of immigrants was a measure adopted by the federal government by virtue of its responsibility for immigration. Section 95 of the British North America Act made immigration a concurrent responsibility of the federal and provincial governments. The former established its sphere of jurisdiction through the Immigration Act of 1869 (32, 33 Vic. cap. 10). The two levels of government were to share the right to recruit immigrants, but the federal government assumed the sole responsibility for regulating the admission of the immigrants. To fulfil this role immigration officers were established at ports of entry and quarantine stations were provided where needed. The only provision attempting to regulate admission prohibited the entry of "every lunatic, idiot, deaf, dumb, blind or infirm person" unless there was a bond guaranteeing maintenance for three years. In 1872 the amended Immigration Act (35 Vic. cap. 28) added a clause permitting the prohibition of "criminal and vicious classes". In 1887 (50, 51 Vic. cap. 34) the Immigration Branch obtained the power to return

<sup>5</sup> PENNER, *Winnipeg*, pp. 219-20.

<sup>6</sup> AVERY, 'Dangerous Foreigners', pp. 86-88; J. PETRYSHYN, "R. B. Bennett and the Communists", *Journal of Canadian Studies*, 9 (November 1974): 43-55.

<sup>7</sup> AVERY, 'Dangerous Foreigners', p. 142. Also see B. A. ROBERTS, "Purely Administrative Proceedings: The Management of Canadian Deportation, Montreal, 1900-1935" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Ottawa, 1980), p. 450.

these prohibited immigrants "to the port whence they came to Canada", but there was no authority to deport immigrants once they had been landed. Deportations were nonetheless carried out.

Not much is known about the number of deportations from Canada in the nineteenth century, but it is evident that a set policy existed. The federal government took the position that since it admitted the immigrants it was consequently compelled to bear the responsibility for any immigrants who proved to be unsatisfactory.

The rule of the Department is that immigrants who have not been over one year in the country, are, in some measure, under the care of the Department; and if it has been found, after they have come to the country, that from illness or bodily infirmity, they have been unable to get their living, they have been sent back, as the simplest and cheapest mode of dealing with them.<sup>8</sup>

This policy statement was first made in the mid-1870s and was to remain the dominant principle for over six decades.

The initial deportation policy was established in 1876. Apparently some French immigrants had wanted to return to France because the economic depression then present in Canada prevented them from securing agricultural employment, and they lacked sufficient funds for the return passage. By the time that 230 were deported, and \$5,000 was spent on the effort, the government decided that too many immigrants were taking advantage of the concession and the programme was terminated. To provide necessary relief was justifiable, but to cater to those who were merely disappointed with their first impressions of Canada was not acceptable. After the incident of 1876 the government obtained a concession from the steamship lines to provide free transportation for immigrants who were being returned within one year of their arrival. The transportation companies were very reluctant to provide the service, and only did so when the Immigration Branch was able to convince them that the immigrants were genuinely unable to provide for themselves.<sup>9</sup>

Incomplete information suggests that during the 1890s some forty to fifty people were "returned".<sup>10</sup> These deportations concerned people who, because of "physical and mental debility", were unable to make a livelihood in Canada. In a few cases these immigrants were "paupers" who were sent to Canada by relatives or by public institutions, but in the majority of cases the immigrants had come to Canada on their own. In at least two cases, men who had received serious injuries while working in Canada were returned. Both of them had exhausted their savings while receiving medical attention and were eager to return to their former homes, one to his family in Austria and the other to friends in Denmark.<sup>11</sup> On

<sup>8</sup> CANADA, PARLIAMENT. *House of Commons Journals XI (1877)*: Appendix No. 6, Committee on Immigration and Colonization, p. 16.

<sup>9</sup> Public Archives of Canada (hereafter PAC), Immigration Branch Records (hereafter IB), F. 837(1), A. M. Burgess, Deputy Minister, to D. McNicoll, CPR, 19 March 1895; McNicoll to Burgess, 21 March 1895; Burgess to McNicoll, 25 March 1895.

<sup>10</sup> IB, F. 837(1); DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, *Annual Report, 1895-96 to 1899-1900*. See the reports by the immigration officer at Montreal.

<sup>11</sup> IB, F. 837(1), H. & A. Allan, shipping agents, Montreal, to L. Pereira, 26 December 1894; Pereira to McNicoll, 11 March 1895.

the whole it appears that these deported immigrants were not averse to returning to their former homelands.

The deportations during the 1890s were usually initiated by immigration officers, but increasingly complaints were received from other sources. In 1894 the Quebec government issued one of a long series of complaints charging the federal government with admitting insane immigrants and placing the burden of their institutional care on the people of Quebec.<sup>12</sup> Municipalities also complained about having to take care of destitute immigrants. In 1897 Calgary felt that the immigrants arriving from the slums of large European cities were an "excessive burden on the citizens". The government was urged to ensure that Canada not become "the dumping ground for the riff-raff of Europe".<sup>13</sup> The Toronto Trades and Labor Council also expressed concern that "people likely to become a menace or a burden to any section or class of those already in the country" not be admitted.<sup>14</sup> Such calls for restraint in recruiting did not alter the immigration policy, especially in view of the frequent demands from other quarters that the country needed a larger population. Rather than impose restrictions on immigration, there was an increasing willingness in the late 1890s to deport immigrants who failed to cope with the Canadian environment. Since the federal government steadfastly refused to enter the field of social services, a jurisdiction which was exclusively the responsibility of the provinces, deportation was used to solve the occasional dispute over responsibility for destitute immigrants.<sup>15</sup>

As immigration began to increase and complaints about undesirable immigrants mounted, the government made some moves to restrict immigration. In 1902 an amendment to the Immigration Act (2 Ed. VII cap. 14) prohibited the landing of diseased immigrants and provided for the return of any immigrant who entered Canada in contravention of the Immigration Act. This was the first legislative recognition of the power to deport immigrants after they had been legally landed. Later in the year regulations were made for the proper inspection of all immigrants by medical officers. Immigrants who were criminals, insane, epileptics, idiots, blind, deaf and dumb, "defectives", advanced consumptives, or suffering from chronic venereal disease were to be refused admission. Those who were deformed, crippled, suffered dangerous, contagious or loathsome diseases not dangerous to life were to be prohibited "if they are likely to become a public charge". Those suffering from readily curable physical diseases were to be detained for treatment at a detention hospital.<sup>16</sup> It

<sup>12</sup> IB, F. 837(1), P.C. (Privy Council) 387J, 31 July 1894.

<sup>13</sup> IB, F. 15197(1), City of Calgary Council, resolution, 23 March 1897.

<sup>14</sup> IB, F. 23624, Report of the Legislative Committee of the Toronto Trades and Labor Council, 4 October 1895.

<sup>15</sup> The Federal government contributed some funds to hospitals in Western Canada to subsidize the costs of treating immigrants and at various times gave agricultural settlers aid, but no substantial assistance was given to the provinces until well after World War II. See Freda HAWKINS, *Canada and Immigration: Public Policy and Public Concern* (Montreal: McGill — Queen's University Press, 1972), p. 192.

<sup>16</sup> IB, F. 653(1), Instructions for the medical inspection of immigrants, 15 March 1904.

also became the duty of the medical officer to "return" immigrants who had obtained entry in contravention of these provisions.

A sharp increase in the number of deportations followed the appointment of these officials. In his report for the fiscal year 1903-4 the Chief Medical Officer, Dr P. Bryce, reported the deportation of 85 immigrants — 66 British, 9 Scandinavians, 4 Finns, 3 Italians, and one each from Russia, Germany and Romania. These immigrants had been deported "under the order of a medical inspector" or they had "at their own request been returned Home", after realizing "their inability to make a living owing to physical disease".<sup>17</sup> Dr Bryce, concerned with "scientific" explanations, argued that the relatively high proportion of British deportations was due to social conditioning, and not to strictly physical or mental soundness.

For a century the poor law unions and the many charitable institutions, especially of England, have taught the people to resort, when ill, to these institutions as a matter of course, and hence when such immigrants in a new land have as yet no permanent abode they naturally would return to the immigration agency and hospital to claim that assistance to which they have been accustomed. Persons from continental countries have not, in the same degree, been accustomed to such charities; they do not know the routine method of obtaining such assistance, are more largely engaged in pursuits outside the cities and towns, and besides are more accustomed to a ruder and less humane social life, and are more content to bear patiently with their ills, either physical or social.<sup>18</sup>

It was also pointed out that despite the fact that England was seventy-eight percent urban, deportations were few in relation to total immigration. It was not difficult for the Immigration Branch to rationalize this sudden increase in deportations.

The deportations reflected the Canadian attitude towards "paupers", the strongly held values of individualism and free enterprise which had developed in the frontier society of British North America. It had been a society where poverty was frequent, but "dependency carried with it the despised label of 'pauper' and was widely regarded as a sign of personal failure if not moral obloquy".<sup>19</sup> The development of an urban, industrial Canada in the early twentieth century was not accompanied by any change in attitudes. A 1912 report of the Associated Charities of Winnipeg characterized the failure of Canadians to face the new realities.

If material assistance was all that was needed, if the families seeking it could in all cases be relied upon to use it in such a way that they would quickly become self-supporting the work of this department would be easy. Unfortunately, the large majority of applications for relief are caused by thriftlessness, mismanagement, unemployment due to incompetence, intemperance, immorality, desertion of the family and domestic quarrels. In such cases the mere giving of relief tends rather to induce pauperism than to reduce poverty.<sup>20</sup>

People who needed aid were suspect and, increasingly, feared. As early as 1897 H. A. Ames, the Montreal social reformer, had argued that "ordi-

<sup>17</sup> INTERIOR, *Annual Report*, 1903/04, p. 169.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 170.

<sup>19</sup> Dennis GUEST, *The Emergence of Social Security in Canada* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1980), p. 15.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 37-38.

nary urban conditions are demoralizing and that no portion of the community can be allowed to deteriorate without danger to the whole".<sup>21</sup> The very need for increased social services in the cities was seen as a threat to Canadian values.

The increasing use of deportation reflected the changing character of the immigration movement as much as the conservative Canadian values. Despite their cited intentions to pursue agricultural occupations, very large numbers of immigrants went directly to urban centres. The large Galician migration after 1897 brought significant numbers to the city of Winnipeg. At the turn of the century the large Jewish and Italian migrations were drawn to large urban centres. The smaller migrations of Armenians, Greeks and Syrians also followed this pattern. In 1902-3 the British immigration increased by 140 percent over the previous year, largely as a result of the shift of Canadian recruiting efforts from rural to urban regions.<sup>22</sup> This unprecedented influx of non-agricultural immigrants produced great concern in a Canadian society which was still steadfastly rural in outlook and ideals.

While the Immigration Branch was somewhat apprehensive about these new urban immigrants, there remained a determination not to restrict the long-awaited immigration unduly. The inspections at the ports of entry were cursory and medical examinations necessarily short.<sup>23</sup> The Chief Medical Officer's report on inspections and rejections at ports of entry indicates that part of the explanation for the large number of British deportations was due to lax inspections. Of over 50,000 British immigrants in 1903-4 only 35 were detained for close inspection, while 150 of 510 immigrants from the Middle East and 624 of 1,955 Russians were detained. A comparison with American inspection of British immigrants shows that in the United States one in 235 was rejected while in Canada only one in 5,027 was refused entry.<sup>24</sup> The medical inspectors were not instructed to discriminate against any national group, but such factors as prejudice, language difficulties, and the unfamiliar habits and customs of certain groups undoubtedly brought them under closer initial scrutiny. The result was that there were more rejections of the non-British at ports of entry but virtually no deportations, while the reverse was the case for the British.

As this new urban migration increased there was greater opposition to the admittance of "undesirable" immigrants. Dr Bryce argued that since it was not practical to overcome the weaknesses in the inspection procedure, "it is desired and expected that medical practitioners and municipal officers throughout Canada will notify the department, giving particulars of cases", so that deportations can be effected, "rather than allow incorrect

<sup>21</sup> Cited in Terry COPP, *The Anatomy of Poverty: The Condition of the Working Class in Montreal, 1897-1929* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1974), p. 15.

<sup>22</sup> INTERIOR, *Annual Report, 1902/03*, Report of the deputy minister.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 1906/07, p. 129. Dr Bryce pointed out that not only did as many as 7,000 immigrants arrive in a single day, but that no clinical examination was made of anyone "not obviously in poor health". Civil examinations — questions relating to education, skills, etc. — were left to the discretion of the medical inspector.

<sup>24</sup> INTERIOR, *Annual Report, 1903/04*, p. 167; 1904/05, p. 119.

or exaggerated reports to reach the public press".<sup>25</sup> In Montreal, at least, the Immigration Branch had this type of co-operation from the benevolent and charitable societies which handled the bulk of the social services in that city. For example, on 25 August 1903 the Italian Immigrant Aid Society requested the deportation of Rocco di Cintia and Carlo Perusini. Unable to make a living, they would soon become public charges because the Society could not support them indefinitely. On 8 September the St Andrew's Home, Church of England, urged the return of William Hinkley because he was "unfit" and would not succeed in Canada. The St George's Society of Montreal reported a couple with one child on 12 September, a couple with two children on 23 September, and a woman with two children on 17 November 1903. The Charity Organization Society requested a deportation on 23 September, and in October an agency which placed domestic servants suggested deporting a Swedish girl of "bad character".<sup>26</sup> It is evident that in Winnipeg, and to a lesser extent in Toronto and in Saint John, the Immigration Branch received similar referrals.<sup>27</sup>

With the increased resort to deportations, the Immigration Branch encountered some immigrants who objected to this treatment. The Chief Medical Officer was disturbed that some deportations from Canada were being successfully challenged in the courts under habeas corpus proceedings. To prevent in Canada "what have proved insurmountable difficulties and even social dangers to the cities of the United States", he urged the revision of the Immigration Act so as to confirm the use of deportations, and further to increase these powers.<sup>28</sup> Discussions about revising the thirty-year-old Act began in January 1904, and the deportation provisions were high on the agenda. The officials studied the highly restrictive American legislation of 1903 which left immigrants liable to deportation for three years. The British legislation was also consulted, and it provided some basis for the draft bill presented to Clifford Sifton in 1905. On Sifton's resignation as minister the matter was delayed until 1906.

In the House of Commons Frank Oliver, the new minister, contended that Bill 170 was merely a codification of the Immigration Act with "certain small amendments".<sup>29</sup> In fact the Bill proposed a radical amendment of the legislation, but in real terms it was not a significant extension of the restrictive measures which had been followed since 1902. There were some objections voiced, but they amounted to little more than opposition sniping. When explaining the power to deport public charges, Oliver allowed that criticism could be justified but circumstances were such that this power was necessary.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., p. 127.

<sup>26</sup> IB, F. 837(5), Italian Immigration Aid Society for Canada to Hoolohan, 25 August 1903; the Andrews Home to Hoolohan, 8 September 1903; St George's Society to Hoolohan, 12, 22 September, 17 November 1903; Hoolohan to Scott, 7 October 1903.

<sup>27</sup> IB, F. 837(5), H. Percy to Scott, 27 January 1904; Lantalum to Scott, 14 September 1903; J. O. Smith, Report, July-September 1903. INTERIOR, *Annual Report*, 1904/05, p. 131.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., p. 133.

<sup>29</sup> CANADA, PARLIAMENT, *House of Commons Debates* (hereafter *Commons Debates*), III (1906): 5196.

It is a very wide power to give to the government but I think the government may be trusted to exercise it with due discretion. There is no doubt that there are conditions of pauperism which are as objectionable as crime, or physical, or moral infirmity; in fact it is mental infirmity in some cases.<sup>30</sup>

In the Senate, however, there was a spirited attack against these sections of Bill 170 from a few members. The reason for this criticism was effectively summarized by one senator:

I think the country is getting rich, and it is getting inhuman at the same time ... any man may come here with the best of health and the best of intentions, with a sincere desire to provide for his family, but may suffer misfortune and be unable to support himself. Then the country ruthlessly turns him out.<sup>31</sup>

The proponents of the strong deportation powers, on the other hand, candidly stated that they did not want a "permanent burden and nuisance in the country", and amendments to these sections were easily defeated. The Liberal leader in the Senate, in his closing statement, argued that this "violent action" was not used indiscriminately, but only when it was "in the interest of the people in whose locality the unfortunate happens to reside."<sup>32</sup> If the community did not wish to provide social services to a recent immigrant, the Immigration Branch was willing to consider deporting the individual.

Previous legislation had prohibited immigrants who posed a threat to public safety; the criminal and those with dangerous diseases. The 1906 Act (6 Ed. VII cap. 19) extended the prohibition to include the feeble-minded, idiotic, epileptic and insane. Also, the deaf and dumb and the infirm were required to have assurances of permanent support in Canada, as opposed to the former requirement of a guarantee of support for three years. A *carte blanche* clause permitting the exclusion of "any specified class" was also inserted to deal with groups, such as gypsies, who were undesirable even if they were physically and mentally fit. Deportation procedures were clearly outlined. If, within two years of arrival, any immigrant "committed a crime involving moral turpitude, or became an inmate of a jail or hospital or other charitable institution", it became "the duty of the clerk or secretary of the municipality to forthwith notify the Minister" so that an investigation could be initiated. The municipality was to pay the cost of the deportation, if the immigrant could not do so.<sup>33</sup> Any decision to reject or deport an immigrant was to be made by a board of inquiry, and any ruling could be appealed to the minister. Finally the Immigration Branch had the power to meet the demands for deportation which were being put to them.

After the passage of the Immigration Act, copies were sent to all the provincial secretaries and provincial medical officers for distribution to the

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.: 5251.

<sup>31</sup> CANADA, PARLIAMENT, *Senate Debates*, 1906: 1006.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.: 1020.

<sup>33</sup> It seems that municipalities never paid for deportations. The existing practice of having the transportation companies return immigrants within one year of their arrival became the rule. For anyone who had been in Canada for a longer period the arrangement was that the Immigration Branch would pay one-half of the regular fare. See IB, F. 653(5), Oliver to Scott, 11 February 1907.



appropriate officials. The Immigration Branch also requested lists of police magistrates, clerks of municipalities, wardens of penitentiaries, heads of asylums, and directors of other public institutions so that copies of the Act could be broadly distributed at the municipal level. Responding to the long-standing protest from Quebec, a special agent was appointed in 1906 to search for undesirables in asylums.<sup>34</sup> Under the new Act the medical officers no longer had the burden of implementing this policy, for any immigration officer could carry out a deportation.

The rate of deportation doubled after the passage of the legislation, but the pattern remained unchanged. Over eighty percent of the deported were British immigrants, and some seventy-five percent of the total, excluding accompanying members, were deported on medical grounds.<sup>35</sup> While the immigrants were being deported from a larger number of centres, almost eighty percent still came from Winnipeg, Montreal and Toronto.<sup>36</sup> For the first time Ontario narrowly edged out the Prairie provinces as the major source of deportations. Deportations increased because as the urban, industrial society emerged, the demand for social services was not met. The issue as to which level of government was responsible for immigrants complicated the question, but the root of the problem lay in society's determination to perpetuate old values.

## II

The increase in deportations (Graph 1) was closely related to the changing patterns of immigration, and especially to the greatly expanded recruitment efforts in Britain. Even Sifton, in early 1904, had noted that philanthropic societies in Britain were sending immigrants "who are perfectly helpless, that is to say people who neither know how to take care of themselves, nor want to do it".<sup>37</sup> He called for an investigation into the situation, and for an end to the migration. The deputy minister, however, took a narrow view of Sifton's complaint and reported that the societies with which the government was directly associated brought in only desirable immigrants.<sup>38</sup> Sifton did not pursue the question. The assistance to the British philanthropic societies by the Canadian government increased, especially after Oliver's appointment as minister in early 1905. The economic prosperity of those years readily facilitated the absorption of most of these immigrants. Warnings, such as from the Associated

<sup>34</sup> IB, F. 567097, Memorandum, n.d.; F. 653(4), Fortier to provincial secretaries, 9 August 1906; Fortier to medical health officers, 9 August 1906; Scott to J. Clark, Secretary to Minister of Justice, 17 December 1906.

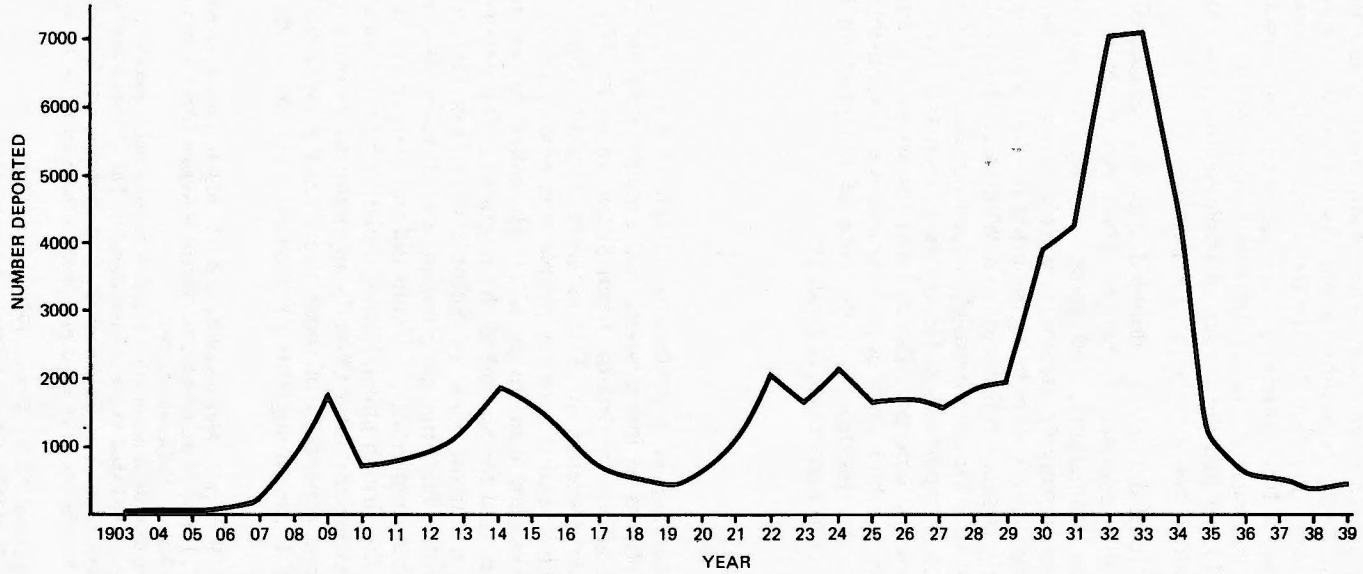
<sup>35</sup> The records of deportation began to be collected in December 1902 by the medical officers and were published in the *Annual Reports*. The statistics used in this paper, unless otherwise stated, come from the compiled tables in the reports for the fiscal year 1922-23, and for 1939-40. The statistics were presented in three tables — by cause, by nationality, by province.

<sup>36</sup> INTERIOR, *Annual Report*, 1906/07, pp. 132-33.

<sup>37</sup> IB, F. 305578, Sifton to Smart, 25 January 1904.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, Smart to Sifton, 30 March 1904.

Graph 1. — DEPORTATIONS FROM CANADA, 1903 -1939.



Source: DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, *Annual Reports*, 1903-39.

Charities of Toronto, concerning the urban congestion created by immigrants brought in by the Salvation Army and the Baron Rothschild Institute were ignored.<sup>39</sup> The economic depression which started in late 1907 brought about a rude awakening.

In October 1907, the St Andrew's Society, St George's Society, and other philanthropic and charitable organizations in Toronto met to protest against the immigration of people who depended on charity.<sup>40</sup> Oliver immediately looked into the allegation and discovered that no less than ten societies, exclusive of organizations dealing solely with children, assisted British immigrants to come to Canada. Incomplete statistics indicated that since 1 July 1905, these societies claimed to have brought 17,323 immigrants to Canada.<sup>41</sup> A report on these societies by the London office of the Immigration Branch was even more damning. It was found that in 1907 seven societies had sent 12,336 immigrants from London, largely in an effort to deal with the unemployment problem in that city. The Canadian authorities had no supervision over this work which was "confined to the destitute, the unfortunate, and to a large extent, the incompetent". Many, it was concluded, would not become desirable citizens.<sup>42</sup> On the basis of this report and on the fact that most of the 441 British deportees in 1907 had been assisted to Canada, the government acted swiftly. Order in Council 410 was passed on 25 February 1908, prohibiting the landing of any person whose passage had been paid to any extent by any charitable organization or public body, unless the assistant superintendent in London had inquired into the "antecedents" of the person and had approved the migration.<sup>43</sup>

Measures were taken to deal with the immediate problem in Canada. In early December 1907 steps were taken to ensure that immigrants had sufficient money to provide for themselves until the spring, when it was anticipated that the economy would have improved. Also, immigrants were warned that if they could not support themselves they would be deported.<sup>44</sup> The government attempted to find employment for the destitute immigrants rather than deport them, but this proved difficult for these immigrants constituted about half of all those depending on charity, and many declined to accept employment in rural areas. The Superintendent of Immigration observed that the main problem lay in the fact the assisted immigrants were not good workers and, consequently, were the first to be laid off during an economic downturn.<sup>45</sup> Thus, when the Fred Victor Mission

<sup>39</sup> IB, F. 286736, Associated Charities of Toronto to Oliver, 12 January 1906.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., J. B. Walker to Scott, 29 October 1907.

<sup>41</sup> IB, F. 752538(1), Scott to Oliver, 9 December 1907.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., Walker, London, to Scott, 10 January 1908.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., Scott to J. O. Smith, London, 9 March 1908; Scott to Smith, 13 April 1908; Scott to Smith, 13 May 1909. These provisions were not strictly enforced, and they did not affect work by organizations such as the Salvation Army which loaned passage money at the current interest rate.

<sup>44</sup> IB, 745162MQ, Oliver to Walker, London, 3 December 1907; Scott to steamship lines, 6 December 1907; Scott to J. V. Lantalum, Saint John, 9 December 1907; Oliver to Walker, 11 December 1907. P.C. 28, Order in Council, 8 January 1908, established that immigrants required a minimum amount of money on landing.

<sup>45</sup> IB, F. 752538(1), Scott to Walker, 14 December 1907.

Society in Toronto complained that it encountered too many "incapable and undesirable immigrants" who found life in Canada too strenuous, the superintendent promptly sent a supply of blank deportation forms to the Mission and requested that they be completed in triplicate.<sup>46</sup> As the economic depression worsened in the summer of 1908, a special agent was sent to Toronto with "a good supply" of deportation forms and with the advice that they be used "where deportation seems desirable".<sup>47</sup> In June 1908, the Immigration Act was printed in pamphlet form to facilitate wider distribution. The introduction noted that it was intended to provide magistrates, clerks of municipalities and the general public with information about the Act, and with "directions for bringing about the deportation of 'undesirables'".<sup>48</sup> As *The Canadian Annual Review* noted, "the crowded towns and heavily-taxed charities spoke forcibly" on the immigration question.<sup>49</sup>

When the depression persisted beyond the short seasonal downturn which was accepted as normal, the Immigration Branch gave in to the demands of the social agencies and provincial governments and relieved them of some of their burdens through deportations. The deportations rose to 1,748 in the fiscal year 1908-9, a number greater than the total since 1900. The depression of 1907-8 set a new pattern for deportations. There was a dramatic shift from deportation for medical reasons to such civil reasons as public charge, criminality and "bad character". In the pre-depression years medical causes had accounted for over 70 percent of the deportations. This slipped to 33 percent during the depression and continued to decline further in later years. The public-charge category, rising from 17 percent of the total in the earlier years to 54 percent during the depression, became the most important single reason for deportation, and remained so in the following years. Deportation under other civil causes rose from 5 to over 11 percent of the 1907-9 total. As well the deportations involved more nationalities, with some thirty-five represented during the depression as opposed to twenty-one up to that period.<sup>50</sup> There was also a significant geographical trend. Ontario contributed a full 50 percent of the deportations, and Quebec followed with 30 percent. An analysis of 279 public-charge deportations for 1907-8 indicates that 57 percent originated in Ontario.<sup>51</sup> Such deportees came not only from Toronto (97), but also from smaller centres such as Chatham (25), Oshawa (21), Ottawa (7) and Peterborough (5). The urban centres of central Canada were unable, or unwilling, to cope with the responsibilities of providing social services during prolonged periods of unemployment.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., Fred Victor Mission to W. W. Cory, 27 November 1907; Scott to Mission, 30 November 1907.

<sup>47</sup> IB, F. 286736, Scott to E. B. Robertson, 12 June 1908.

<sup>48</sup> CANADA. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, *The Law and Regulations of Canada Respecting Immigration and Immigrants* (Ottawa, 1908).

<sup>49</sup> J. C. HOPKINS, *The Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs, 1908* (Toronto: Canadian Annual Review Publishing Co., 1909), p. 116.

<sup>50</sup> INTERIOR, *Annual Report, 1907/08*, pp. 131-35.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

Public charges did not account for all the deportations. Some immigrants simply wanted to return to their former homes. In one case, a British immigrant who had been unemployed for almost a year wished to be deported because he had an offer of employment in London, but lacked the funds for passage for himself and his family. They were deported with the immigrant agreeing to reimburse the government for the passage.<sup>52</sup> Also a greater intolerance, perhaps an insecurity, had developed in the new urban, industrial society. Suddenly there was a dramatic increase in deportations for criminal causes. The Chief Medical Officer was very frank in explaining this trend:

Whenever there has been a depression in business and a lack of employment, there is an increase in criminal returns, part of it being due to the fact that many vagrants and others have charges preferred against them in order that they may be taken charge of.<sup>53</sup>

The deportation of "bad characters" also rose noticeably. During the unemployment crisis in Vancouver, a moralistically inspired crack-down on the red-light district brought some American-born prostitutes under investigation by the Immigration Branch. Fourteen women were deported and, apparently, a further sixty-five decided to leave the city on their own.<sup>54</sup> Concern for morality was also evident in the deportation of fourteen British mechanics living in Montreal. They had come to Canada as strike-breakers for the Canadian Pacific Railway in September and October 1908. Later in the year they were convicted to ten days in jail for drunkenness. Since their employment had been terminated for that same reason they were deported.<sup>55</sup>

The numerous problems with "undesirables" led the Immigration Branch to seek an amendment of the Act so as to restrict further the entry of certain types of immigrants, and to extend the powers concerning deportation. In the fall of 1908 a review was begun and Bill 17 was presented in January 1909. In the House of Commons Oliver stated that circumstances had changed since 1906 and that "more and more restriction or more and more careful selection" was essential.<sup>56</sup> With the end of the depression in sight, the amendment was not vigorously pressed and the session ended before the debate was completed. The amendment was resubmitted in January 1910 as Bill 102. The proposed restrictions related to prostitutes, pimps, professional beggars or vagrants, and to charity-aided immigrants. Those advocating the overthrow, by force or violence, of the government or constituted law and authority could be deported. The proposal to extend the time limit within which deportation could be effected to three years was criticized by the opposition as being too short. Much of the pressure for greater deportation powers was based on a report from Ontario which argued that the number of immigrants in the various public institutions was disproportionate to their percentage of the popula-

<sup>52</sup> IB, F. 805495, Memorandum, n.d.; J. O. Smith to Scott, 30 June 1909.

<sup>53</sup> INTERIOR, *Annual Report*, 1908/09, p. 109.

<sup>54</sup> IB, F. 741425, A. S. Monro to Scott, 12 February 1908.

<sup>55</sup> IB, F. 804560, J. Hoolahan to Scott, 14 October 1908.

<sup>56</sup> *Commons Debates*, I (1909): 2009.

tion, and that the financial burden of maintaining immigrants in such institutions was excessive.<sup>57</sup> Oliver felt that the extended powers granted in the amendment were sufficient to deal with the existing problems and he refused to entertain stronger provisions. The Senate accepted Bill 102 as it was presented. The revised Act (9, 10 Ed. VII cap. 27) reflected the fact that Canadians were becoming more and more selective about who could be admitted and more discriminating about who fit into Canadian society.

During the period of economic prosperity which followed the recession of 1907-8, there was a sharp decline in the number of deportations, but there was not a return to the pre-1907 rate. Deportations had become acceptable and were carried out at a rate of over 750 a year. By 1911 the great upsurge in immigration was reflected in a slight increase in the number of deportations. During the five years from April 1909 to March 1914, Canada received 1,575,495 immigrants — more than had arrived in the preceding twenty years. Economic prosperity based on continued agricultural settlement, industrial expansion, resource development and railway construction enabled the flood of immigrants to be absorbed. Although deportations of public charges continued to constitute the single largest category, they declined steadily as a percentage of the total deportations and remained relatively constant in real numbers. Deportation of criminals was rising rapidly during the period, and there was a small increase in the number of deportations for medical causes. Prosperity, combined with an appreciation of the value of immigrant labour, contributed to a more tolerant attitude towards immigrants encountering temporary economic setbacks. At the same time, there was a hardening of the attitudes towards those who transgressed the law. Convicted criminals and individuals who offended the moral values of the community increasingly found themselves subject to deportation.

In early 1913 another more serious financial crisis hit Canada. Deportations of immigrants living in Alberta and Manitoba rose dramatically, while in British Columbia and in the Maritime Provinces they doubled. As the crisis deepened, the industrial centres of central Canada experienced severe unemployment. An increase in deportations followed. Although the deportations rose to a level equal to that of the earlier depression, it seems that a less reactionary policy was followed. The deportation of public charges was double that of the years of prosperity, but remained thirty percent less than in 1908-9. This, despite the fact that there was a vastly larger group of potential deportees because of increased immigration and of the longer period within which deportation was possible. This time the immigration officials made a greater effort to find employment for the unemployed, especially in agriculture. The railways co-operated by providing reduced rates for farm labourers in Western Canada.<sup>58</sup> Deportation, as a quick solution to the problem of unemploy-

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, III (1910): 5519-22.

<sup>58</sup> INTERIOR, *Annual Report*, 1913/14, p. 142; 1914/15, p. 90; IB, F. 29490(3), memorandum by E. B. Robertson, 17 July 1914; Scott to railway companies, 21 July 1914.

ment, was less apparent than in 1907-9. It is evident that, to some extent, the Immigration Branch saw the financial crisis as responsible for the unemployment and, consequently, was not rigid in enforcing the regulations. The absence of a large problem group such as the assisted immigrants during the previous crisis also contributed to this change in attitude.

Low immigration and full employment by 1916 brought about a sharp decline in deportations which lasted for the remainder of World War I. During this period fifty percent of the deportations were for criminal causes and only twenty-two percent were of public charges. Since much of the wartime immigration was from the United States, sixty-three percent of the deported were American citizens.

A number of the "crimes" for which people were deported were "incidental to times of war".<sup>59</sup> This referred to such things as being "pro-German", anti-war, and evading the United States draft. Among these there were some deportations of individuals who were perceived as attempting to disrupt the war effort through labour activities. The position of the government was clearly outlined in a response to complaints from lumber interests on the Pacific Coast.

The fact that a man belongs to the IWW [International Workers of the World] is not in itself sufficient to absolutely debar his entry to this country and of course it could not be sufficient to bring about his deportation. However, there are usually other features connected with the majority of these cases which enable us to deal with them and you may rest assured that the Department is alive to the importance of the situation.<sup>60</sup>

There is no evidence that any large number of IWW organizers were deported from British Columbia, but some investigations were carried out. In 1918 a major effort was made to investigate an organizer who had conducted two strikes in the Prince George district — "his scheme being six hours a day".<sup>61</sup> It was discovered that he had entered Canada surreptitiously via a mountain trail at Nelson and, therefore, he was deported for illegal entry. Since he was also avoiding the United States draft, the authorities were notified and he was arrested on his re-entry. The IWW also made some attempts to organize the harvesters in Western Canada during 1917. Five Americans who started a strike at Yorkton were arrested and convicted by the local authorities. The Immigration Branch complied with the request that they be deported after they served their thirty-day terms in the Regina Gaol.<sup>62</sup> A request, in 1918, by the Department of Justice that IWW officials in British Columbia be deported as public charges was turned down by the Immigration Branch.<sup>63</sup> The Immigration Branch was willing to comply with requests to deport undesirables who seemed to be undermining the war effort, but the powers of deportation, while broad and discretionary, did have limits which were observed by the officials in charge.

<sup>59</sup> INTERIOR, *Annual Report*, 1918/19, p. 22.

<sup>60</sup> IB, F. 917093(1), Scott to Harvey, et al, Solicitors, Cranbrook, 12 May 1917.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid., Reid to Scott, 9 April 1918.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid., Walker to Scott, 11 October 1917.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid., Scott to E. L. Newcombe, 6 September 1918.

## III

In the aftermath of World War I the Canadian government turned its attention to the future of the nation. In April 1919 a lengthy amendment to the Immigration Act was presented. The minister, J. A. Calder, argued that many mistakes had been made in the past and that a new immigration policy was needed. The problem, as he saw it, was that too many immigrants had not been assimilated into the Canadian community. This was attributed to the negligence of former governments in educating the immigrants in the responsibilities of citizenship and to the fact that some of the immigrants were not readily assimilable.<sup>64</sup> Calder, however, did not propose an end to immigration for he subscribed to the popular theory that an increased population would solve the national debt problem, and provide both traffic for the beleaguered railway systems and a home market for the industrial concerns.

Much of the debate on Bill 52 was highly partisan, focusing on the apparent failure of the "foreign" immigrants to contribute a fair share to the war effort.<sup>65</sup> All the proposals further to restrict immigration and to broaden the powers of deportation were accepted by Parliament. The major change was to extend to five years the time-limit within which an immigrant could be deported. No time-limit was placed on the deportation of immigrants who at the time of entry belonged to any of the prohibited classes, because their entry was by "false representations".

On 9 May the minister proposed the inclusion of a new clause to the amendment. He wanted to strengthen Section 41 of the 1910 Act which dealt with revolutionaries, anarchists and terrorists. The new amendment would give him the power to deport any person who advocated or taught the unlawful destruction of property, or who was "a member or affiliated with any organization entertaining or teaching disbelief in or opposition to organized government". It was also specified that such individuals could not acquire domicile.<sup>66</sup> This had the effect of making every radical not born in Canada liable to deportation. By 4 June the revised Bill 52 had received approval from both Houses of Parliament. At this point, legal advisers from the Department of Justice informed Calder that Section 41 was not precise and suggested that it be rewritten. Since Bill 52 was beyond the stage where amendment was possible, a new bill was presented to the House of Commons on 6 June.<sup>67</sup> Minor changes, such as substituting "by word or act" for "advocates", were made. The untenable attempt arbitrarily to deny domicile was replaced by a clause granting immunity from deportation to any immigrant who had become a naturalized Canadian citizen.<sup>68</sup> An addition was made by including a clause

<sup>64</sup> *Commons Debates*, II (1919): 1866-69.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*: 1910-29.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, III (1919): 2283-86.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, IV (1919): 3212-13.

<sup>68</sup> A Canadian citizen could not be deported, but the Department of Justice, under the Naturalization Act, could revoke the naturalization of a foreign-born person. Deportation, however, could be effected only if the country of birth still recognized the individual as a



referring to assuming powers of government without lawful authority. A subsection declared that anyone who had been a prohibited immigrant at any time since the passage of the Act in 1910 was assumed still to be so. The burden of disproving such a charge rested on the accused. Unanimous consent was given for the introduction of Bill 132, and it was passed with minimal debate. The Senate rubber-stamped the rewritten Section 41 so as to permit it to receive royal assent during the session which had been previously scheduled for that afternoon.<sup>69</sup>

The government definitely had the Winnipeg General Strike in mind when clarifying Section 41, but the amendment was not the product of a frantic panic. Most of the section had been in place since 1910, and the substantive amendments were inserted on 9 May, a week before the strike started.

The changes to Section 41 had arisen out of the conditions during the latter part of the war. The rising social discontent in Canada had been blamed on the "alien enemy" and, increasingly, on a Bolshevik conspiracy. In September 1918 action had been taken under the War Measures Act to increase censorship and to declare illegal a number of socialist organizations.<sup>70</sup> This action had increased the possibility of using the powers of deportation because immigrants could be deported upon conviction for any of the new offences. However, with the three-year limit of the 1910 Act, few had come within the reach of deportation. In early 1919 the Manitoba government had established the Alien Enemy Investigation Board so as to issue identity cards to loyal aliens. There was some desire on the part of this board to deport immigrants who had been disloyal, but the Immigration Branch did not transfer any power to this provincial body.<sup>71</sup> In Toronto, a move against radicals had resulted in the arrest of Leon Samson and Elise Saborowski. Both were ordered deported. Samson, "a Russian revolutionist" but an American citizen, was returned to the United States on 25 May 1919. This, against the wishes of the Department of Justice which "was anxious that this man should be deported to Siberia where he would no doubt have been executed under the regime of Admiral Kolchak".<sup>72</sup> Saborowski, a German citizen and "a member of the communist party and a revolutionist of a pronounced type", could not be deported because relations with Germany were non-existent. She was transferred to the internment camp at Vernon, B.C., and repatriated to Germany as a prisoner of war on 27 February 1920.<sup>73</sup>

The prolonged general strike in Winnipeg created a minor "red scare". The Borden Government decided to take a direct part in the

citizen. The USSR, for example, accepted few deportees because it did not recognize the individuals as citizens. See IB, F. 906924(1) and 906924(2).

<sup>69</sup> The two immigration bills received assent along with sixty-eight other bills.

<sup>70</sup> P.C. 2384, Order in Council, 25 September 1918.

<sup>71</sup> PAC, RCMP Papers (hereafter RCMP), Vol. 2168, F. 15, R. J. Mansfield to Minister of Militia, 26 February 1919.

<sup>72</sup> IB, F. 961162, W. R. Little to Calder, 5 August 1919; F. C. Blair to Ireland, 27 April 1920.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid.

negotiation of a settlement and to deport the radical elements.<sup>74</sup> The Minister of Labour, Senator Gideon Robertson, was sent to Winnipeg to carry out the decision. To facilitate the deportations eleven senior officers of the Royal North West Mounted Police in Western Canada (RNWMP) were appointed as immigration officers on 16 June. These officers, thereby, had the power to detain and examine immigrants under Section 42 of the Immigration Act. This power, however, could only be obtained from the Minister of Immigration after he had received the names and full details as prescribed by Section 41. The RNWMP, unaware of this limitation, immediately decided that "all undesirables shall be interned and deported" in a massive campaign which would be timed to coincide with the Winnipeg arrests.<sup>75</sup> Senator Robertson was told by Calder on 16 June: "In case arrests are to be made have wire sent me giving names and particulars so that necessary order may issue".<sup>76</sup> As far as the Immigration Branch was concerned the regulations were to be respected.

The entire situation was bungled. Not only were the arrests conducted in the early hours of 17 June illegal under the Immigration Act, but the sudden action in Winnipeg resulted in the stillbirth of the RNWMP anti-radical campaign. The six Anglo-Saxon strike leaders were charged with seditious conspiracy under the criminal code and were released on bail. Four of the five "aliens" were held under the Immigration Act for examination as to whether they had entered Canada legally. Represented by three lawyers, they came before boards of inquiry in July and August in Winnipeg. Solomon Almazoff was acquitted, while Michael Charitinoff and Samuel Blumenburg were ordered deported, but their appeals were sustained. Only the American-born Oscar Schoppelrie was deported because he had entered Canada illegally.<sup>77</sup> Significantly, Schoppelrie had played only a minor role in the radical movement, while the three who were released had been major figures in the radical movement among Winnipeg's foreign-born.

On 21 June, "Bloody Saturday", a riot in downtown Winnipeg led to the arrest of over one hundred people. Thirty-one "alien" rioters were brought before Magistrate Sir Hugh J. Macdonald; most were fined or given short sentences. Macdonald further recommended that some of the "alien enemy" be interned and deported. Colonel Starnes of the RNWMP ordered the internment of twelve of these men under the Alien Enemies Act. Later he stated that at the time he had felt it to be "imperative that an example should be made of some of these aliens".<sup>78</sup> These men were sent to the internment camp at Kapuskasing, Ontario, in early July. An appeal was launched on their behalf by the Winnipeg Trades and Labor Council, and the case was brought under review by the Department of

<sup>74</sup> RCMP, Vol. 578, F. 333, N. Rowell to A. A. Mclean, 14 June 1919.

<sup>75</sup> RCMP, Vol. 2172, F. 22/4, Scott to A. B. Perry, Commissioner, Regina, 16 June 1919; Circular 71, Regina, 16 June 1919. This circular was cancelled on 20 June 1919.

<sup>76</sup> IB, F. 961162(1), Calder to Robertson, 16 June 1919.

<sup>77</sup> RCMP, Vol. 3314, F. 4, 5, 6, transcripts of Board of Inquiry.

<sup>78</sup> PAC, Department of Justice Records, Vol. 239, F. 1960, Starnes to Commissioner, RNWMP, 16 December 1919.

Justice in late October.<sup>79</sup> Meanwhile, Major-General Otter, who was in charge of the internment operations, had finally arranged for the repatriation of the prisoners of war held at Kapuskasing. On his own authority he released two of these men because they had dependent families in Canada. The remaining ten were repatriated in a routine manner as prisoners of war.<sup>80</sup> A serious mistake had been made. The Department of Justice investigated the circumstances surrounding this repatriation, but decided not to question the actions of any of the government officials.

The RNWMP did not revive their plan to mount a national anti-radical campaign, but some individual arrests were made in the summer of 1919 under Section 41. Only a few led to deportation. The number of detentions was low because the Immigration Branch required credible evidence, particularly evidence on employment history "to disclose whether the alien is a *bona fide* worker or an agitator".<sup>81</sup>

The sudden rise of the One Big Union in Western Canada, accompanied by radical rhetoric and violent labour disputes in Alberta and B.C., led to some deportations. Romeo Albo was arrested under Section 41 at Lethbridge with a minister's order on 25 July 1919. He was ordered deported to Italy. An appeal was dismissed, but before his deportation could be arranged he died in hospital.<sup>82</sup> Anna Kannasto, an organizer for the Finnish Socialist Democratic Party in Alberta, was ordered deported on the grounds of having entered Canada by misrepresentation. She appealed the ruling, and was still in Canada in April 1920.<sup>83</sup> An Austrian noted for his strong sympathy for the One Big Union was convicted of possessing firearms and, consequently, was considered for deportation. It was decided not to press the case for he was "not one of the leading agitators, due doubtless to his lack of brains".<sup>84</sup> There is no evidence that the leading members of the One Big Union were deported or even detained for investigation under the Immigration Act.

One group which was persecuted under the Immigration Act was the Union of Russian Workers. Starting in July 1919, a series of arrests netted twenty-one Russian-born in British Columbia. Boards of inquiry ordered the deportation of fourteen. In October they were sent to the internment camp at Vernon, so as to be isolated from their friends and supporters. The Immigration Branch also found it more economical to detain them at Vernon than elsewhere.<sup>85</sup> Attempts to have them deported were futile as the Russian consul at Montreal would not consider their return, and the Canadian government had no relations with the Soviet government. When the camp at Vernon was closed in late February 1920,

<sup>79</sup> Ibid., Comptroller, RNWMP, to Deputy Minister of Justice, 29 October 1919.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid., Otter to Deputy Minister of Justice, 8 November 1919; Otter to Deputy Minister, 15 November 1919.

<sup>81</sup> IB, F. 961162(1), Scott to all officers, 17 June 1919.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid., Blair to Gibson, 17 July 1919; Blair to Ireland, 27 April 1920.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid., Blair to [illegible], 18 December 1919.

<sup>85</sup> RCMP, Vol. 1931, F. 2/4, Vancouver, Monthly Reports; IB, F. 906924(1), Memorandum, 1920; Blair to L. Pacaud, 11 February 1923.

one of these radicals was released on parole and the others were lodged in the penitentiary at New Westminster. Hope that these people could be returned via normal channels was abandoned and the possibility of simply dumping them on Russian territory was explored. The United States was contacted to see if another shipload of "reds" such as that carried by the *S.S. Buford* in December 1919 was being dispatched to Europe. A negative response led to a second attempt to get Japanese approval for sending them to Vladivostok.<sup>86</sup> Protests that they would be executed if sent to that destination convinced the government, in July, to ask whether Britain could arrange their return. Soviet-British relations were tense and negotiations proceeded slowly. Concern about having these men on their hands indefinitely led the Immigration Branch to release them on parole in early December 1920.<sup>87</sup> It does not appear that they were deported at a later date. This incident typified the success with which Canada deported "radical agitators" during the "red scare" of 1919. The number actually intended for deportation by the Immigration Branch was very small and often the lack of evidence, or external factors, prevented even these deportations from being carried out.<sup>88</sup>

Changed social conditions after World War I, and not the "red scare", were responsible for the significant increase in deportations during the 1920s. During the war the need to assist soldiers' families and returned soldiers had exceeded the capacity of voluntary agencies and was increasingly shifted onto the government. This established precedents and to some extent also "accustomed the public, both recipient and donor, to think in terms of government responsibility for social services".<sup>89</sup> During the recession of 1920-21 the federal government, for the first time, gave direct grants to the provinces for public works and relief. With economic recovery in 1923, the aid dwindled despite the increasing need for social services in the urban, industrial society. In 1926 the public welfare expenditures of all levels of government were only 12.5 percent of total expenditures, the same proportion as in 1896 and significantly less than had been allocated in 1913.<sup>90</sup> Social services had a very low priority in a decade which is noted for its prosperity. Consequently, municipalities and public institutions felt compelled to request deportations to reduce the costs of outside relief, overcrowded asylums and overburdened hospital wards.

<sup>86</sup> IB, F. 969713, Blair to John Clark, United States Consul, 10 February 1920; Blair to Calder, 10 February 1920; Clark to Blair, 19 February 1920; Scott to Calder, 25 February 1920.

<sup>87</sup> PAC, Governor-General's Papers, Vol. G21, F. 34691, Walker, Acting Under-Secretary for External Affairs to Governor-General's Secretary, 31 July 1920; Devon to Milner, 7 December 1920.

<sup>88</sup> It has been stated that some 200 radicals were held for deportation by the Immigration Branch in 1919, and it is implied that with the help of the United States they were deported. (AVERY, *Dangerous Foreigners*, p. 87) No evidence was given for this claim. Perhaps twenty to thirty were held for investigation by the Immigration Branch, and not more than a handful were deported.

<sup>89</sup> R. C. BROWN and R. COOK, *Canada, 1896-1921: A Nation Transformed* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1974), pp. 222-23.

<sup>90</sup> GUEST, *Social Security*, pp. 65-70, 102.

With the resumption of large-scale immigration from Great Britain in 1919 and from continental Europe in 1920, the deportations increased. Throughout the 1920s deportations ranged from 1,500 to 2,000 a year. This rate was double that of the period from 1910 to 1913, but the causes for the deportations were essentially the same. An unchanged deportation policy had created an established pattern. During the first half of the decade, public-charge deportations accounted for nearly forty percent of the total, but fell to twenty-five percent during the boom of the latter years. The deportations for medical causes rose steadily during the 1920s. The British continued to be deported disproportionately to their immigration, as were the Americans in the first half of the decade. In the latter part of the 1920s, as British and American immigration fell to just half of the total, the deportations of other nationals rose to nearly thirty percent. The majority of the immigrants during this decade were seeking non-agricultural wage employment and were very easily reduced to seeking social services if unemployed or disabled through accident or illness.

#### IV

The reluctance to provide social services was deeply rooted, but the realities of the Great Depression forced some loosening of the purse strings, and some reconsideration of the constitutional strait-jacket. The burden of social services was increasingly assumed by the senior levels of government; total public welfare expenditures by all government levels rose from 99 millions in 1926-27 to 230 in 1933-34 and to 317 in 1939-40.<sup>91</sup>

This tremendous increase in spending on public assistance and on social services in general, did not, however, represent any significant change in the attitude of the government towards social services. The economic depression was so severe that government programmes were "all but submerged by the need to provide a subsistence living for thousands of unemployed Canadians", leaving little time to experiment with new ideas.<sup>92</sup> There was no change in the manner in which dependent immigrants were dealt with.

Deportations were resorted to in an unprecedented way. There were 28,097 between April 1929 and March 1935, an average annual rate 220 percent higher than during the preceding five years. Public-charge deportations were over 500 percent higher; criminal deportations rose by 50 percent; those for other civil causes by 25 percent, while the deportations for medical causes rose by less than 2 percent. In all, over 61 percent of the deportations were of public charges. These deportations represented 3 percent of the 900,000 immigrants who arrived in Canada between 1925 and 1935.

A sharp increase in deportations occurred in August 1929 as an economic recession coincided with a large immigration. These deportations,

<sup>91</sup> Ibid., pp. 86, 206.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid., pp. 84-85, 95.

largely of public charges, amounted to an almost wholesale deportation of the destitute unemployed by the Liberal government of Mackenzie King. It was considered to be an expedient solution to a temporary problem.

In view of the unemployment situation in the West, it was advisable to effect the deportation of persons in Canada without domicile who became public charges thus, in some measure, helping to relieve the conditions ... the majority of them covering Britishers. ... The extent to which these people became public charges was not large but in the majority of cases the men were not willing to accept farm work, could not obtain industrial work in the cities and were, as a matter of fact, looking for a chance to return to the British Isles.<sup>93</sup>

Most of these men had come to Canada as harvesters, and were handled in the same manner as a number of earlier ill-fated immigrants.<sup>94</sup> During the spring and early summer of 1930 there was a decline in the deportations; by July they rose again and by October they were at the level of the previous fall.

The new Conservative government of R. B. Bennett faced a serious unemployment problem when it assumed office in August 1930. W. A. Gordon, the Minister of Immigration, was firmly convinced that the immigration policy of the previous administration had been reckless and irresponsible. For him it was "clear, therefore, beyond peradventure that either substantial numbers of immigrants who have recently arrived in Canada are in the ranks of the unemployed, or conversely, they have displaced Canadians who are now unemployed".<sup>95</sup> The Minister of Labour, Senator G. Robertson, was even less charitable towards the immigrants. In reference to the situation in Northern Ontario, he wrote that "Russian and other European people who have only been in this country for a short time ... should not be allowed to work ... while hundreds of Canadians are standing in the bread line."<sup>96</sup> In the spring of 1931 the ever-attentive Assistant Deputy Minister of Immigration, F. C. Blair, put forward a proposal for the voluntary repatriation of unemployed continental Europeans. Not only would Canada be better off without them, but it would be cheaper than a second season of winter relief. Gordon approved the principle, as did the consul-generals of a number of European countries.<sup>97</sup>

Blair had a full plan developed by early July. The initial programme was not to be publicized, but was to be limited to referrals by the consul-general. The repatriation would only occur from Montreal, thereby saving on rail fares from inland points. It was estimated that each case would cost the federal government \$30, far less than the cost of a similar programme in the United States. It was also anticipated that eventually the Department of National Defence would be needed to help control the expected congestion in Montreal.

<sup>93</sup> IB, F. 563236(14), Memorandum for the Minister, 18 August 1930.

<sup>94</sup> IB, F. 907095, File on British harvesters arriving in 1923, and subsequently deported.

<sup>95</sup> PAC, Bennett Papers, Vol. 364, Gordon to E. Beatty, n.d. [October 1930].

<sup>96</sup> IB, F. 563236(14), Robertson to Rev. W. B. Williston, Cochrane, 21 July 1931.

<sup>97</sup> IB, F. 500761, Blair to Gordon, 22 April 1931; Memorandum by Blair, 19 June 1931.

Once the burdened municipalities hear of the scheme they will not be slow in urging their unemployed to shuffle along in the direction of Montreal. The news will then spread like prairie fire and the unemployed Continentals of Canada desirous of returning to their native country will descend on the City of Montreal like the locusts of Egypt.<sup>98</sup>

This scenario did not materialize for on 6 July the minister suspended the plan.

The proposal was never adopted despite pressure from various quarters. The Montreal press had printed rumours about this repatriation and by the end of July the Montreal immigration office was daily receiving large numbers of applications for deportation. Argument by Blair that these men were not needed, that they were the "fertile soil of Communist propaganda", that they were not agriculturalists as many of them had claimed on arrival and that many wanted to return, failed to persuade the minister to launch even a limited repatriation of 10,000 men.<sup>99</sup> The business-oriented Bennett Government had concluded that the depression was temporary and the labour of these immigrants would soon be needed in Canada. Instead of mass deportations of the unemployed foreign-born, the government gave increased assistance through the Unemployment and Farm Relief Act of 1931. The provinces were provided with grants to establish work camps for the single unemployed. In 1932 the camps were put under the supervision of the Department of National Defence.

Unlike in the pre-World War I period, it was not necessary to inform the local governments of their right to issue complaints about immigrants. The Immigration Branch was deluged with requests for deportations and found it difficult not to comply. The Relief Board of Alberta, for example, kept a central list of individuals on relief from as early as 1926 and actively sought the deportation of "repeaters and trouble-makers".<sup>100</sup> In the fall of 1930 Alberta complained that the deportation procedures were too slow to meet its needs. Twice an immigration officer was sent from Winnipeg to investigate, but on both occasions it was found that there was lack of evidence to support deportation orders. In June 1931 the supervisor of the Relief Branch again called for action on the grounds that the "peace and right of the Canadian tax-payers should be considered".<sup>101</sup> This time those on relief were requested to accept available employment, and lists were kept of those who refused. It appears that this strategy worked as the increase in deportations was higher than in the neighbouring provinces.

While Alberta was anxious both to rid itself of its Eastern European immigrants and to reduce relief costs, Winnipeg was primarily concerned with the latter objective. One Manitoba politician was said to have boasted about the ingenuity of that city's policy.

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*, T. Magladery to Blair, 17 July 1931.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*, Blair to Gordon, 15 August 1931; Blair to Gordon, 28 August 1931.

<sup>100</sup> Alberta Provincial Archives, Alberta Employment Service, F. 14, List of Men on Relief in Alberta, 1926-1931.

<sup>101</sup> Alberta Provincial Archives, Alberta Employment Service, F. 12, Memorandum, 26 June 1931; Premiers' Papers, F. 501, A. A. Mackenzie to G. B. Henwood, 17 June 1931.

Table 1. — CLASSIFICATION OF DEPORTATION WORK DURING THE CALENDAR YEARS 1932-1933.

<i>Class of Deportees *</i>	<i>Complaints</i>	<i>No Action Taken</i>	<i>Deportation not Ordered</i>	<i>Deportation Effected</i>	<i>Voluntary Departure</i>	<i>Deportation Suspended</i>	<i>Death</i>	<i>Cases Disappeared</i>	<i>Pending Cases</i>
<b>BRITISH</b>									
Public Charge	7,357	679	42	5,659	14	837	2	55	69
Criminal	891	177	12	594	2	61	0	13	32
Medical	473	67	7	339	3	39	4	6	8
Other	199	16	4	140	4	30	0	4	1
Total	8,920	939	65	6,732	23	967	6	78	110
<b>OTHERS</b>									
Public Charge	7,411	1,769	37	3,099	39	1,716	7	401	343
Medical	2,160	686	28	899	29	366	3	47	102
Criminal	894	140	11	537	11	77	22	19	77
Other	810	133	12	388	55	176	2	9	35
Total	11,275	2,728	88	4,923	134	2,335	34	476	557
<b>TOTAL</b>									
Public Charge	14,768	2,448	79	8,758	53	2,553	9	456	412
Medical	3,051	863	40	1,493	31	427	3	60	134
Criminal	1,367	207	18	876	14	116	26	25	85
Other	1,009	149	16	528	59	206	2	13	36
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>20,195</b>	<b>3,667</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>11,655</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>3,302</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>554</b>	<b>667</b>

Source: PAC, RG 76, F. 563236(18), Statistical tables, n.d.

\* There were 854 persons accompanying the British deportees, 276, the others, for a total of 1,130.



In our town when those foreigners from across the tracks apply for relief we just show them a blank application for voluntary deportation. Believe me, they don't come back. It's simple, but it has saved the city a lot of money.<sup>102</sup>

The Immigration Branch was aware of the practice but did not interfere. In late 1932 pressure by Winnipeg's two daily newspapers brought an end to the use of this form. It was not until December 1933, however, that Winnipeg's City Council resolved to oppose the deportation of immigrants who were "on relief with no charge against them than being the recipients of unemployment relief".<sup>103</sup> Immediately the number of deportations fell off dramatically.

The Immigration Branch did not deport all those against whom complaints were lodged. As shown in Table 1, during 1932 and 1933 some nineteen percent of the complaints were dismissed either immediately or during a board of inquiry. Over sixteen percent had their deportations suspended on the understanding that they would secure employment or obtain financial support from friends or relatives. Almost three percent decided to stay in Canada by evading the immigration officials. Another one percent of those reported for deportation had sufficient funds to leave Canada on their own. An interesting feature of these complaints is that although the majority were lodged against non-British immigrants, the majority of the deportees were British. A large number of spurious complaints were lodged against the non-British by the municipalities. Many of these deportations were suspended because, although temporarily unemployed, they were considered to be desirable immigrants. The municipalities were given a free rein to request deportations, but the Immigration Branch retained the right to make a final decision based on an established immigration policy.

If any prejudice existed in the deportation policy, it continued to be directed against immigrants who had seen assisted. British immigrants who had arrived under one of the numerous Empire Settlement Act agreements were more likely to be deported than immigrants who had paid their own passage.<sup>104</sup> The large juvenile migration which had occurred in the late 1920s was due to the free passages provided under that act. Statistics reveal that British boys were deported at an alarming rate from April to September 1930. Eighty-one were deported and twenty were returned by the organizations which had sponsored them (Table 2).<sup>105</sup>

The reasons were largely related either to the boys' unemployment or to crimes against persons or property. Only twelve percent of the eighty-one were deported for medical causes. The fact that fifty of these boys

<sup>102</sup> *Winnipeg Tribune*, 14 December 1932.

<sup>103</sup> IB, F. 563236(16), City Clerk, Winnipeg, to Minister, 19 December 1933.

<sup>104</sup> In 1919 the British government gave free passage to veterans or war widows, and their families. In 1923 the federal and various provincial governments joined the British government under the Empire Settlement Act to assist the unemployed to leave Great Britain.

<sup>105</sup> PAC, RG 26, Citizenship and Immigration Records, Vol. 16, Immigration Under Empire Settlement Scheme.

Table 2. — BRITISH JUVENILE BOYS DEPORTED, APRIL-SEPTEMBER 1930.

<i>Cause</i>	<i>Number</i>
Assault	3
Indecent Assault	3
Incendiarism	1
Break and Enter, Theft	18
Loitering, Vagrancy	14
Malicious Damage	1
Trespassing	1
Public Charge	29
False Pretence	1
Insanity	6
Epilepsy	2
Tuberculosis	2
Total	81

Source: PAC, RG 26, Vol. 16, Immigration under Empire Settlement Scheme.

had arrived within the past year added to the suspicions about the recruitment of these immigrants. In 1931 this group created further problems because a number "exhibited a disinclination to work preferring rather to impose on the sympathy and credulity of the public in towns and cities".<sup>106</sup> Juvenile migration was immediately reduced to a trickle, but the deportations continued for a number of years.

The immigration of British houseworkers under the Empire Settlement Act produced similar problems. Between 1926 and 1930, some 18,790 houseworkers received passage assistance and loans to come to Canada, as well as receiving "aftercare" assistance in Canada. Of this group, 877 had been deported by 1936 and eighty had had their deportations suspended. One particular group of houseworkers which arrived in 1929 and 1930 had a twelve percent deportation rate. The supervisor of the Women's Branch, in view of an over-all deportation rate of 4.5 percent, argued that "no girl was sent home who was in good health, had a good record and was able to take a houseworker situation".<sup>107</sup> The land settlement programme also had their share of problems. These immigrants, who were to have been specially selected, had received a \$1,500 loan from the British government and were supervised in Canada by Canadian officials. The "500 New Brunswick Family Settlement Scheme", for example, received 359 families between 1929 and 1931. By mid-November 1930, two families had already been deported. By April 1934, over seven percent of these selected immigrants had been deported.<sup>108</sup>

<sup>106</sup> DEPARTMENT OF IMMIGRATION AND COLONIZATION, *Annual Report*, 1931/32, p. 80.

<sup>107</sup> DEPARTMENT OF IMMIGRATION AND COLONIZATION, *Annual Report*, 1933/34, p. 89; IB, F. 594293, Report on Hostel Trainees arrived April 1929 — 31 March 1931, 31 December 1934.

<sup>108</sup> IB, F. 266687(3), Report, 15 November 1930; IB, F. 266687(5), Memorandum, April 1934.

Table 3. — DEPORTATIONS, FOR FISCAL YEAR OF 1933-1934,  
OF BRITISH SUBJECTS WHO HAD ARRIVED UNDER ASSISTED PASSAGE.

<i>Type of Assisted Passage</i>	<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>	<i>Children</i>	<i>Canadian-Born</i>	<i>Total</i>
<b>EMPIRE SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT</b>					
3,000 Family Settlement Scheme	21	18	37	14	90
Families for other Farm Placement	1	1	1	2	5
New Brunswick Family Settlement	23	21	67	13	124
Nominations	31	20	24	15	90
British Settlement Society of Canada	9	11	15	3	38
Canadian National Railways	22	6	8	6	42
Canadian Pacific Railways	53	35	66	23	177
Ontario Government	11	10	19	8	48
Hudson Bay Company	6	3	11	1	21
Salvation Army	4	3	7	5	17
Alberta Government	2	0	0	0	2
United Church of Canada	1	0	0	2	3
Ministry of Labour Trainees (British)	13	0	0	2	15
Nova Scotia Government	1	0	0	0	1
Family Reunion Scheme	1	4	12	4	21
Clan Donald	4	4	9	1	18
Domestics	0	104	1	49	154
Juvenile Boys	126	0	10	1	137
Juvenile Girls	0	2	0	0	2
Total	327	242	287	149	1,005
<b>OTHER SCHEMES</b>					
British Dominions Emigration Society	15	20	47	7	89
Ministry of Labour (British)	97	0	0	3	100
Navy League	3	2	5	2	12
Society for the Overseas Settlement of British Women	0	20	49	8	77
Others	6	3	9	2	20
Total	121	45	110	22	298
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>448</b>	<b>287</b>	<b>397</b>	<b>171</b>	<b>1,303</b>

DEPORTATION FROM CANADA

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Source: PAC, RG 26, Vol. 16, Fiscal Year Statements.

The number of British immigrants who had received passage assistance between 1923 and 1930 was less than thirty percent, but they constituted a large proportion of the deportations. For example, in the fiscal year 1933-34 they accounted for forty-eight percent of the British who were deported. As Table 3 indicates, these immigrants came under the sponsorship of various organizations which had received certain powers of selection from the Immigration Branch. Experience demonstrated that this confidence was misplaced.

Another large migration of the late 1920s was that of Eastern Europeans under the Railways' Agreement. Between 1925 and 1930 the Canadian railways recruited some 120,000 adult males who were given certificates which claimed that they were agriculturalists, while 11,600 women were certified as houseworkers. With dependents the migration totalled some 170,000.<sup>109</sup> The Immigration Branch had been opposed to the Railways' Agreement because it undermined its ability to select the immigrants, but the arrangement was imposed on the Branch by the King Government.<sup>110</sup> During the 1920s few of these immigrants were deported despite the vigilance of the immigration officials. During the Great Depression, however, 4,000 — less than 2.5 percent of the total migration — were deported.<sup>111</sup> Public charges constituted fifty-five percent of such deportees during 1930 through 1932. This was a smaller proportion than the average for total deportations. Another significant feature of these statistics is the high proportion of unattached males deported. This is not entirely surprising in view of the fact that at least 105,000 of the men arriving under the Railways' Agreement were not accompanied by wives. There was no concerted effort made to deport immigrants from Eastern Europe.

Many immigrants became disillusioned with Canada during the depression and sought to be deported. They wanted to return to their former homes and, in many cases, to rejoin their families. Some had exhausted their funds in Canada while many others had sent their earnings to their families in Europe and then demanded free passage. The Immigration Branch was somewhat reluctant to deport all those wishing to return home.

In a large number of the cases deportation was solicited by the persons themselves and a considerable proportion of these positively refused to consider accepting any kind of employment, preferring to return to their own homes. In cases of persons other than those of the undesirable classes, the department effected deportation only where it was established that such action was the one practicable solution to the problem.<sup>112</sup>

<sup>109</sup> IB, F. 193745(6), Blair to Crerar, 21 January 1936. AVERY, 'Dangerous Foreigners', p. 91, uses the figure of 369,905 immigrants, but this included immigrants from all of continental Europe, and not just the area where the Railways' Agreement operated.

<sup>110</sup> IB, F. 216882(1), Egan to Beatty, 29 July 1925; J. A. Robb to Beatty, 1 September 1925.

<sup>111</sup> IB, F. 351406, Undated tables of statistics; PAC, RG 26, Vol. 16, Alien Citizens of countries in which Railway Agreement operates.

<sup>112</sup> IMMIGRATION AND COLONIZATION, *Annual Report*, 1931/32, p. 72.

Prime Minister Bennett also received numerous requests for deportation from British immigrants.<sup>113</sup> Not all of these requests were favourably received because in some cases domicile had been acquired, and when the individuals were agriculturalists there was a reluctance to comply. Some European consuls complained that the immigrants were made to stay in Canada longer than they had wished because deportation proceedings were too slow.<sup>114</sup>

In 1932 the Immigration Branch began to keep statistics on the disposition of public-charge cases. Of the 7,758 deported as public charges during 1932 and 1933, over forty percent had applied for deportation.<sup>115</sup> Of those ordered deported after investigation, it was found that twenty-eight percent were unwilling to accept available employment and that another twelve percent believed employment opportunities to be better in their native countries. Only ten percent registered a determination to remain in Canada by appealing the deportation. The seven percent classified as medically unfit were debarred from appealing the order. These statistics, divided between British and non-British, indicate that the British requested deportations more frequently because they anticipated employment on their return. Thus, far fewer British appealed the deportation order. Statistics compiled from monthly reports from November 1932 to December 1935 (Table 4) show a similar pattern. This information indicates that, as the depression lengthened, more individuals requested deportation. While Winnipeg and, likely, other municipalities, resorted to using "voluntary" deportation forms to reduce relief costs, it is obvious that large numbers of immigrants did use deportation as a means of escaping unemployment in Canada.

The threat of communism was a very real concern of the Bennett Government, and it was not ignored by the Immigration Branch. Although it was recognized that the communists were only a small group, there was a growing fear that the "unemployed, undomiciled wanderer" could provide a large number of new recruits.<sup>116</sup> Unrest among the unemployed and aggressive organizing by the Communists in 1931, led to the arrest of prominent members of the Communist Party of Canada in August under the criminal code. In November, after a ten-day trial, eight were convicted of belonging to an "unlawful assembly" and of seditious conspiracy. Although the seven foreign-born were recommended for deportation after serving their sentences, only one was eventually deported.<sup>117</sup>

<sup>113</sup> Bennett Papers, Vol. 372, Files D-186-D, D-187, D-188; IB, F. 563236(15), Blair to Little, 11 January 1933.

<sup>114</sup> IB, F. 80671, K. Moser, Consul-General, Czechoslovakia, to J. M. Langlais, Montreal agent, 1 August 1932.

<sup>115</sup> IB, F. 563236(15), Statistical tables, "Immigrants Deported as Public Charges during the Calendar Years 1932 and 1933".

<sup>116</sup> IB, F. 500761, Blair to Gordon, 15 August 1931.

<sup>117</sup> Ivan AVAKUMOVIC, *The Communist Party in Canada* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1975), pp. 85-88; A. RASPORICH, "Tomo Cacic: Rebel without a Country", *Canadian Ethnic Studies*, X, 2 (Spring 1978): 86-94.

Table 4. — STATEMENTS OF PERSONS DEPORTED AS PUBLIC CHARGES FROM 1 NOVEMBER 1932 TO 31 DECEMBER 1935.

<i>Country of Origin</i>	<i>DESIRE FOR DEPORTATION BASED ON</i>							<i>Total Statements</i>
	<i>A</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>C</i>	<i>D</i>	<i>E</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>G</i>	
Austria	17	2	2	5	3	1	1	31
Belgium	5	4	0	1	4	0	1	15
British Empire:								
England	872	250	26	84	212	88	65	1,597
Ireland, Northern	140	33	9	7	18	46	0	253
Ireland, Free State	21	17	2	4	5	12	4	65
Scotland	605	163	12	32	143	72	20	1,047
Wales	141	39	9	18	21	32	2	262
Africa, South	0	0	0	0	2	0	1	3
Australia	3	0	1	3	1	9	1	18
Bermuda	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	8
West Indies	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	3
Guiana	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Lesser British Isles	5	0	0	0	5	0	0	10
Newfoundland	6	6	0	0	0	1	1	14
New Zealand	6	1	0	0	0	0	0	7
Bulgaria	12	1	0	0	2	2	0	17
Czechoslovakia	44	48	0	9	7	27	6	141
Danzig	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Esthonia	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	3
Finland	46	100	23	30	20	40	29	289

France	0	3	0	0	1	0	2	6
Germany	113	38	6	36	38	23	6	260
Holland	18	1	3	1	2	7	0	32
Hungary	30	43	5	14	11	29	10	142
Italy	1	0	0	1	2	0	0	4
Jugoslavia	13	45	6	17	13	22	12	128
Latvia	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Lithuania	8	3	0	1	2	9	4	27
Roland	112	71	16	32	18	96	15	360
Romania	70	73	7	21	16	23	20	230
Russia	14	0	0	0	1	2	0	17
Scandinavia:								
Denmark	34	17	1	5	2	17	3	78
Norway	21	4	1	7	8	12	8	61
Sweden	21	9	6	3	8	17	13	77
Spain	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Switzerland	2	4	0	2	0	3	0	11
Ocean Port Total	2,390	978	135	335	564	593	226	5,221
USA	23	9	0	22	29	25	34	142
Grand Total	2,413	987	135	357	593	618	260	5,363
As % of Total Statements	45.8	18.7	2.6	6.4	10.8	11.4	4.3	100.0

Source: PAC, RG 26, Vol. 16, Public Charge Deports, 1931-37.

A = Applications to Department for deportation; B = Refusal to consider employment; C = Demand for impossible wages or working conditions; D = Illness; E = Anticipation of employment in native country; F = Appeals dismissed; G = Readiness to consider employment but no appeal.

Before the prosecution of the Communist leaders there had been few deportations for radical activity, but afterwards "communist agitators" became targets for deportation.<sup>118</sup> Between April and December 1931, twenty-four were deported for various reasons ranging from assault to distributing communist literature. The only attempt at an organized and concerted effort of deportation occurred in May 1932. In Winnipeg, Sudbury and Montreal, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police arrested nine men for their participation in local May Day celebrations and immediately transported them to Halifax. On 13 May eight were charged under Section 41 of the Immigration Act and were ordered deported. Appeal of the order was dismissed, as were appeals to the Supreme Court of Nova Scotia and the Supreme Court of Canada.<sup>119</sup> Although this time the government succeeded in deporting "dangerous foreigners", it was December before the legal appeals were exhausted and the order could be carried out. As in 1919, the government had failed in an effort to bring about the rapid deportation of radicals.

The attempt to arrest individuals and transport them half-way across the country without any trial did not go without comment. J. S. Woodsworth attacked the action in the House of Commons, and a few newspapers lamented this travesty of justice. The *Toronto Star* rose to the fore by labelling Royal Canadian Mounted Police the "Canadian Cheka" and by pointing to the plight of civil rights under the Bennett Government.<sup>120</sup> Canadians, however, as indicated by the majority of the daily press accepted this action as appropriate, if not necessary. Bennett, in what became known as his "iron heel" speech, warned Canadians that democratic institutions had to be defended:

These so-called groups of socialists and communists ... are sowing their seeds everywhere. Right in this city of Toronto, such propaganda is being carried on, and in the little out-of-the-way places the same injurious work is being done. We know that throughout Canada this propaganda is being put forward by organizations from foreign lands that seek to destroy our institutions. Now ladies and gentlemen, we ask every true Canadian to put the heel of ruthlessness against a thing of that kind.<sup>121</sup>

These were strong sentiments, but his government lacked the will to be entirely ruthless.

The number of deportations was exceedingly small. In 1932 a total of forty-two communist agitators were deported; in 1933 and 1934 there were a further sixteen. Of the eighty-two "communist agitators" deported

<sup>118</sup> PAC, RG 26, Vol. 16, Communist Agitators.

<sup>119</sup> IB, F. 513111, Deportation Order for Dan Holmes, 7 December 1931; Notice of Appeal, Dan Holmes, 9 May 1932; Minutes of Board of Inquiry, Halifax, 6 May 1932; Receipt for Delivery of Immigrant, 23 January 1933; F. 513116, Notice of Appeal, Arvo Vaara, 13 May 1932; Reference to Supreme Court of Canada, 17 May 1932; Receipt for Delivery of Immigrant, 17 December 1932; W. R. Little to W. J. Egan, Deputy Minister, 30 December 1932.

<sup>120</sup> *Commons Debates*, III (1932): 2658, 2683-87, 2690-96; S. M. BREEZE, "Editorial Response to Communism in the English Language Press during the 1930's" (M.A. thesis, Carleton University, 1970), pp. 22-37.

<sup>121</sup> *The Canadian Unionist*, December 1932, p. 113.



during 1931 through 1934 less than a handful were organizers of the communist movement in Canada. The leadership of the Communist Party of Canada, almost exclusively foreign-born, was not deported. The vast majority of those deported were simply individuals who took part in labour strikes or in protest marches and demonstrations against inadequate wages and relief measures. Their frustration found expression in radical rhetoric and at times in violence. This caused local authorities to seek the deportation of "trouble-makers". Only about thirty percent of these individuals were deported from the major urban centres. Most came from smaller centres such as Rouyn, Sudbury, Kirkland Lake, Fort William, Timmins, Dauphin, Lethbridge, Fort Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, Estevan, Drumheller and The Pas. Only three agitators were deported from Winnipeg, a city noted for the radicalism of its immigrant population. The immigration officer in that city did not see a justification for deportation on these grounds:

Some of the men are perhaps Communists, or, owing to present conditions, are showing by their action leaning to Communism, or they are receiving legal advice from that source. I might state, however, that I do not think that these men were Communists, or had any ideas of this kind before they came to Canada.<sup>122</sup>

The majority of Canadians, however, resented criticism by these individuals. Many would have agreed with Major-General MacBrien, the Commissioner of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, when he told a group of war veterans that "many of them have not been here long, and I have always felt that if they do not like the way we live and want to uproot our institutions, the best thing to do would be to send them back where they came from in every possible way."<sup>123</sup> There was no mass repatriation of the unemployed nor, with the exception of the May Day arrests in 1932, was there any attempt to use deportations to destroy the Left in Canada.

The deportations peaked during 1932, and declined steadily because fewer and fewer people were within reach of the legislation and because the pressure by municipalities for deportation eased. By 1935-36 just over 600 people were deported and by 1938-39 it had declined to 434. The proportion of deportations for medical and public-charge causes was the lowest ever, while the proportion deported for criminality remained high. The single largest reason for deportation during the latter 1930s was illegal entry. Since many immigrants were beyond the reach of deportation on traditional grounds, there was a special effort made to establish that the "undesirables" had entered Canada illegally. The Mackenzie King Government was not prepared to adopt any revision of the deportation policy.<sup>124</sup>

<sup>122</sup> IB, F. 563236(15), T. Gelley to Jolliffe, 30 October 1931.

<sup>123</sup> *Canadian Forum*, July 1932, pp. 367-68.

<sup>124</sup> AVERY, *Dangerous Foreigners*, p. 139. He states that the "King government quickly repealed both Section 98 of the Criminal Code and Section 141 of the Immigration Act". The notorious 1919 amendment of Section 41 had been amended in June 1928, but not so as to restrict the power to deport. No further changes were made in the 1930s. Section 98 of the criminal code was repealed in June 1936, but at the same time the substance of the section was transferred to Section 133 of the criminal code.

## V

The initial function of deportations was to return immigrants who did not become self-sufficient soon after their arrival, and who were not likely to do so in the near future. Canadians felt that immigrants who failed to become independent were incapable of doing so and, consequently, they were undesirable as citizens. These ideals of independence and self-reliance were inherited from the frontier society, and had been adopted to explain the progress and prosperity of America. As the need for social services increased, especially in urban centres, fears about the decline of Canadian values and the breakdown of the society began to preoccupy the middle class. When it was pointed out that many immigrants were among those requiring assistance, pressure to have them deported increased. Canadians, especially the middle class, hardened themselves to this policy because they lacked the self-assurance and confidence which would have allowed them to adapt to the emerging urban, industrial society.

Deportation of public charges was also motivated by a more basic concern of the middle class — money. During economic recessions when municipal ratepayers were faced with costs which exceeded levels which they were willing to shoulder, the demands for deportations intensified. Local governments also refused to be responsible for immigrants requiring medical care, whether physical or mental. It was commonly believed that much of the problem originated outside of Canada, that “undesirables” were being “dumped” in Canada. This view, reinforced by the frequent problems encountered with British assisted immigrants, made it easy to rationalize what were in reality economy measures.

The deportation of criminals was a much more straight-forward matter. Between 1902 and 1939 just over thirty percent of the persons deported were returned for criminal activity. The information on the nature of the crimes indicates that the vast majority were crimes against persons and property, as well as violations of the Opium and Narcotic Drug Act. There also were crimes against society such as vagrancy, loitering, prostitution and immorality. These crimes, which offended the work ethic and puritanism of the middle class, were not numerous. Significantly, like the public-charge deportations, they rose during periods of economic stress when the middle class felt itself threatened.

Individuals advocating political change were kept under surveillance by the nation's security forces, and, on a few occasions, by the Immigration Branch. While at least one organizer of the Ku Klux Klan was deported, and pro-Nazi Germans were investigated, the Immigration Branch generally focused on leftist supporters.<sup>125</sup> About one hundred individuals who were considered by the government to be radical agitators were deported prior to World War II. The crimes of the majority were that they reacted against conditions in Canada during periods of economic

<sup>125</sup> IB, F. 352190, File on deportation of J. H. Hawkins, Ku Klux Klan organizer, 1928.

stress. Since many resorted to violence, or were public charges, deportations were routine. Section 41 was used on the few occasions when there were attempts to obtain the deportation of organizers. Overall, the small number of these deportations indicates that there was no concerted effort to deport radicals.

The deportation policy was not designed to discipline immigrants, to force them to conform to the work ethic and embrace capitalism,<sup>126</sup> nor did it function as a modified *gastarbeiter* policy to control surplus labour. Although the threat of deportation undoubtedly encouraged some recent immigrants to accept low-paying jobs, it could not have seriously affected wage levels in Canada. Deportation was an expedient solution to the problem of inadequate social services, a problem which middle-class Canadians wanted to and did evade. To some extent it also served to defuse the conflict between interests which wanted, and largely obtained, large-scale immigration and the middle-class elements which feared the influx of people with different cultural and social values.

Though only about one percent of the total immigration was deported, the programme was not without its effects on the immigrants and on Canada. For some immigrants deportation actually offered a measure of relief, but for many others it represented a humiliating defeat in their efforts to establish life in a new land. They came for economic reasons, and they were frequently deported for the same reasons. In Canada the ejection of these tens of thousands of "undesirables" most certainly helped the middle-class conservatives to delay the establishment of needed social services. Only after the adoption of a basic system of social services in the post-war period was the deportation of public charges reduced to a minor cause.

<sup>126</sup> This is not to say that such aims never crossed the minds of officials or entered into Cabinet discussions, for they certainly did; but the important point is that the deportation policy was never designed for these specific purposes. As to what extent the immigrants saw deportation in this light requires a separate study.