

Book Review

Gerald Dirks

Reg. Whitaker

Double Standard: The Secret History of Canadian Immigration
(Toronto: Lester and Orpen Denys Ltd., 1987. 348p.)

The implementation and administration of Canada's immigration policy has in recent years become the focus of public, journalistic and academic attention. Mounting critical scrutiny has been sparked in large part by a widespread feeling within Canada that the prevailing policy does not reflect our national interest as the influx of foreigners appears to be unmanaged and out of control. The arrival on our shores and at our ports of entry of thousands of persons who have not been properly documented or processed, the acrimonious debate inside and outside parliament regarding the passage of appropriate legislation for refugee status determination combined with the recent discovery in our midst of a convicted Palestinian terrorist have significantly contributed to an overall sense of immigration mismanagement of a least ineptness. The book under review, which comprehensively examines Canada's security screening practices as applied to prospective immigrants and visitors, does little to diminish our misgivings.

The thesis of Professor Whitaker's well-written volume asserts that for most of this century, and especially in the years since World War II, the Canadian security establishment headed by the RCMP has been far more concerned about preventing leftists than rightists from gaining entry in Canada. In eleven chapters requiring more than three hundred pages, the author proves this contention with uncontroversial evidence drawn from public archival holdings, federal department documents and a few secondary publications. Whitaker has also skillfully acquired other important data through the use of Canada's "access to information" legislation. The book examines and critically comments upon a wide range of administrative practices, public policy content and political expediency all relating to security screening of potential newcomers. Time and time again, Whitaker describes the extreme measures the security establishment adopted to achieve what it perceived to be a patriotic duty, namely the exclusion from Canada

of suspected communists, Marxists, leftist activists, radical academics and their fellow travellers. While zealous investigation frequently typified the approach officials used when screening suspected leftists, much less energy was expended when delving into the past activities and philosophical views of Nazis and Nazi collaborators, fascists and possible war criminals.

Whitaker's examination of the world of immigration security screening embraces an impressive range of themes and subject areas. To this reviewer, some of the more interesting include the provision of a profile of the Canadian security community, an exhaustive examination of the close cooperation prevailing between American and Canadian security personnel, the demonstration of how ethnic discrimination masqueraded as a national security issue, and the exposure of how security officials confused subversives with simple dissidents. Throughout the book, which contains numerous case studies of specific security incidents, the author provides exceptionally detailed accounts of administrative injustices and arbitrariness. Chapter ten in particular is illustrative of these problems as it contains a carefully constructed picture of the treatment to which refugees, academic scholars and suspected terrorists were subjected by Canadian authorities.

In his final chapter, Whitaker shifts gears to some extent, stepping away from his analysis of Canada's security community and moving instead to a discussion of the issues that today surround the debate over legislation for determining refugee status in Canada. Even here, the author convincingly demonstrates that persons seeking to enter Canada from Eastern Europe and Indochina persistently are favoured by Canadian immigration regulations and officials over possibly more desperate individuals originating in non-communist countries where oppression and human rights infractions are prevalent. While this assertion has been made on other occasions by informed observers of the Canadian immigration field, no other scholarly work has offered as much unequivocal proof.

Professor Whitaker leaves no doubt in the reader's mind of his own ideological or philosophical perspective. His inclination is to be sympathetic to social democratic concepts and principles, critical of

many aspects of contemporary American foreign policy, and suspicious of hard-line security personnel whether attached to the RCMP or the recently established civilian run security service. Yet, this volume is anything but a contrived attack upon Canada's security practitioners. What criticisms the book contains reflect high standards of academic research, as well as rationally derived interpretations of the available data.

Now that we have this well documented scholarly analysis of the operations of the Canadian security establishment in the realm of immigration, we can hope that an equally definitive study of the enforcement operations within Employment and Immigration Canada will be soon forthcoming. It is, after all, the enforcement personnel within the Immigration Branch who, when combined with the security screening officials elsewhere, continue to ensure that Canadian immigration policy emphasizes management and control at the cost of facilitation and fairness. Possibly Professor Whitaker could be convinced to embark upon this next examination of the immigration process.

Gerald Dirks, himself the esteemed author of scholarly works related to Canadian immigration policy and practice, is a professor in the Department of Politics, Brock University.

New Publications

REFUGEES: AN ANTHOLOGY OF POEMS AND SONGS. Eds. Brian Coleman. 'From the Rivers of Babylon' to refugee movements of the twentieth century. Prepaid \$12.00 includes postage. Orders through: The Editor, 44 Caroline Avenue, Ottawa, Canada, K1Y 0S7

RACIAL ATTITUDES IN ENGLISH-CANADIAN FICTION: 1905-1980. Terence Craig. 1987/xii + 163 pp. \$23.95 (cloth) \$28.50 in U.S.A. WLU Press, Wilfred Laurier University, Waterloo, Canada, N2L 3C5.

"LISTEN WHILE I TELL YOU": A STORY OF THE JEWS OF ST. JOHN'S, NEWFOUNDLAND. Alison Kahn. 1987 248 pp b & w photos, \$23.96 (cloth) ISER, Memorial University of Newfoundland, St. John's, Newfoundland, A1C 5S7.

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Interdiction at Sea ...

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(a) is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, by reason of such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country, or
(b) not having a country of nationality, is outside the country of his former habitual residence and is unable or, by reason of such fear, is unwilling to return to that country;

Legislative Instruments

Bill C-84

An Act to amend the Immigration Act, 1976 and the Criminal Code in consequence thereof
Introduced August, 1987

The Constitution Act, 1982, Part 1, The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms

The Convention Relating to the Status of

Refugees. Signed at Geneva, on July 28, 1951, 189 U.N.T.S. 137

The Immigration Act, 1976 and Immigration Regulations, 1978

The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, 1966 U.N. Coc.A/6316

The Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees. Signed at New York, on January 31, 1967, 606 U.N.T.S. 267

The Convention on the Law of the Sea, 1982, A/CONF. 62/122

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948, U.N. Doc. A/810

Footnotes

¹Michael Akehurst. *A Modern Introduction to International Law*. London: George Allen and Unwin, 1977:162-164.

²G.W. Alexandrowicz, et. al. *International Law Coursebook*. Kingston: Queen's University Faculty of Law. 1980:14-172. See also K.R. Simmonds. *UN Convention on the Law of the Sea*.

Dobbs Ferry, N.Y.: Oceana Publications, 1983:B37.

³Simmonds, op. cit., B69, Article 19.

⁴R. Cleroux. "Tories offer senators deal to speed refugee bill." *The Globe and Mail*, Dec. 9, 1987:A10.

⁵A. Grahl-Madsen. *The Status of Refugees in International Law: Volume II, Asylum, Entry and The Netherlands*: A.J. Sijthoff-Leiden, 1972:201-207.

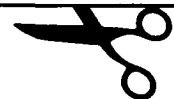
⁶Simmonds, op. cit. (p. 207).

⁷*Singh v. Minister of Employment and Immigration* (1985) [1985] 1 S.C.R. 177.

⁸B. Jackman. "Critique and Suggested Amendments." 1987:para.31.

⁹Cleroux, op. cit.

¹⁰James C. Hathaway. "Speaking Notes for Press Conference, Bill C-84" Toronto: August 17, 1987.



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