UCLPRESS

London Journal of Canadian Studies

Article

'The fight on educating the public to equal treatment for all will have to come later': Jewish Refugee Activism and Anti-Immigration Sentiment in Immediate Post-War Canada

Antoine Burgard[1,*]

How to cite: Burgard, A., "The fight on educating the public to equal treatment for all will have to come later": Jewish Refugee Activism and Anti-Immigration Sentiment in Immediate Post-War Canada.' *London Journal of Canadian Studies*, 2019, 34(6), pp. 103–122. DOI: https://doi.org/10.14324/111.444.ljcs.2019v34.006.

Published: 14 November 2019

Peer Review:

This article has been peer reviewed through the journal's standard double-blind peer-review, where both the reviewers and authors are anonymized during review.

* Correspondence: burgard.antoine@gmail.com
[1] University of Manchester, UK

‘The fight on educating the public to equal treatment for all will have to come later’: Jewish Refugee Activism and Anti-Immigration Sentiment in Immediate Post-War Canada

Antoine Burgard

Abstract

Canadian immigration policy of the 1930s and 1940s was the most restrictive and selective in the country’s history, making it one of the countries to take the smallest number of Jewish refugees fleeing the Nazi persecution. After the war, Canada slowly opened its borders, but only through small token gestures in 1947 and 1948. This article explores how the main Canadian Jewish organization lobbied for the welcoming of more Jewish refugees and migrants in the immediate aftermath of the war. It examines how their perception of the public’s anti-Jewish immigrant sentiment and of the Canadian immigration policy’s discriminatory mechanisms informed their strategies. During that period, the Canadian Jewish Congress prioritized constant and subtle action with the government instead of trying to set up mass mobilization campaigns. This strategic shift is an overshadowed but essential chapter of both Jewish and human rights histories in Canada. This article invites a re-evaluation of Jewish activism’s role in ending ethnic selection in the Canadian immigration policy and promoting refugee rights. It contributes to broadening our understanding of how minority groups lobbied and worked with hostile media and authorities.

Keywords: history, immigration, refugees, Holocaust, human rights, antisemitism, activism

Introduction

In March 2015, Justin Trudeau, leader of the Liberal Party, criticized the conservative government's response to refugees and accused Prime Minister Stephen Harper of using 'the same rhetoric that led to a "none is too many" immigration policy towards Jews in the 1930s and 1940s'.[1] By making a reference to the 1982 book by historians Irving Abella and Harold Troper, Trudeau drew a parallel with a period that is now regarded as the most restrictive and selective in Canadian history, especially because of its discrimination towards Jewish migrants and refugees.[2] The 'blatant anti-Semitism' and the stubbornness of its federal administration, the hostility of its population, and the powerlessness and division of its Jewish community are now well documented.[3] This article aims to look at the often neglected immediate aftermath of the war and to explore not only this general hostility but also how it was perceived and fought against in the immediate post-war period by the country's main Jewish lobbying and social organization, the Canadian Jewish Congress (CJC). Between 1945 and 1948, anti-immigration sentiment and rhetoric were omnipresent, and a large part of the public considered specific ethnic groups such as the Jewish, Japanese and Chinese populations to be undesirable.[4]

This article examines how the CJC understood anti-Jewish immigration sentiment and the immigration policy's discriminatory mechanisms, and how this understanding informed its lobbying strategies. While engaging with the existing literature on anti-discrimination and anti-prejudice activism, it focuses on lesser-known immigration matters and documents the work of the organization within the Jewish community, with the media and with a hostile federal administration.[5] By doing so, it aims to shed new light on the CJC's role during the 'early human rights era',[6] a period that has been overshadowed by the war and the latter 'Golden Age' of Canadian diplomacy.[7]

The CJC lobbying strategies shared many similarities with those of other activist groups, especially those involved in the fights against Canadian-Japanese deportation and the Chinese immigration ban. They reflect the 'increasing politicization of minority groups' and importance of human rights rhetoric in Canadian politics.[8] However, their pragmatic approach to building stronger relations with the authorities also embodied Jewish singularities that could be linked to some extent to what Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi called 'royal' or 'vertical alliance'.[9] By

examining both similarities and singularities, this article offers new insight into a key moment in Canadian human rights, immigration and refugee histories. It broadens our understanding of how minority groups advocated for the liberalization of migration and refugee policies and dealt with hostile media and authorities.

Token Gestures

The CJC was founded in 1919, a year after its American counterpart, and embodied the centralization agenda of a group of community leaders. One year later, it had stopped most of its activities and a few months after that completely ceased to exist. This quick ending contrasts with the enthusiasm that followed its creation.[10] The organization started up again in 1934, as a response to the creation of Adrien Arcand's Parti National Social Chrétien and to the overall rise in antisemitism.[11] Mobilization campaigns, such as German product boycotts, were started by the new general secretary of the CJC. These initiatives highlight how the organization slowly strengthened its position and took over roles from traditional Canadian *shtadlonim*, such as the few Jewish liberal MPs in Montreal and Winnipeg who tried to pressure the government to loosen its migration restrictions in the 1930s.[12] However, these public actions had a very limited impact and the CJC remained on the margins of Canadian Jewish life, its position being weak and frequently contested. Most community leaders and members were reluctant to support the CJC's centralization ambitions as they were more used to individual actions regarding immigration matters. The influence of the *landsmanshaftn*, for instance, was still strong.[13] In 1939, the powerful head of the Seagram distillery company, Samuel Bronfman, became president. In 1942, Saul Hayes was appointed executive director.[14] With a law and social work degree from McGill University, Hayes belonged to a new generation of community leaders. Their arrival dramatically changed the influence of the organization and marked a shift in its lobbying strategies.

During the war years, their efforts were mostly unsuccessful as the CJC managed only to bring over small groups of refugees, illustrating the government's 'politics of limited gestures'.[15] After the war, the Jewish representatives were under pressure as calls for action from the community were becoming louder, especially concerning the relief of children. Hayes seemed pessimistic. In his opinion, the current Liberal government relied more than ever on the support of

Québec: 'It is not indiscreet to say, even in a memorandum, that we can expect the French members to be a little less than enthusiastic about immigration.'[16] The position of Ottawa seemed to be predominantly influenced by the fear of a political backlash, in Québec and elsewhere, in the event of a broad opening of its borders to Jewish immigration. In the end, Hayes had little to celebrate. In October 1945, the government granted permanent residency to some temporary permit holders, including the approximately 400 Jewish refugees who had fled Europe through the Iberian Peninsula in 1944. During the summer of 1946, a small group of rabbis was also authorized to migrate from Japan.

Beside these token gestures, the government's main announcement was made on 28 May 1946 with the promulgation of the order-in-council PC-2071: every Canadian resident, if they fitted the vague requirement of being 'in a position to receive and care for his dependents' was now authorized to sponsor the immigration of their first-degree relatives (wives and underage children). This category also included non-married children, non-married brothers and sisters, as well as nephews and nieces if they had lost both of their parents and were under the age of 16.[17] Hayes coldly welcomed these new provisions: 'we should not overestimate the value of the present action of the Canadian government. Only a relatively small number of Jews will find it possible to enter Canada under the broadened regulations, and even these will not be able to come into the country for some time.'[18] For him, this order-in-council was nothing but a bare-minimum solution and public display of concern. By restoring the relatives' sponsorship system, the government was mostly trying to postpone any broader action.

Widespread Hostility

In the first months after the war, Ottawa was focused on the repatriation and reintegration of Canadian soldiers and predominantly worried about the country's economic transition from wartime to peace. For Hayes, it was obvious that 'there [was] a public opinion, which if [he could] gauge it more or less accurately, would come to the support of any government which would insist on rehabilitation and absorption of veterans before any thought is given to an inflow of immigration.'[19] Transport was essential in this problem. Even after the order-in-council of May 1946, any significant migration project sponsored by the CJC was almost

impossible because of the lack of available space on the ships coming from Europe. At the beginning of June 1946, Hayes feared that the Canadian government intended to prioritize agriculture-related schemes once the repatriation of soldiers had been completed. The subsequent arrival of Polish soldiers as part of a farming scheme[20] and a meeting, in October, with the Immigration Branch's director, Arthur L. Jolliffe, confirmed his suspicions: 'No transportation. No immediate hopes. Soldiers and repatriation movement likely to be over by December, but no certainty boats will be used.'[21] Business elites, mainly through the Ministry of Labour, lobbied the International Refugee Organization to use their shipping space on projects in a way that directly benefited Canadian agriculture and industry. Until the spring of 1948 and the decision of the International Refugee Organization representatives to give more shipping space to the European Jewish population, the CJC's requests were all rejected with the same justification: the lack of available transport prevented any project that did not immediately contribute to the country's economy. Hayes' correspondence and the numerous memorandums he sent to the organization highlight the difficulties he experienced as an executive director: he had to maintain good relations with the government while dealing with an increasingly impatient community. It is therefore difficult to grasp what he might have thought about the lack of transport and the government's position on the matter. Abella and Troper argued that he regarded the issue as a 'smoke screen' by the government, even though in several letters he seemed to admit the seriousness of the situation.[22] He may also have used this as an excuse to address criticism from the community.

For the CJC, the lack of transport was damaging not only because it prevented their projects in the short term, but also because it heavily contributed to Canadian anti-immigrant sentiment. While a large part of the public seemed to be in favour of the liberalization of the migration policy, the idea of carefully selected immigration was still dominant. The December 1946 call to the Prime Minister from the Young Women's Christian Association, an organization that had been long involved in immigrant aid activities, clearly illustrates this sentiment. After acknowledging this evolution within Canadian public opinion, its president pressured the government to act quickly: 'if the resettlement on an international basis is postponed for some time, the most desirable persons will have been selected by other nations'.[23] For Hayes, this might have been the beginning of a larger wave of sympathy, but the CJC's director remained more than cautious about the reality and the impact of such a change:

> With the end of the war, public thinking on immigration has undergone an important development and there is a very large proportion of the Canadian people which realizes the need for the admission of a great many new settlers into Canada. However, it would be misleading not to recognize that feeling is strong for a carefully selected type of immigration and in very many cases the basis of selection – whether by country of origin, race, occupation or political predilection – is in the minds of many intended not to give high priority to Jewish refugees. A recent Gallup Poll investigation brought this into the open very harshly.[24]

The Gallup Poll Hayes referred to had been published less than a month before and was particularly alarming for the Canadian Jewish community. A sample of about 2,000 people were asked by the Canadian Institute of Public Opinion what group they regarded as the most undesirable migrants: 49 per cent of the respondents held negative views of Jewish immigration, with only the Japanese having a higher percentage.[25] At the same time, to the question 'as you know Britain is interning Jewish Refugees who have attempted to enter to Palestine without permission. Do you think Canada should allow some of these refugees to settle here or not?', 61 per cent answered no and 23 per cent yes. The Institute underlined that the strongest opposition was in Quebec (76 per cent no) and in 'small towns and farming areas'. At the end of 1946, Hayes asked the Canadian Institute of Public Opinion to send more detailed information about the poll. Respondents did not have to justify their choice of undesirable categories of migrant but the co-director of the Institute gave Hayes a list of spontaneous comments: 'there are too many Jews in Canada now, the Jews hoard and take the money out of the country, they monopolize the industries, take the better places, they are not an agricultural nationality, won't assimilate, etc.'[26] The polls demonstrated strong negative sentiment towards the Jewish population, regardless of whether they were labelled migrants or refugees.

From Public Campaigning to Subtle Administrative Action

The CJC dealt with this hostility in several ways, especially in their relations with the press. From the end of the 1930s, the organization

seemed to be constantly torn between fighting antisemitism and anti-Jewish immigrant sentiment in the long term and obtaining quick results – which meant pragmatically working with the government and the media. The end of the war increased this tension. David Rome, who became the organization's first press officer in 1942, constantly tried to prevent the dissemination of anti-Semitic prejudice in the main Québécois and Canadian newspapers. He was particularly worried to see Jewish immigration, almost non-existent at that time, depicted as a massive phenomenon by several journalists. For instance, after an article in the *Canadian Press Halifax* about the arrival of 16 Jewish persons, Rome warned the editors about the way they had depicted this: 'It would serve no purpose to create the impression that these sixteen refugees are flooding the country.'[27] For him, 'there [was] no doubt that if the Canadian public were better informed of the record of Jews as agriculturalists there would be less resistance to the admission of Jews in the country'.[28] When an article in *Le Devoir* of 1 August 1946 stated that the Jews who had arrived in Canada as farmers quickly changed jobs, Rome sent the editors some statistics proving them wrong. He concluded his letter: 'I … most confidently leave it to you to find the most opportune occasion and manner of setting your record straight.'[29] The fact that Rome communicated in English with *Le Devoir* editors demonstrates one of the biggest weaknesses of the organization. How could they have efficiently fought against antisemitism and prejudice in Québec without working in French? Rome's attitude also illustrates the CJC's main strategy on immigration-related issues: constant but subtle administrative action. After the Duplessis' 'Zionist International Fraternity' incident in 1943, the organization wanted to avoid drawing attention to Jewish immigration at any cost.[30]

Correspondence between the CJC office in Vancouver and Hayes perfectly embodies this position. During the autumn of 1946, they informed him that a women's organization in the city was to hold a vote for a resolution addressed to Prime Minister William Lyon Mackenzie King. This resolution was in favour of a broader opening of the Canadian borders through a carefully selected immigration, mostly from the British Isles. A representative of the CJC was to take part in this vote, and the Vancouver office asked Hayes which way he suggested she should vote. His response is significant. While reassuring her that the CJC's policy was to advocate for the suppression of any racial discrimination in the Immigration Act and to fight against selective immigration, Hayes recommended that she vote in favour of the text, concluding his telegram by stating: 'We feel the practical

situation would be for us to be thankful that a resolution requesting the government to permit immigration to this country is super important – stop – the fight on educating the public to equal treatment for all will have to come later.'[31] Hayes' advice illustrated his idea of lobbying: in the short term, supporting any initiative pressuring the government to liberalize its immigration policy, even when it did not directly benefit Jewish populations, was more efficient than openly fighting antisemitism and anti-Jewish immigration sentiment.

A Unique Position Within the Canadian Human Rights Community?

This pragmatic position – which has been described as 'incrementalism'[32] – was not unique in immediate post-war Canada. Organizations such the Committee for the Repeal of the Chinese Immigration Act displayed similar lobbying practices.[33] The Committee always made it very clear to the government that they were advocating for a limited and modest change that would not challenge the country's laws and immigration policy and would not result in a substantial increase of non-British immigration. The similarities between the two entities come as no surprise. Several CJC representatives or close collaborators were active in the Committee for the Repeal of the Chinese Immigration Act, contributing to the development of a 'human rights community' in post-war Canada.[34]

However, the Jewish organization seems to distance itself from other activist groups on the question of mass mobilization and media use. Since the CJC's resurgence in 1934, this question had been frequently discussed. In May 1945, during a phone call with Hayes, the Immigration Branch director advised him to be as discreet as possible on immigration matters: 'publicity at the present time on these matters may be harmful in that it will afford fuel for a political fire which better be left unlit.'[35] In the middle of the general election campaign, such advise resonated with Hayes.[36] He was not the only one doubting that, with the current political agenda, a mass mobilization campaign would be efficient. In October 1946, the Canadian National Committee on Refugees' Montreal branch took a similar position in their resolutions. They claimed that, because of the divisiveness of the topic, 'this time [was] not opportune for an all-out and aggressive campaign for immigration'.[37] The CJC maintained this position very strictly and for longer than any other organization. For instance, in October 1947,

David Rome recommended not advertising a refugee children project sponsored by the CJC outside the Jewish press, but doing so without giving the impression that the organization was withholding information from the public.[38] Even when Hayes and his collaborators seemed to be more confident about public support, they remained prudent with the media coverage of any immigration-related initiative outside of the English- and Yiddish-speaking Jewish press.[39]

For the CJC, the public's hostility was regarded as a direct threat to the community and, moreover, as a tool for the authorities to justify their decision to retain a strict immigration policy. Probably more than highlighting a real fear of fuelling this hostility, the CJC's strategy demonstrates how it wanted to maintain good work relations with the government. Hayes was perfectly aware that the Prime Minister considered the refugee and immigration issues, especially as concerning Jewish populations, particularly sensitive politically. He was always willing, therefore, to be discreet on the matter if it could benefit his agenda. For instance, in a letter written in November 1946, he stated that he 'would like to have this off-the-record talk and would, if the Prime Minister so suggests, not publicize the conference either in advance nor subsequently'.[40] This attitude illustrates a significant strategic shift. The public campaigning of the 1930s was replaced by a more constant but less visible lobbying. This shift was more radical within the Jewish community than elsewhere. The organizations involved in the issue on the Chinese immigration ban or the earlier one on the deportation of Canadians with Japanese ancestry were less reluctant to employ mass mobilization. The Cooperative Committee on Japanese Canadians was, for instance, successful in organizing public campaigning to oppose the government's deportation policy. They coordinated awareness campaigns and organized publications in mainstream media, the production and distribution of pamphlets, and letter writing.[41] For Hayes, these strategies could not prove successful on the matter of Jewish immigration.

Focusing on his pragmatic approach to lobbying should, however, not overshadow that the CJC's director had sometimes been openly critical of the government's actions, especially with the Canadian Senate's Standing Committee on Immigration and Labour.[42] During one of his presentations to the Committee, in June 1946, he showcased a detailed knowledge of the Canadian immigration policy's discrimination mechanisms:

> When we look to see how these procedures have worked out in actual practice during this period of time in regard to the

> immigration of our corrilligents [*sic*], we do not find much cause for satisfaction … we find that the actual number of Jewish immigrants have been very small … Jewish citizens of certain countries have not been put together with all other citizens, but as a group apart and it is further stated this group has received very low priority in the unusual scale that was theirselves [*sic*] arbitrary and secretly set up.[43]

This presentation was based on an extensive memorandum gathered by the organization's archivist, Louis Rosenberg. Rosenberg's memorandum illustrates what the CJC knew about the Immigration Act and how it was applied by the Immigration Branch representatives. One of the main points in the text was the gap between the law and its application. According to Rosenberg, Canadian immigration policy was not only oriented by the Immigration Act or the orders-in-council but by 'confidential administrative regulations and letters of direction issued from time to time'. The Immigration Branch policy was based on a racial hierarchization 'recognizing a "preferred" race group, a "non-preferred" race group and a more underprivileged group consisting of Jews, Italians, Greeks, etc., applying the clauses of the Immigration Act differently to each of these groups'.[44] The written traces of such a system were rare, the Chinese Immigration Act of 1923 being the only openly racist law (the Act was repealed in May 1947). As a result, Rosenberg had to support his argument with a fiscal report of the Immigration Branch from March 1941 that explicitly stated that 'Canada, in accordance with a generally accepted practice, places greater emphasis upon race than upon citizenship'.[45] This unwritten 'generally accepted practice', what French jurist Danièle Lochak called '*infra-droit*',[46] made it difficult to hold the government accountable.[47] It partly explains the CJC's choice to limit open critiques to specific spaces, such as the Senate Committee, and the important evolution of Canadian Jewish lobbying from public campaigning to subtle administrative action: the Jewish organization had to develop stronger working relations with the government and Immigration Branch representatives.

Struggling for Legitimacy

In the immediate post-war era, there was no consensus on the efficiency of such a choice within both the Jewish community and the CJC. In spring 1947, the new presentation to the Senate Committee,

this time by the director of the CJC's Toronto office, Michael Graber, was met with frustration and incomprehension. In a letter to Graber, a community member wrote: 'Had you believed that with apologetics, as it does in your document, you will soften the hearts of the government in Ottawa? … I assure you that strong mass-movement of Jews and progressive non-Jews would have brought more good.'[48] Hayes himself received several similar letters asking him to start a mass mobilization campaign. Facing a government that was hard to read, he frequently expressed doubts. In September 1946, he seemed to be ready to reorient the organization's strategy: 'If Canada takes a fair share [of refugee resettlement] we will not embark upon an educational and public relations program … If, however, we find that their role is to be a minor one and wholly ineffectual, we will go all-out to enlist public support to force the government to do so.'[49] Such hesitations were poorly received by many community members who wanted quick, concrete action.

After the war, the community was divided and, even on the refugee issue, the CJC's authority was frequently contested. Hayes was determined to impose a common position on the matter. When Canadian senator and long-term ally Arthur W. Roebuck asked him, before the presentation to the Senate Committee in May 1947, if it would be possible to see 'a little more protest from Canadian Jewry than can be voiced by any one man',[50] his reply illustrates his agenda:

> We allege and our allegations are very close to the fact that the Congress represents the Canadian Jewish Community, particularly in cases where a unified voice has to be heard. … I know that you have enough on your mind not to be bothered by internal matters of the Jewish Community in Canada and, therefore, I won't bother you further with a treatise on this but I will reserve further explanation for the next time.[51]

The immigration issue had always been a source of conflict in the community. After the end of the war, the refugee question exacerbated the internal tensions Hayes referred to. For its director, the CJC was the legitimate representative of the Canadian Jews on this matter but the centralization agenda of the organization remained a contentious issue. The fragility of its position is essential to understanding the CJC's strategy, especially with the Jewish and non-Jewish press. At the beginning of September 1946, Rome wrote to several Canadian

newspapers, such as *The Telegram* and *The Standard*, to denounce the general tone of their editorial line; this, according to him, gave the impression that 'not a "single authoritative Jewish voice has been heard to advocate the admission of Jews to this continent"'.[52] He enclosed with his letter a copy of the presentation to the Senate Committee as an example of the organization's work. Hayes even contacted the French newspaper *Droit et Liberté*, published by the Union des Juifs pour la Résistance et l'Entraide, in reaction to an article about immigration in Canada. In this article, the author strongly criticized Ottawa's anti-semitism and regretted that 'officially, [the CJC] was pretending to be satisfied'. Hayes refuted the accusation and ended his letter, once more in English, by asking the newspaper to correct their position.[53] The fact that the CJC's director took the time to write to a French Jewish newspaper illustrates how worried he was about seeing his organization criticized.

At the end of 1945, the controversy following the publication of several papers about the work of Canadian Jewish organizations on immigration issues confirmed both the pressure on the CJC and the community's impatience. The director of the CJC Vancouver office, Charles Walfish, forwarded an article from *The Vancouver Daily Press* entitled 'No "Mercy Gesture" for Destitute Jews'. This article stated that 'immigration officials said that as far as they knew Canada had received no request to permit the migration into the Dominion of destitute European Jews'.[54] For Walfish, if the article was true, many community members considered that the CJC had definitively failed in its role.[55] Until the end of January 1946, Hayes sent to Jewish leaders, newspapers and community councils a memorandum detailing the actions that the CJC had taken to stop the controversy. In this document, he reminded them that since September 1945, two formal requests had been made to the government and that Bronfman and himself met King several times.[56] The fact that a single article on the seventh page of a Vancouver newspaper generated a wave of indignation in the community and led to pressure on CJC officials to reply demonstrates how sensitive the issue was. The intensity of Hayes' attempt to stem the controversy highlights his fears of seeing the organization contested as a legitimate representative to the government on immigration matters.

His attitude also illustrates how determined he was to maintain good working relations with the Immigration Branch and its director, Arthur L. Jolliffe. The CJC's director did not seem eager to question how the controversy had started: did an Immigration Branch representative

tell a journalist that no request had been made from the Jewish community? In a memorandum, Hayes described how, during a phone call, Jolliffe had admitted to doing so and justified himself in a surprising way: 'he did not consider our previous applications as still current matter seeing that it had been made in August and refused in October'.[57] While admitting that the controversy was embarrassing for the CJC, Hayes also said he was sure that the director of the Immigration Branch did not mean to damage the organization's interests. In a letter sent to various Jewish organizations and representatives, he wrote that it was unnecessary to focus on this matter.[58] For Hayes, immigration issues depended heavily on the arbitrary decision of Jolliffe and other Immigration Branch officials. It was, therefore, essential to maintain healthy working relations with them, and to do so without weakening the authority of the CJC within the community. Such a position was precarious because of the ambiguous behaviour of several Immigration Branch representatives, especially with the media.

At the beginning of spring 1947, a new controversy illustrates this ambiguity even more clearly. An article by James Oastler published in *The Montreal Daily Star* of 1 April talked about the supposed mail received by the Immigration Branch:

> What has caused some real concern is a strain of anti-Semitism running through the mail even from those normally referred to as liberals who are in favour of increased immigration. It has been expected that there would be a certain opposition to migration of displaced Jews to Canada. It had not been expected that it would reach the proportions it has.[59]

This article was problematic for the CJC because it reinforced the idea of massive antisemitism within the Canadian public. After its publication, the organization quickly asked Jolliffe to clarify the situation. This time, the Immigration Branch's director strongly denied the information, calling it 'sheer nonsense'. He reassured Hayes that, in his department, no one was authorized to give that kind of information to the press and that, to his knowledge, no one had done so.[60] A few days later, the CJC's director had a meeting with the editors of *The Montreal Daily Star*. After almost an hour, one of the editors admitted that the information had come from a Minister of the government's Cabinet. In a memorandum about the meeting sent to his president, Hayes stated: 'it might be the way someone is trying to get out of

pormises [*sic*] and reneg [*sic*] on commitments.'[61] This controversy demonstrates the ambiguous relations between the non-Jewish media and government representatives; some of the latter did not hesitate to fuel the idea of strong anti-Jewish immigration sentiment in order to justify their position on the matter. It also highlights the efforts of the CJC to maintain good working relations with a rather hostile administration while preventing the publication of articles undermining its actions on immigration issues, which was one of the true raisons d'être of the organization.

Conclusion

After 1948, the position of the CJC quickly evolved. Its relations with the non-Jewish media improved following an important change: the organization's awareness of the importance of working in French with the French-Canadian population to efficiently fight antisemitism and anti-Jewish immigration sentiment. The creation of the *Cercle Juif de Langue Française* exemplifies this evolution of strategy.[62] The fact that Rome, who used to work only in English even with the French-speaking press, started this initiative is significant. This evolution contributed towards filling the gap between Québécois organizations and Jewish representatives. In 1949, Rome himself considered that 'in the province of Québec, the remarkable rapprochement between the Jewish community and the French-Canadian Catholic majority was continuing'.[63] As Pierre Anctil had demonstrated with the example of mainstream Québécois newspaper *Le Devoir*, anti-immigration sentiment had not disappeared but was not as strongly directed towards the Jewish population as before.[64] The shift within the Canadian public that Hayes cautiously noticed in the first months following the end of the war was confirmed. The relations also quickly evolved with the government. In 1948, the nomination of Hugh Keenleyside as the Deputy Minister of Mines and Resources (which was in charge of the Immigration Branch) greatly contributed to strengthening the links between the CJC and the Immigration Branch. Keenleyside was a civil servant well known for his progressive views on immigration and human rights. He was, for instance, a strong advocate of the Japanese Canadians living in British Columbia at a time when this position was unpopular.[65]

For sociologists David Cook-Martin and David Fitzgerald, 'the end of ethnic selection was shaped by Canada's position in multilateral

institutions rather than domestic pressure or any incompatibility between ethnic selection and liberal democracy'.[66] This article complexifies such an assumption and invites a re-evaluation of civil society's role in this change. Hayes' pragmatism in facing anti-Jewish immigration sentiment, especially his choice of avoiding the use of large-scale mobilization, has been regarded as weakness, passivity or even indifference. His position on public campaigning contrasts with that of other activist groups. It was partly a result of the organization's powerlessness, but this strategic shift had a lasting effect not only on Jewish lobbying but also on Canadian pro-refugee activism. It played an essential and often overshadowed role: it hastened the normalization of the interactions with the Canadian authorities and enabled the CJC to consolidate its position as an insider organization. The CJC also contributed, along with other activist groups, to increasing the place of human rights rhetoric, to focusing on the positive impact of immigration, and to putting both ethnic selection and refugee issues on the Canadian agenda as major public policy concerns.

Notes

1 Jane Taber, 'Trudeau Slams Tories for Terror Rhetoric', *The Globe and Mail*, 9 March 2015.

2 Irving Abella and Harold Troper, *None Is Too Many: Canada and the Jews of Europe, 1933–1948* (Toronto: Lester, 1991 [1982]); Gerald E. Dirks, *Canada's Refugee Policy: Indifference or Opportunism?* (Montreal, Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1978); for a discussion on Abella and Troper's work, see the contributions in Antoine Burgard and Rebecca Margolis (eds.), 'None Is Too Many and Beyond: New Research on Canada and the Jews During the 1930–1940s', *Canadian Jewish Studies/Études Juives Canadiennes* 24 (2016); David Fitzgerald and David Cook-Martin, *Culling the Masses: The Democratic Origins of Racist Immigration Policy in the Americas* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2014), 141–85.

3 Ninette Kelley and Michael Trebilcock, *The Making of the Mosaic: A History of Canadian Immigration Policy* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 2010 [1998]), 345; for a thorough analysis of antisemitism in Canada, see Ira Robinson, *A History of Antisemitism in Canada* (Waterloo: Wilfried Laurier University Press, 2015).

4 Martin Pâquet, 'Duplessis, le Canada et le Monde. Un Repli Calculé. Maurice Duplessis et l'Immigration', in *Duplessis, Son Milieu, Son Époque*, ed. Lucia Ferretti and Xavier Gélinas (Montréal: Septentrion, 2010), 246; see also the first chapters of Franca Iacovetta, *Gatekeepers* (Toronto: Between the Lines, 2006).

5 For a wider overview of the CJC's human rights activism and fight against discrimination of Canadian Jews, see, for instance, James Walker, 'The "Jewish Phase" in the Movement for Racial Equality in Canada', *Canadian Ethnic Studies* 34.1 (2002): 1–29; Ruth Frager and Carmela Patrias, 'Transnational Links and Citizens' Rights: Canadian Jewish Human Rights Activists and Their American Allies in the 1940s and the 1950s', in *Taking Liberties: A History of Human Rights in Canada*, ed. David Goutor and Stephen Heathorn (Don Mills: Oxford University Press, 2013): 139–65. See also, for a later period, Andrew Thompson, *In Defence*

of Principles: NGOs and Human Rights in Canada (Vancouver: University of British Columbia, 2010): 54–87. The materials used for this research are kept at the Montreal's Alex Dworkin Canadian Jewish Archives. Some have been digitised and are in open-access through the Canadian Jewish Heritage Network (www.cjhn.ca).

6 Stephanie Bangarth, "'We Are Not Asking You to Open Wide the Gates for Chinese Immigration": The Committee for the Repeal of the Chinese Immigration Act and Early Human Rights Activism in Canada', *The Canadian Historical Review* 84.3 (2003): 396.

7 The 'Golden Age' of Canadian diplomacy refers to the period when Lester B. Pearson was Secretary of State for External Affairs (between 1948 and 1957); see Hector Mackenzie, 'Golden Decade(s)? Reappraising Canada's International Relations in the 1940s and 1950s', *British Journal of Canadian Studies* 23.2 (2010): 179–206.

8 Bangarth, "'We Are Not Asking You to Open Wide the Gates for Chinese Immigration"', 396.

9 Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi, "'Serviteurs des Rois et Non Serviteurs des Serviteurs". Sur Quelques Aspects de l'Histoire Politique des Juifs', *Raisons Politiques* 7.3 (2002): 19–52 (this text was first written in German then translated into English but, to my knowledge, the English translation has not yet been published); for an overview of the concept, see Lois Dubin, 'Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi, the Royal Alliance, and Jewish Political Theory', *Jewish History* 28.1 (2014): 51–81.

10 Gerald Tulchinsky, *Canada's Jews: A People's Journey* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008), 33.

11 On Adrien Arcand and his fascist movement in Québec, see, for instance, Hughes Théorêt, *Les Chemises Bleues: Adrien Arcand, Journaliste Antisémite Canadien-Français* (Montréal: Septentrion, 2012).

12 In Yiddish, a *shtadlan* (pl. *shtadlonim*) is a representative of the Jewish community to any kind of authority.

13 The *landsmanshaftn* (*homeland* or *fraternal society*, from the Yiddish *landsman*, which means someone that comes from the same city, region or country) were migrant organizations with a membership based on the European city or town of origin. They provided basic services (health, burial, etc.), jobs placement and social networks. See, for instance, Daniel Soyer, *Jewish Immigrant Associations and American Identity in New York, 1880–1939* (Detroit: Wayne State University, 2001 [1997]), 1.

14 Saul Hayes (1906–80) was the CJC's and UJRA's executive director from 1940 to 1959. According to Canadian historian Franklin Bialystok, 'Saul Hayes was the leading voice of the Canadian Jewish community at home and abroad.' Franklin Bialystok, *Delayed Impact: The Holocaust and the Canadian Jewish Community* (Montréal, Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2000), 70.

15 Patrick Reed, 'A Foothold in the Whirlpool: Canada's Iberian Refugee Movement' (MA thesis, Concordia University, Montréal, 1996), i.

16 Memorandum of S. Hayes to the U.J.R. Executive and Dominion Council, 20 July 1945, CJA CJC-CENT CA [298] Immigration – children (1945–6).

17 Letter from H. McNeill to A. L. Easterman, 30 November 1946, CJA CJC-CENT CA [300] Immigration (1946). See also Valerie Knowles, *Strangers at Our Gates: Canadian Immigration and Immigration Policy, 1540–2006* (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 2007 [1997]), 161.

18 Memorandum of S. Hayes, 7 June 1946, CJA CJC-CENT CA [300] Post-war immigration (1945–6).

19 Memorandum of S. Hayes to the U.J.R. Executive and Dominion Council, 20 July 1945, CJA CJC-CENT CA [298] Immigration – children (1945–6).

20 These soldiers were part of the General Anders army. After the war, they refused to return to Poland; 4,000 of them went to Canada and were required to keep their farming jobs for a period of two years.

21 Memorandum of S. Hayes, 9 October 1946, CJA CJC-CENT CA [300] Immigration (1946).

22 Abella and Troper, *None Is Too Many*, 210; see, for instance, the letter from S. Hayes to Irwin Rosen, 27 May 1947, CJA CJC-CENT CA [300] Immigration (1947).

23 Letter from W. C. Rean to W. King, 10 December 1946, CJA CJC-CENT CA [300] Immigration (1946).

24 Speech of S. Hayes, 25 November 1946, CJA CJC-CENT CA [300] Immigration

(1946); this speech was probably given to the United Nations Economic and Social Council in New York.

25 'Selected Immigrants Favored: Public Opposed to Japanese', *The Montreal Daily Star*, 30 October 1946; earlier in 1946, another poll had already highlighted strong anti-immigration sentiment, especially from Eastern Europe and Russia, and the belief in 'carefully selected' immigration; 'Opinions on Immigration', *The Montreal Daily Star*, 24 April 1946.

26 'Canadian Institute of Public Opinion', CJA CJC-CENT CA Inter-Office Information, 1, 64, 1.

27 Letter from D. Rome to M. Brayler, 9 April 1947, CJA CJC-CENT CA [300] Immigration (1947).

28 Letter from D. Rome to J. A. Edmison, 11 September 1946, CJA CJC-CENT CA [300] Immigration (1946).

29 Letter from D. Rome to E. Benoist, 6 August 1946, CJA CJC-CENT CA [300] Immigration (1946).

30 During a campaign speech at Sainte-Claire-de-Dorchester in November 1943, Maurice Duplessis, then leader of the opposition, told the audience that a mysterious 'Zionist International Fraternity' was secretly funding his liberal opponent Adélard Godbout's campaign, in exchange for a promise to bring 100,000 Jewish refugees to Québec.

31 Telegram from S. Hayes to CJC Vancouver, 4 October 1946, CJA CJC-CENT CA [300] Immigration (1946).

32 R. Brian Howe, 'Incrementalism and Human Rights Reform', *Journal of Canadian Studies* 28 (1993): 29–44; cited in Bangarth, '"We Are Not Asking You to Open Wide the Gates for Chinese Immigration"', 398.

33 The Chinese Immigration Act was enacted in 1923 by the King government (it is now known as the 'Chinese Exclusion Act'). It dramatically reduced eligible categories of Chinese immigrants. From 1923 to 1946, almost none were able to come to Canada. Beside Bangarth, see Patricia Roy, *The Triumph of Citizenship: The Japanese and Chinese in Canada, 1941–1967* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2007).

34 Bangarth, '"We Are Not Asking You to Open Wide the Gates for Chinese Immigration"', 421.

35 Memorandum of S. Hayes, 21 May 1945, CJA CJC-CENT CA [300] Post-war immigration (1945–6).

36 On the place of immigration and 'foreigners' issues during the Québécois general elections of 1944 and 1948, see Alexandre Turgeon, '"Duplessis Ne Donne Pas aux Étrangers." Le Regard du Caricaturiste Robert La Palme sur les Politiques du Gouvernement Duplessis en Matière d'Immigration, 1944–1959', *Conserveries Mémorielles* 13 (2013): 32.

37 Resolutions of the Canadian National Committee on Refugees' Montreal branch, 15 October 1946, CJA CJC-CENT CA [300] Immigration (1946); the Canadian National Committee on Refugees was another organization that worked only in English, even in Montreal.

38 Letter from D. Rome to S. Grand, 16 October 1947, CJA CJC-CENT CA box 25 [224K] Children's project (1947).

39 In a letter to King sent at the end of January 1947, Hayes wrote: 'it would be no more than following a considerable public opinion on the question, to grant permission for a block number of displaced persons to come to Canada'. Letter from S. Hayes to W. King, 27 January 1947, CJA CJC-CENT CA [300] Immigration (1947).

40 Letter from S. Hayes to Gordon H. Robertson, 15 November 1946, CJA CJC-CENT CA [300] Immigration (1946).

41 Stephanie Bangarth, *Voices Raised in Protest: Defending North American Citizens of Japanese Ancestry, 1942–49* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2008).

42 On the work of this comity, see N. Kelley and M. Trebilcock, *The Making of the Mosaic*, 320; on the relations between the CJC and this comity, see I. Abella and H. Troper, *None Is Too Many*, 229–30.

43 Presentation of S. Hayes to the Senate Standing Committee Immigration et le Travail, 3 June 1946, CJA CJC-CENT CA BOX 29 [300] Post-war immigration (1945–6).

44 Memorandum 'Immigration to Canada' of L. Rosenberg to S. Hayes, 17 May 1946, CJA CJC-CENT CA BOX 29 [300] Post-war immigration (1945–6).

45 Author unknown, 'Annual Report of the Department of Immigration for the fiscal

year ending March 31, 1941', 194.

46 Danièle Lochak, *Étrangers, de Quel Droit?* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1985) 214; on this topic in France, and especially for the notion of '*magistrature bureaucratique*', see Alexis Spire, *Étrangers à la Carte. L'Administration de l'Immigration en France (1945–1975)* (Paris: Grasset, 2005).

47 The conversation between a Canadian senator and the Minister Glen perfectly highlights why this opacity mattered; Kelley and Treblicock, *The Making of the Mosaic*, 569, n. 47.

48 Letter from I. Gershman to Michael Garber, 8 May 1947, CJA CJC-CENT CA [300] Immigration (1947).

49 Letter from S. Hayes to Alec L. Easterman, 10 September 1946, CJA CJC-CENT CA [300] Immigration (1946).

50 Letter from A. W. Roebuck to Saul Hayes, 19 March 1947, CJA CJC-CENT CA [300] Immigration (1947).

51 Letter from S. Hayes to A. W. Roebuck, 1 April 1947, CJA CJC-CENT CA [300] Immigration (1947).

52 Letter from D. Rome to various Canadian newspapers, 9 September 1946, CJA CJC-CENT CA [300] Immigration (1946).

53 Letter from S. Hayes to the editors of *Droit et Liberté*, 4 February 1947, CJA CJC-CENT CA [300] Immigration (1947).

54 'No "Mercy Gesture" for Destitute Jews', *Vancouver Daily Tribune*, 11 December 1945.

55 Letter from C. Walfish to S. Hayes, 12 December 1945, CJA CJC-CENT CA [300] Post-war immigration (1945–6).

56 Letter from S. Hayes to J. Ages, 23 January 1946, CJA CJC-CENT CA [300] Post-war immigration (1945–6); memorandum from S. Hayes to S. Granatstein, 14 December 1945, CJA CJC-CENT CA [300] Post-war immigration (1945–6).

57 Memorandum from S. Hayes (draft), 23 January 1946, CJA CJC-CENT CA [300] Post-war immigration (1945–6).

58 Letter from S. Hayes to J. Ages, 23 January 1946, CJA CJC-CENT CA [300] Post-war immigration (1945–6).

59 Telegram from J. Fine to J. A. Glen, 3 April 1947, CJA CJC-CENT CA [300] Immigration (1947).

60 Handwritten notes of S. Hayes, 2 April 1947, CJA CJC-CENT CA [300] Immigration (1947).

61 Memorandum from S. Hayes to S. Bronfman, 11 April 1947, CJA CJC-CENT CA [300] Immigration (1947).

62 It is difficult to date precisely the creation of the Cercle Juif because of the informality of its beginnings. Its first publication, the *Bulletin du Cercle Juif de Langue Française*, came out in November 1954 (I thank Hélène Vallée, Janice Rosen and Pierre Anctil for the information).

63 David Rome, 'Canada', *American Jewish Year Book 1948–1949* 50 (1949): 292–3.

64 Pierre Anctil, *'Le Devoir', les Juifs et l'Immigration: de Bourassa à Laurendeau* (Québec: Institut québécois de recherche sur la culture, 1988); Pierre Anctil, *À Chacun ses Juifs. 60 Éditoriaux pour Comprendre la Position du Devoir à l'Égard des Juifs (1910–1947)* (Montréal: Septentrion, 2014).

65 John Hilliker, *Le Ministère des Affaires Extérieures du Canada. Tome 1 – Les Années de Formation, 1909–1946* (Québec: Presses de l'Université Laval, Institut d'administration publique de Canada, 1990), 278.

66 Fitzgerald and Cook-Martin, *Culling the Masses*, 184; on this topic, see also Susan Armstrong-Reid and David Murray, *Armies of Peace: Canada and the UNRRA Years* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008).

Bibliography

Abella, Irving, and Harold Troper. *None Is Too Many: Canada and the Jews of Europe, 1933–1948*. Toronto: Lester, 1991 [1982].

Anctil, Pierre. *'Le Devoir', les Juifs et l'Immigration: de Bourassa à Laurendeau*. Québec: Institut québécois de recherche sur la culture, 1988.

Anctil, Pierre. *À Chacun Ses Juifs. 60 Éditoriaux Pour Comprendre la Position du Devoir à l'Égard des Juifs (1910–1947)*. Montréal: Septentrion, 2014.

Bangarth, Stephanie. '"We Are Not Asking You to Open Wide the Gates For Chinese Immigration": The Committee for the Repeal of the Chinese Immigration Act and Early Human Rights Activism in Canada'. *The Canadian Historical Review* 84.3 (2003): 395–422.
Bangarth, Stephanie. *Voices Raised in Protest. Defending North American Citizens of Japanese Ancestry, 1942–49*. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2008.
Bialystok, Franklin. *Delayed Impact. The Holocaust and the Canadian Jewish Community*. Montréal, Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2000.
Burgard Antoine and Margolis, Rebecca (eds.). 'None Is Too Many and Beyond: New Research on Canada and the Jews During the 1930–1940s'. *Canadian Jewish Studies/Études Juives Canadiennes* 24 (2016).
Dirks, Gerald. *Canada's Refugee Policy: Indifference or Opportunism?* Montreal, Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1978.
Ferretti, Lucia and Xavier Gélinas, ed. *Duplessis, Son Milieu, Son Époque*. Montréal: Septentrion, 2010.
Fitzgerald, David, and David Cook-Martin. *Culling the Masses. The Democratic Origins of Racist Immigration Policy in the Americas*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2014.
Frager, Ruth and Carmela Patrias. 'Transnational Links and Citizens' Rights: Canadian Jewish Human Rights Activists and Their American Allies in the 1940s and the 1950s'. In *Taking Liberties. A History of Human Rights in Canada*, ed. David Goutor and Stephen Heathorn, 139–65. Don Mills: Oxford University Press, 2013.
Hilliker, John. *Le Ministère des Affaires Extérieures du Canada. Tome 1 – Les Années de Formation, 1909–1946*. Québec: Presses de l'Université Laval, Institut d'administration publique de Canada, 1990.
Howe, R. Brian. 'Incrementalism and Human Rights Reform', *Journal of Canadian Studies* 28.3 (1993): 29–44.
Kelley, Ninette and Trebilcock, Michael. *The Making of the Mosaic. A History of Canadian Immigration Policy*. Toronto: University of Toronto, 2010 (1998).
Knowles, Valerie. *Strangers at our Gates: Canadian Immigration and Immigration Policy, 1540 – 2006*. Toronto: Dundurn Press, 2007 (1997).
Lochak, Danièle. *Étrangers, de Quel Droit?* Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1985.
Reed, Patrick. 'A Foothold in the Whirlpool: Canada's Iberian Refugee Movement'. MA thesis, Concordia University, Montréal, 1996.
Robinson, Ira. *A History of Antisemitism in Canada*. Waterloo: Wilfried Laurier University Press, 2015.
Roy, Patricia. *The Triumph of Citizenship: The Japanese and Chinese in Canada, 1941–1967*. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2007.
Soyer, Daniel. *Jewish Immigrant Associations and American Identity in New York, 1880–1939*. Detroit: Wayne State University, 2001.
Spire, Alexis. *Étrangers à la Carte. L'Administration de l'Immigration en France (1945–1975)*. Paris: Grasset, 2005.
Théorêt, Hughes. *Les Chemises Bleues: Adrien Arcand, Journaliste Antisémite Canadien-Français*. Montréal: Septentrion, 2012.
Thompson, Andrew. *In Defence of Principles: NGOs and Human Rights in Canada*. Vancouver: University of British Columbia, 2010.
Tulchinsky, Gerald. *Canada's Jews: A People's Journey*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008.
Walker, James. 'The 'Jewish Phase' in the Movement for Racial Equality in Canada'. *Canadian Ethnic Studies* 34.1 (2002): 1–29.

Note on Contributor

Antoine Burgard is a visiting postdoctoral researcher at the Humanitarian and Conflict Response Institute (HCRI), University of Manchester, and a

Fellow of the Fondation pour la Mémoire de la Shoah in Paris. In January 2020, he will take on a permanent lectureship in contemporary history of humanitarianism at HCRI. His dissertation was a transnational analysis of a resettlement scheme that allowed a group of young Holocaust survivors to migrate to Canada after the war. It has received the Fondation Auschwitz (2018), French Association for Canadian Studies (2018) and International Council for Canadian Studies (2019) best doctoral thesis awards. He is currently developing a new research project on age determination and migration control through an early career fellowship with the John Rylands Research Institute in Manchester.

Acknowledgements

This research would not have been possible without the Fondation pour la Mémoire de la Shoah. It has also benefited from a grant of the Fondation Renée et Léon Baumann. I would like to thank the Canada Inclusive/Exclusive conference conveners and the participants. I would also like to thank Bob Moore for his insightful comments, as well as Yolande Cohen, Pierre Anctil, Fabien Théofilakis and Lucy Gripper for their feedback on earlier versions of this text.

Conflict of Interests

The author declares that there are no conflicts of interests with this work.