

THE WORK OF
COMMUNITY CITIZENSHIP COUNCILS

A Study of the Development and
Co-ordination of Services for
Immigrants based on Vancouver,
Victoria, and Nanaimo Experience.

by

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to examine the role of the local Citizenship Council in assisting new immigrants upon their arrival in the community, and during their subsequent early residence in their new environment. The study considers the problems of organization and administration faced by the Councils; and the individual and group adjustments faced by the immigrant. The broad implications of community organization, and of education for citizenship, are also examined.

Time and geographical factors limited the study to three Councils, located in Vancouver, Victoria, and Nanaimo. The essential material of the study has been derived from interviews with various executive members of the Councils concerned, and from perusal of their records and minutes of meetings. This resulted in some limitations, especially when the minutes or records were inadequate or incomplete.

The study shows (1) the value of the guidance, leadership and stability provided by the Community Chest and Councils, when new organizations are formed within the community; (2) that a Council programme should evolve out of discussion and participation with local voluntary groups interested in the adjustment of the immigrant, and with the government agencies concerned; (3) membership should include representatives of ethnic groups, who should participate in planning the programme; and (4) that care is required in formulating any policy regarding citizenship education within the community; initially, their programme should be primarily concerned with meeting the immediate needs of the immigrant.

It is hoped that this study will be of value to Citizenship Councils now functioning, by emphasizing the need for application of sound community organization principles; and will assist Councils now in the formative stage, by pointing out some of the difficulties encountered in creating a voluntary organization which attempts to work with diverse nationality groups.

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CHAPTER I

THE IMMIGRANT AND THE COMMUNITY

The rate of immigration to Canada has to a large extent, been controlled by economic, political, and social considerations, and has been influenced by both domestic and world conditions. Canadian immigration has never ceased, but it has fluctuated from the vast and comparatively unregulated flow of immigrants during the relatively prosperous years, 1904 - 1914, to the small and restricted trickle admitted during the depression years of 1932 - 1935. The chaotic conditions existing in many European countries at the end of the last war (circa 1945) created a need for emigration from them. At the same time Canada needed immigrants to supplement the labour force in an expanding post-war economy. These circumstances resulted in accelerated immigration to Canada and it is this post-war activity which is of prime interest to this study.

According to a recent official spokesman, since World War Two ended, about 685,000 immigrants have arrived in Canada, 370,000 of whom are workers and 315,000 dependents.¹ The source of these immigrants is of special interest because there is a tendency on the part of many Canadians

1 Reid, E.B., Chief of Immigration Services, Department of Citizenship and Immigration, speaking on radio programme "Points of View", Thursday, July 17, 1952. (Copies obtainable from Citizenship Branch, Department of Citizenship and Immigration, Ottawa.)

to think of all immigrants as displaced persons or political refugees. The publicity which attended the efforts of the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration and the International Refugee Organization is partly responsible for this stereotyping of newcomers. For several years displaced persons were admitted to Canada from European centres under the auspices of U.N.R.R.A., particularly from refugee camps in Western Germany and Western Europe. When U.N.R.R.A. was discontinued the I.R.O. took over this branch of its work. Displaced persons came from such war-torn countries as Austria, Poland and Czechoslovakia, to which they were unrepatriable for economic and political reasons. Their entry into Canada was a mixture of necessity and choice. Although they still arrive, the number of their admissions has decreased greatly, and in 1951 only 22 per cent of European immigrants were in the displaced person category.

Many recent immigrants do not have a background of uprooted family life and political persecution. They are people who come to Canada because they believe there are more opportunities here for them, and they desire to raise their economic status. The recent trend appears to favour a greater percentage from the United Kingdom and Northern Europe. Taking the first five months of 1952 as an example, 23 per cent of all immigrants were from the United Kingdom, as compared with 17½ per cent in 1951; 38 per cent were from

Northern Europe, as compared with 34 per cent in 1951; and 39 per cent were from other countries, as compared with ²48½ per cent in 1951.

In part, this trend is the result of the government-sponsored assisted-passage scheme. This was instituted on February 1, 1951, and under it advances are made on a recoverable basis to immigrants whose services are required in Canada, but who do not have sufficient funds to pay their own passage. The immigrants are required to contribute not less than thirty dollars, or an equivalent amount in the currency of their country. In return for this assistance the immigrants must agree to work for a Canadian employer, and to remain in the same type of employment for a period of one year, or until such time as they have repaid the advance made to them by the government.

The selection procedure and priority given certain immigrants varies. Immigrants from the United Kingdom, the Commonwealth countries, Ireland, France, and the United States may come freely to Canada, providing they are of good health, good character, and have funds to maintain themselves until employed. From Belgium, Switzerland and the Scandinavian countries, immigrants who arrive are usually qualified in such trades as may be needed from time to time.

² Canada, House of Commons Debate. Speech, Hon. Walter Harris, Q.C., Minister of the Department of Citizenship and Immigration, delivered on July 4, 1952, Queen's Printer, Ottawa.

From Holland agriculturists, farm workers, and certain artisans are selected under an agreement with the Dutch Government. Farm workers, domestics, nurses, and nurses' aides, are being selected from Germany, Austria, Greece and Finland.

From all these countries, close relatives of nationals already in Canada, including grandparents, orphan nephews and nieces, fiance(e)s, and certain "meritorious cases", are being accepted. In view of the large number of applications on behalf of close relatives made by Italians already established in Canada, and in order to assure the reunion of the families, it has been necessary for the time being to limit the "processing" of Italian applications to husbands, wives, minor unmarried children, parents and fiance(e)s. From most other countries, only close relatives and "cases of exceptional merit" are approved.

Two government departments have been actively engaged in the initial selection of immigrants overseas. This is a new development in Canadian immigration procedure and involves the Department of Citizenship and Immigration and the Department of Labour. In addition to the initial selection of immigrants these Departments are also involved in the subsequent responsibility for those selected. For example, the Department of Labour selects immigrants who come to Canada under contract to fill specific labour vacancies. The Department of Citizenship and Immigration selects immigrants who

are coming to relatives, or who have sufficient funds to establish themselves in Canada.

Citizenship

A problem which accompanies any immigration scheme is that of the alien's status. Legally a newcomer remains an immigrant until he has spent a specified number of years in Canada, and has taken the necessary action to obtain his citizenship certificate. Socially, a newcomer may remain an "immigrant" for the rest of his life, because as Henry Pratt Fairchild points out: "assimilation is a reaction of the individual to the social environment. While it is produced by the influences of the group, it takes place within the individual."³

The attitude of the immigrant and his adjustment within the community will depend to a large extent upon the attitudes and adjustments of those with whom he comes into contact. In the United States, for instance, the newcomer is quickly involved in the process of "Americanization". The procedure is deliberate and formal. A good example is the flag-raising ceremony performed by American children in their school, and of course, participated in by the immigrant of school age. This "ritual of flag worship and oath-taking in an American school from which religion in the old sense is barred,

³ Fairchild, Henry Pratt, "Immigration and National Unity," "The Immigration Problem", Peters, Clarence A., ed., H.W. Wilson Company, New York, 1948, p.27 (italics added by present writer).

solemnly rising each morning and reciting together the
⁴
'American Creed', are performing a religious exercise as
truly as if they began the day with 'I believe in God the
Father Almighty' or asserted that 'There is no God but God'.⁵"
This approach must result in acceptance or rejection of
"Americanization" - it does not allow for lethargy. The
child's parents feel a similar pressure because of national
legislation, i.e., the American Nationality Act of 1940,
which consolidated a number of duties which had been explicit
in earlier legislation. The "regulations specify three fields
of knowledge in which the petitioner for citizenship may be
questioned; namely: (1) principal historical facts of the
country's development as a republic, (2) the organization
and principal functions of American Government at three
levels, federal, state, and local, and (3) the relation
of the individual in the United States to his government,

4 "I believe in the United States of America as a Government
of the people, by the people, for the people, whose just
powers are derived from the consent of the governed; a
democracy in a republic; a sovereign Nation of many sovereign
States; a perfect union, one and inseparable; established
upon those principles of freedom, equality, justice, and
humanity for which American patriots sacrificed their lives
and fortunes. I therefore believe it is my duty to my
country to love it; to support its Constitution; to obey
its laws; to respect its flag; and to defend it against all
enemies."

5 Brogan, Dennis, W., "The American Character Today",
Naftalin, Arthur, et al, ed., An Introduction to Social
Science, J.B. Lippincott Company, New York, 1953, p.324.

and the rights and privileges growing from that relationship⁶ and the duties and responsibilities which result from it".

In Canada, the approach to the problem of citizenship education is much less direct and perhaps more democratic. The responsibility is left with the immigrant and in part this is due to the fact that before 1947 Canada had no clear-cut definition of a Canadian citizen. Before this date there were three statutes bearing on the matter of citizenship. The Naturalization Act of 1914 defined British subjects and covered the naturalization of aliens in Canada. The Canadian Nationals Act of 1921 defined Canadian "nationals"; and the Canadian Immigration Act of 1910 defined Canadian citizenship. All three were in conflict with each other; the legal status of the foreign-born was intricate and involved, varying⁷ according to the origin of the immigrant. As H.F. Angus pointed out, policy underlying the various Acts and Orders-in-Council was vague, and in some ways discriminatory.

When on January 1, 1947, the Canadian Citizenship Act came into force, these anomalies were removed, and Canada passed another milestone on the road to nationhood. For the first time in Canada's history, an immigrant coming to this

6 Harrington, Burritt C., "The Government and Adult Citizenship Education", Peters, Clarence A., ed. "The Immigration Problem", The H.W. Wilson Company, New York, 1948, pp.197-8.

7 Angus, H.F. "Canadian Immigration - The Law and its Administration", American Journal of International Law, Washington, D.C., Vol.28, January, 1938.

country could, after a specified period of time, be legally designated as a Canadian. According to the official title of the statute, it covers "Citizenship, Nationality, Naturalization and Status of Aliens". Its passage not only clarified the procedure by which an immigrant could attain citizenship, but brought with it a responsibility on the part of the government to actively assist newcomers to attain full citizenship. Thus on January 18, 1950, the Immigration Branch was joined by the new Citizenship Branch and raised to the status of a government department.⁸ At this time the Prime Minister, Mr. Louis St. Laurent, explained that "uniformity of policy and treatment was more likely to be achieved if one Minister had the responsibility for both immigration activities and the activities pursued to bring immigrants as reasonably as could be expected to full⁹ citizenship".

In the first annual report of the new Department, Mr. Frank Foulds, Director of the Canadian Citizenship Branch,

8 On October 12, 1917, the Immigration Branch was taken out of the Department of the Interior, and the Department of Immigration and Colonization was created. However, when in 1936 the Department of Mines and Resources was established, this Department combined the functions of the former Department of Mines, Department of the Interior, Hydrographic Survey of the Department of the Marine, Department of Indian Affairs, and the Department of Immigration and Colonization.

9 Department of Citizenship and Immigration, Report for the fiscal year ended March 31, 1950, Queen's Printer, Ottawa, 1951, p.7.

states: "The functions of the Canadian Citizenship Branch are to promote unity among the various ethnic elements in Canada; to awaken in all Canadians a consciousness of the true worth of their citizenship; and to assist newcomers to this country to adjust themselves more rapidly to the Canadian way of life."¹⁰ A Settlement Division was created within the Immigration Branch and its activities include: "the survey of areas of potential establishment in Canada and of potential sources of immigration abroad; the maintenance of an up-to-date flow of factual information in respect of occupational categories to visa officers abroad in order to guide them in selecting immigrants; the dissemination of information to prospective immigrants in Europe by means of lectures; liaison with federal, provincial, and municipal authorities and with voluntary private organizations interested in immigration; and assistance to immigrants who wish to settle on their own farms or in small businesses."¹¹

With the new flow of immigration in the post-war years, there has been growing concern about the future adjustment of immigrants. What kind of citizens will our newcomers make? Will they find jobs, settle down and make contributions to Canadian life? These questions and many more are asked not only by government, but also by private citizens. In many

¹⁰ Department of Citizenship and Immigration, Report for the fiscal year ended March 31, 1951, Queen's Printer, Ottawa, 1951, p.7.

¹¹. Ibid, p.23.

Canadian communities this concern has led to the formation of citizenship councils. These councils are composed of interested citizens who voluntarily form a group within their own community, the general purpose of which is to assist newcomers and to create interest in Canadian citizenship among all members of the community.

If these councils are to be successful in their efforts to help newcomers, it is essential that they understand something about the immigrant as an individual. Immigrants must become people - they must not be looked upon as stereotypes. In their struggle to find acceptance, and to accept the mores of their new community, immigrants need a great deal of support and encouragement from those with whom they come in contact. Citizenship councils should sponsor a positive approach to the immigrant as an individual, thereby setting an example not only to other volunteer groups but also to government.

The success or failure of councils to interest all members of the community in Canadian citizenship will depend upon how democratic they are in their approach to this project. Democracy implies compromise on the part of those who plan, and responsibility on the part of those who are the recipients of such planning. It is sometimes easier to be bureaucratic and dictate ways and means, especially when interest seems to be lacking, but this method will produce

only short-term results. The democratic approach is often made even more difficult because many newcomers are reluctant to accept responsibility, having been "conditioned" by dictatorial methods. The role of the council in the community should be to help all members of their community realize that they live in a democracy and to make them aware of the responsibility that this implies. This can be best achieved by example.

Social Work Implications

Social work as a profession is concerned both with the needs of people and with the democratic approach in meeting these needs. It has been defined as "an enabling process of helping the individual, the group, and the community, to cope with stresses that prevent their best possible adjustment to society. Its philosophy is rooted in democratic principles and in the social worker's belief and conviction in man's dignity, worth, and determining rights."¹² This would imply, therefore, that a study of the problems facing the immigrant as an individual and as a member of a minority group will enable Canadians to offer newcomers not merely casual friendly help, but planned and organized assistance to enable him to mobilize his internal strengths and external resources, so that he may reach his optimum adjustment.

12 Abrahamson, Arthur C., et. al., "Defining Social Casework" (a report of a student group project). Unpublished manuscript, University of British Columbia, School of Social Work, Vancouver, B.C.

The Immigrant as an Individual

The immediate difficulties of newcomers should be the first concern of those planning to assist them. These may be the finding of a job, housing, language barriers, or the anxiety which accompanies any new situation. The immigrant may become hostile and aggressive, demand more attention than usual, or he may withdraw into a protective shell whereby he is unable to cope with the simplest situation. It is important to realize that each immigrant must learn to understand and work within a new culture. This applies to the British immigrant just as it does to the Italian newcomer or the Polish "D.P." The two last-mentioned may have a language barrier, but all have unconscious and emotionally-charged codes and customs, which are meaningful to them, and which in varying degrees offer them security. Some have no strong desire to forget their own ways of doing things, their own folkways and customs. For a few, the insecurity they feel reinforces their desire to cling to their old beliefs and attitudes, even when in so doing they jeopardize their chances for success in this country. A case in question concerns a young Austrian immigrant brought to this country by his brother. He was single and an electrician by trade, but because of language and trade-qualification difficulties he was unable to find work in this field immediately,

although he had been advised that these obstacles could be overcome in time. He obtained work at various manual occupations, but would never stay for any reasonable period of time. He was always re-appearing at the Immigration Service in quest of employment as an electrician. Between jobs his brother supported him.

In the course of two interviews, this youth stated: "In my country if you do unskilled labour you stay at it forever. If your father digs ditches then you dig ditches too. I am not a labourer, I am an electrician." He had been in Canada some months by this time and his knowledge of English had improved; also he had become acquainted with Canadian customs, but in his stress and disappointment at not being able to utilize his training he had irrationally escaped into an old cultural concept. He was unable to accept the reality that in Canada people can move up and down across the lines of class distinction. After some interpretation, he applied for an unskilled job with the Canadian Pacific Railway in the hope of eventually obtaining electrical work with them. Some two months later he was still employed in an unskilled capacity, but he was confident that eventually he would be able to obtain employment as an electrician.

It is quite possible that the young immigrant mentioned above might have been classified as "lazy" or "irresponsible" by someone who assessed his behaviour on a superficial level.

Before he could be helped to consciously express his "cultural traits" he had to be accepted as a person, as distinct from a "foreign immigrant". When dealing with immigrants it is important to remember that: "respect for others includes respect for their differences....each one is different, not only as to thumbprints but as to his unique vision of himself and his world. Each has on him the stamp of his times, his culture, his community, now a blurred impression, not a distinctive one, now adding to his stature and achievement as a human being. Stereotypes about other cultures break down as soon as one gets to know the individuals within those cultures."¹³

This same principle applies when planning a new organization within the community. Those sponsoring the new project must get to know the real feelings of all sections of community life. Superficial investigation must give way to free enquiry and the utilization of the scientific method. Groups interested in assisting immigrants should encourage discussion with representatives of all ethnic groups within the community. At the same time representatives from government departments, social agencies, school boards, churches, and other groups interested in immigrants, should be contacted and encouraged to contribute their knowledge, experience, and point of view. This approach will ensure that the community is understood,

13 Hamilton, Gordon, "Helping People - The Growth of a Profession," Journal of Social Casework, New York, Vol.25, October, 1948, pp.295-6.

and should result in a plan of action acceptable to the community as it is and where it is.

The Immigrant and His Problems

The newcomer to this country is a person with the same basic needs as those of the native-born Canadian. In the case of the immigrant, however, these needs are intensified because he is faced by a completely strange environment. Everyone has a strong emotional need to belong and in this regard the newcomer faces a difficulty rarely experienced by a Canadian citizen within Canada. It might be argued that many "Canadians" are new to a particular community and thus feel like "strangers". It must be remembered, however, that they have the advantage of a Canadian education, Canadian group associations, relatives, mutual friends, or at least other Canadians with whom they can communicate with comparative ease and on an equal basis. Initially, this is not possible for the immigrant and although he may have his particular ethnic group association he cannot confine all his activities within this group. When he leaves it, he often becomes aware of at least a strange and sometimes semi-hostile environment which is a constant reminder that he does not belong.

Both the newcomer and the Canadian resident face the common problem of finding a job, locating suitable housing, trying to improve their income, finding suitable recreational outlets and generally striving to make a satisfactory

adjustment within the community. In gratifying these needs the native-born have the advantage over the immigrant. Through long association they become aware of the local idiosyncrasies and "the way things are done" in their particular community. They belong to certain groups and often benefit through these contacts. Initially the immigrant is a "fringe member" of the community. Whether he is accepted or not depends almost entirely upon his own efforts. It is true, however, he is often helped in this regard by his ethnic group association or by his church.

The emotional needs of an immigrant accompanied here by his family are probably less than those of an immigrant coming here alone. The married man does "belong" within his own family and initially, at least, derives a good deal of support from family relationship. On the other hand the material needs of the married man are greater than those of the single immigrant. Children must be clothed and educated and their immediate needs must be met. Like their parents, immigrant children have a great adjustment to make. If they are of school age they are faced with conflicting patterns of behaviour at school and at home. At school they must quickly learn the "Canadian way" of doing things and if they attempt these methods at home it often leads to conflict. If a language barrier exists, then the pressure is

intensified. The parents are often able to function in the community with merely "a working knowledge" of English, but the children are expected to become more proficient in this regard. This means, however, that they may start school with a grade placement below their intellectual level.

The language difficulty encountered by many immigrants is perhaps the greatest single obstacle they face in their efforts to adjust to their new community. Those who are interested in assisting newcomers must have some means of communicating with them. The problem can be mitigated to some extent by the use of an interpreter, but concepts such as "help is most effective if the recipient participates actively and responsibly in the process" are difficult to put into practice if a language barrier exists. Trained personnel equipped to speak the many languages needed in dealing with immigrants are just not available, and in a country with a population as scattered as that of Canada they probably never will be. Initially, therefore, the community members must help the immigrant by "doing". He cannot ask for a job, he must be taken to one. The same approach applies to finding his way about, making friends, and getting help. This is time-consuming but most necessary if the immigrant is to feel that some interest is being taken in his welfare. His particular ethnic group organization can be of great help in dealing with this problem.

A basic answer to this difficulty is, of course, to provide English classes and encourage the immigrant to attend them. His adjustment to the community can be hastened through the medium of language classes and adult education. This is best accomplished on a group basis, and the cooperation of every ethnic organization and church group must be enlisted to make it effective. Facilities for learning the language are constantly growing and many classes originally started by volunteer groups have been taken over by local school boards. Further development should be encouraged, but existing facilities must be well publicized among the various ethnic group organizations. That this is necessary was shown by a recent survey of English classes in Ontario which revealed that "less than fifty per cent of the new immigrants are enrolled and the proportion of women, particularly married women is quite low.¹⁴ The experience in British Columbia has varied considerably, some areas seeing the need for more classes, other areas being unable to fill those classes already existing. To a large extent, immigrant response depends upon the approach taken by the sponsors organizing the classes. It must also be remembered that not all immigrants are faced by language difficulties, and that some are content to struggle along with a minimum of English, and do not have the capacity for further education.

14 Hendry, Charles F. "Summing Up", Food for Thought, Canadian Association for Adult Education, Toronto, January, 1953, Vol. 13.

This relativity of need and the ability of the immigrant must also be considered in the matter of immigrant housing. Some newcomers arrive in Canada financially solvent and housing presents them with no great problem. Single immigrants do not experience too much difficulty in this regard because their needs are not too great. The greatest difficulty is experienced by immigrant families with limited financial resources. When these families arrive, they are forced to settle in districts where rents are low and where the accommodation is poor. Usually the dwelling has not been improved for years because of the expectation that commercial and business activities will expand and annex the area. This type of accommodation may be acceptable to the adult immigrant but it sometimes has an adverse effect upon their children. A commercial area has few recreational facilities, and the children have difficulty in finding healthy outlets for their activities. Neighbourhood houses have long recognized this situation and are still attempting to meet the need of newcomers in transient and deteriorated areas in many communities.

With very few exceptions, immigrants arriving in Canada are immediately provided with employment. This is, in fact, undertaken by either the Department of Labour or the Department of Citizenship and Immigration depending upon which Department processed the immigrant's application. Difficulty arises when the immigrant either leaves his initial employer

or is discharged by him. If he applies at the National Employment Service and it is discovered he was brought out by the Immigration Service, he is then referred to them. The reverse procedure also applies. While this "responsibility" is being established, the immigrant wanders around completely bewildered. A similar situation sometimes arises for immigrants who arrive here as qualified tradesmen or journeymen. They find themselves in the unfortunate position of being a non-union tradesman in search of employment in a unionized trade. When applying for a job they are told that union membership is obligatory before they can be hired; and when they apply to the union they find they are unable to join unless employed. Thus they become confused and frustrated. In most cases, if the immigrant is well qualified and able to adjust to the change of method and tempo found in Canadian industry, as compared to his own, this problem is solved as he becomes known to his particular group, and makes contacts in the community. In the initial stages, however, a great deal of support is necessary, and if he cannot obtain employment because of lack of knowledge of Canadian techniques in a specific trade he should be helped educationally and vocationally to improve his skill.

Handicapped by his lack of knowledge of the language and customs of Canada, the immigrant seeks associations with persons of his particular ethnic group. Among these people he can converse freely and often they can understand his

problems and give him the support he needs. If these ethnic organizations, through the medium of folk festivals or other organized activities, can participate in community affairs, then the newcomer is given the opportunity of meeting members of other groups in the community. Through these contacts he is often able to make a transition from ethnic group organizations to other associations within the community.

Method of Study

In British Columbia, in recent years there has been a considerable interest in extending help to new Canadians, and as many as twelve local citizenship councils have been formed. They are located at Vancouver, Victoria, Nanaimo, Chilliwack, Prince Rupert, Kamloops, Vernon, Kelowna, Penticton, New Westminster, Revelstoke and Prince George. Each council varies in focus and function, being influenced by the varying purposes and resources of the local scene, and being designed to fit different needs in the community which it serves.

There appears to be a double implication in Citizenship Council work. The task of the council and its associated organizations is to help the newcomer to recognize and take part in the democratic aspects of Canadian life. This is difficult because these may be economic, social, political, cultural - they are diverse and unstandardized. In the second place, the council must itself follow democratic procedures in its educational, organization, recreational or welfare programmes. This implies good community organization, which has

been defined as "the process by which people of communities, as individuals or representatives of groups, join together to determine social welfare needs, plan ways of meeting them, and mobilize the necessary resources."¹⁵ Applied to citizenship councils this points up the necessity for representation from all ethnic group organizations. Needs for immigrants or resources to meet these needs cannot be truly assessed unless immigrants participate in the examination of both the needs and the resources. If the council is representative of all aspects of community life then this participation by ethnic group representatives will give them an opportunity to meet representatives from social agencies, government departments, school boards, churches, and voluntary groups engaged in helping immigrants. Discussion of realistic difficulties, attitudes and points of view will lead to a better understanding of the problems involved and should result in a realistic programme suited to the needs of the community.

For the purpose of this enquiry, it was decided to study the councils located in Vancouver, Victoria and Nanaimo. The material was obtained by perusal of their records and minutes of meetings, and by interviews with the various executive members. An attempt has been made to analyze their organization and function, and to enquire how far they have been helpful in

15 McNeil, C.F., "Community Organization for Social Work", in Kurtz, Russell, ed., Social Work Year Book, 1954, New York, American Association of Social Workers, p.121.

mitigating some of the difficulties which newcomers face.

In so doing the study attempts to assess the extent to which the councils have applied the principles of community organization in their efforts to create and maintain interest in their work within the community.

CHAPTER II

CONSTITUTION AND FUNCTION OF COUNCILS

Any programme which attempts to include diverse nationality groups will encounter difficult organizational problems. Language, cultural and religious barriers are superimposed upon the ordinary administrative procedures faced by any new group. For this reason an attempt to create a new organization, which purports to co-ordinate the activities of heterogeneous groups, must give special consideration to administrative details and to organizational aspects, while still in the formative stage. The programme starts with an idea which may come from within the community, or be superimposed from the outside. In either case, before this idea is implemented, good community organization procedure demands that those interested "get the facts". This evaluation of the situation will result in good planning, in creating teamwork, in educating members, and in broadening community participation.

Motivating force behind formation of Councils

The idea of an organization to help in the integration of all services for immigrants arriving at Vancouver came from outside the community. On August 31, 1949, in the board room of the Community Chest and Council office in Vancouver, B.C. a meeting was held at which the guest speaker was Miss Constance Hayward, liaison officer with the Canadian Citizenship Branch of the Department of Citizenship and Immigration. Miss Hayward was anxious to know what was being done by

organizations across Canada to help the newcomer adjust to his new community. She pointed out that while the Dominion government is interested in the initial placement and continued employment of immigrants, through the efforts of the Department of Citizenship and Immigration, and the Department of Labour, the formal process of integration is considered to be the responsibility of the provinces in which the newcomers are placed. This meeting resulted in a resolution to the effect that Community Chest and Council be asked to plan for the establishment of a co-ordinating committee on citizenship. This committee should consist of representatives from social agencies, government, and volunteer groups interested in the welfare of immigrants, and in an integrated approach to the situation. This resolution gave rise to the Vancouver Co-ordinating Council on Citizenship.

In Nanaimo, the idea which led to the formation of their Citizenship Council came from within the community. On November 13, 1951, a group of business men formed a Co-ordinating Council, sponsored by the Mayor, to meet the need for a movement to foster good Canadian citizens - with particular attention being paid to new immigrants. Apart from this general concern about citizenship and the welfare of newcomers, the programme of the Council was undefined and rather nebulous.

The idea behind the formation of a Citizenship Council in Victoria was the direct result of a specific problem within the community. Early in 1949 the Community Welfare Council of Greater Victoria became concerned with the difficulties encountered by immigrant domestics. In order to investigate and assist with these problems, a Co-ordinating Committee for new Canadians was formed on June 2, 1949. This committee became interested in an integrated approach to the immigrant situation within the community, and as a sub-council of the Community Welfare Council of Greater Victoria, it now functions as the Greater Victoria Canadian Citizenship Council.

Thus in these three examples of Citizenship Councils, the motivating force behind each Council differed. Similarly, the implementation of a programme which eventually led to a formal constitution, or a statement of aims and objectives, also differed.

Constitution of Councils

In the formative stages of its development the Vancouver Co-ordinating Council on Citizenship was primarily interested in the co-ordination of the various ethnic group associations within the community. This policy was not too clearly defined and there was some dissension because of the desire on the part of some members of executive to implement specific projects with the community. Lack of a definite focus delayed a dynamic programme, and because of this, no constitution evolved until the Council had been active for over one year. A constitution was finally adopted on September 28, 1950, but

unfortunately the writer was unable to peruse the original document, as it was revised on June 24, 1952, and in the hands of committee during the interim period. In part, the revised constitution reads as follows:

The functions of the Council shall be:

- (a) to promote the development of such educational, recreational, and other services as may be necessary for furthering the welfare of new Canadians.
- (b) to interpret to the larger community the needs and problems of new Canadians.
- (c) to promote an understanding and appreciation of the privileges of Canadian citizenship.
- (d) to provide an avenue of cooperation for citizen groups, private welfare agencies and government, in matters affecting the welfare of new Canadians.

In order to defray part of the expenses which the Council would incur it was decided that each affiliated society would pay an annual fee of two dollars, and each individual member an annual fee of one dollar.

Financially, the Greater Victoria Canadian Citizenship Council is dependent upon donations from member organizations. There is no amount specified and donations are called for intermittently when the need arises. The response has been immediate and therefore no structured fee system has been necessary. The organization functions as a sub-council of the Greater Victoria Welfare Council, and as such has no formal

constitution. However, its function is outlined in the following six objectives:

- (a) to familiarize the new Canadian resident with the laws of naturalization, to publicize these rules, and to see the committee itself shows an interest in the naturalization ceremonies in the local courts, thereby impressing the new Canadian resident with a sense of the significance of the occasion.
- (b) to assist new residents so that they can become Canadian citizens in the best sense of the word, contributing something of their own national cultures while sharing in ours.
- (c) to provide a centralized information and guidance service on naturalization, health and welfare, education, recreation and other services.
- (d) to co-ordinate the activities in respect to immigrants, and groups which are active or interested in the aforesaid objectives.
- (e) to establish "liaison" between governmental services and private welfare organizations, and to disburse such funds as may be entrusted to it.
- (f) to interpret to the community as a whole the needs and problems of the new Canadian residents, in order that they be accepted into the Canadian community as soon as possible.

The Nanaimo Citizenship Council is an autonomous organization, but it has not yet produced a constitution. It functions under the terms of reference outlined by a representative of the Canadian Citizenship Branch, who spoke at the Council's second general meeting. The Council's chief aim is to assist landed immigrants to become good Canadian citizens, with specific attention to:

- (a) interpreters, billeting, employment, social contacts.
- (b) Court House ceremonies, whenever such immigrants finally receive their naturalization papers.
- (c) annual citizenship days for both Canadian-born and naturalized citizens.

The Council also aims to assist in the integration of North American Indians as full citizens, and to cooperate with the Immigration Service and with local social service agencies.

This programme has little chance of being implemented because it encompasses too many aspects of community planning. Because members of the Council accepted these terms of reference with a minimum of discussion, they became confused as to the goals of the group. Employment, for example, was not interpreted as informing immigrants about the National Employment Service or other community agencies, but was accepted as a "job finding" function involving actual contact with employers. How this could be handled by a voluntary part-time organization is a factor which apparently received scant consideration. With lack of office space in which to

hold executive meetings, and with no provision for obtaining funds (the Council has never had any funds since its inception), it is doubtful if the organization was ready to accept job placement as one of its main functions. The reference to North American Indians is indeed commendable, but this again is a full-time pursuit for a voluntary agency. If thorough investigation had indicated that action in this regard was a real need in the community, then some membership organization of the Nanaimo Citizenship Council might have been delegated to take action in this matter.

Membership

The membership of the Nanaimo Citizenship Council includes five local service clubs. Although church groups and ethnic associations are also represented, their representation is on a non-official basis, and therefore much of their active participation and continuity of attendance is lost. This, in part, is the reason why the Council has had difficulty in maintaining a dynamic programme of interest to immigrants.

The Vancouver Co-ordinating Council on Citizenship had a similar problem concerning the representation of ethnic associations in its organization. At the time of its formation the Council represented twenty organizations, such as the Department of Labour, the Department of Immigration, Catholic, Protestant and Jewish Church groups, welfare agencies, the Y.M.C.A., and the Y.W.C.A. There were no representatives from

the various ethnic societies within the city. On July 17, 1951, some members on the Council, recognizing the need for representatives from such groups, made a motion that the Vancouver Co-ordinating Council on Citizenship (in the existing form) be disbanded, and that a reorganization meeting be called to which representatives of various ethnic groups be invited. A special meeting was called three days later and the motion to disband was set aside. The minutes of this meeting are not too comprehensive, but a great deal of discussion ensued. The cause of the dissension was the question of whether the Council should continue as a co-ordinating organization, or whether it should initiate specific projects to assist immigrants. Many members were of the opinion that the disbandment of the Council and its subsequent reorganization with the inclusion of ethnic associations would defeat the purpose for which it was formed. They argued that co-ordination would become secondary, and that the implementation of a specific programme would leave little time for the broader aspects of community organization. It was decided not to disband, but to revise the constitution to allow for the inclusion of four vice-presidents. These executive positions were to be filled by representatives from ethnic associations. This gave representatives from ethnic groups an opportunity to participate in organization and planning. Since that time, members of the various ethnic groups have become interested and active members of the Council.

Ethnic associations have been members of the Greater Victoria Citizenship Council ever since its inception, and its membership reflects all sections and aspects of community life. The membership consists of the Women's Canadian Club, the Knights of Columbus, the National Employment Service, the Protestant Ministerial Association, the Imperial Order of the Daughters of the Empire, the Business and Professional Women's Club, the Local Council of Women, the University Women's Club, the Canadian Club, the Victoria Public Library, the Chinese Benevolent Society, the Y.M.C.A., the Greater Victoria School Board, the Provincial Department of Education, the Parent-Teacher Association, the Chamber of Commerce, the East Indian Community, the Y.W.C.A., the Catholic Women's Council, the Community Chest and Council, the Department of Immigration, the B.C. Indian Arts and Welfare Council, the Sons of Norway, the Canadian Daughters League, and the Lutheran Church. This representative membership, which includes representatives of ethnic groups and community resources, has been the prime factor in the initial and continued dynamic quality of the Council.

Specific focus of each Council

It has already been pointed out that the Vancouver Co-ordinating Council on Citizenship had difficulty in finally adopting a formal constitution. There was much time spent in discussion, and to a certain degree in dissension over what the specific focus of the Council would be. To construe from this evidence that the time spent in debate was wasted, would

be misleading and erroneous. Before there can be a sound programme of action, there must be an understanding of existing problems. Discussion led to the realization that co-ordination of existing agencies within the city was not enough.

The Council therefore decided to include as one of its main functions the promotion and development of such services as may be necessary for furthering the welfare of new Canadians.

Those forming the Nanaimo Citizenship Council wanted to "do something" for the new immigrants arriving in this country, but their approach to the problem was extremely opportunistic. Without studying the situation or assessing the needs of their community, they accepted a set of aims and objectives "ready made". These functions proved to be over-ambitious, and the result has been that the Council has floundered badly through lack of a specific and workable programme acceptable to the community.

The Greater Victoria Canadian Citizenship Council has not experienced too much difficulty in the formulation of a programme. This is primarily due to the fact that co-ordination was accomplished by the Council almost simultaneously with its formation. This was achieved by encouraging the participation of all major groups concerned or affected in some way by the situation, and by the inclusion of individuals or ethnic group representatives who could contribute much in effecting a programme acceptable to their respective section of the community. Since then, concern with specific problems faced

by new Canadians has kept the programme of the Council dynamic. It, like the other Councils studied, has had as one of its prime objectives, an attempt to foster good citizenship among both Canadian-born and naturalized citizens.

Administrative Difficulties

As one member of the Vancouver Citizenship Council stated it, initially their biggest administrative problem was lethargy among the various membership groups. In part this was due to the lack of ethnic representation, and in part to lack of specific programme. Inclusion of both has overcome this difficulty.

The Nanaimo Council has also experienced lethargy among members, but this has been coupled with a misconception on the part of many as to the actual function of the Council. They have also suffered from a lack of funds, and although they did appeal to both the Federal and Provincial authorities for financial assistance, no help was forthcoming.

The administrative difficulties experienced by the Greater Victoria Citizenship Council have been negligible.

Summary

One of the factors which shows most clearly in this experience is the value of the guidance, leadership, and stability provided by the Community Chest and Councils.

Although the Vancouver Co-ordinating Council on Citizenship is now an autonomous organization it still benefits from members who are active with the Vancouver Welfare Council,

and it can obtain advice and guidance from the Welfare Council should the necessity arise.

The Greater Victoria Citizenship Council is a sub-council of the Greater Victoria Welfare Council and has had few administrative difficulties while maintaining a dynamic programme.

On the other hand, Nanaimo has no Community Chest and Council, and the Nanaimo Citizenship Council has lacked the support and advice from a professional organization which is so necessary when new projects are started.

The Council has no written constitution. It seems content to struggle along under terms of reference which did not evolve out of discussion and investigation, but which were adopted without regard to the specific needs of the community.

Good community organization should follow a process wherein a new organization starts by "gaining the facts about human needs....analyzing resources (services) available to meet
16
needs". This is especially important when dealing with immigrants, because controversy often arises when their needs are discussed. Analysis of this controversy will lead to an assessment of attitudes toward newcomers. An understanding of the immigrants' attitude towards help will also evolve if the means are provided for "bringing into participation in all phases
17
of the process individuals and members of groups concerned".

16 McNeil, C.F., "Community Organization for Social Work", in Kurtz, Russell, ed., Social Work Year Book, 1954, New York, American Association of Social Workers, p.123.

17 Loc.cit.

The Vancouver Council ignored this basic concept, and as a result they achieved very little until they reorganized to include ethnic representatives. Perhaps the most difficult stage of this process, when applied to organizations working in a controversial area such as immigration, is "fostering interaction of attitudes and representative viewpoints with the objective of reaching agreement through mutual understanding"¹⁸. This procedure may lengthen the time taken by an organization to become active, but it usually results in a sound programme based upon the needs of the community.

18 Loc.cit.

CHAPTER III

WORK AND PROBLEMS OF COUNCILS

The aims and objectives of the Citizenship Councils as set forth in preliminary statements, such as have been examined, are the nucleus from which a plan of action evolves. To be successful, however, any project considered by a voluntary organization should be fully understood by those who will be affected if the proposed plan is implemented. Citizenship councils are primarily interested in assisting newcomers and it follows, therefore, that newcomers or their representatives should participate in planning any programme designed to meet their needs. If they are not included, the project will not be too successful.

An illustration of this concept is provided by the experience of the Land Settlement Committee of the Vancouver Co-ordinating Council on Citizenship. This Committee was formed to investigate the existence of, and need for, a government-assisted land settlement programme for both new Canadians and established citizens. An enquiry was sent to the Provincial Department of Lands and Forests, who replied that no positive policy of assistance for land settlement had been set, but that the matter was under consideration. The Deputy Minister was able to provide some information on the areas where Crown land was available at low prices, and suggested that there were many opportunities for immigrants

to establish themselves with limited capital.

On October 16, 1951, the committee sent out the following letter to sixteen ethnic group organizations:

It is felt that many European immigrants are anxious to make farming their career in Canada, but are unable to do so due to the high prices being asked for established farms in British Columbia, and the equally high cost of operating new farmland from virgin country.

This Council is hoping to interest the British Columbia Provincial Government in a scheme of assistance for such immigrants. Such a program should make new land available on a basis the immigrant can afford, should include help in clearing the land, and offer advice and technical data on such matters as climate, cultivation, marketing of crops, etc.

Will you please help us in this work by sending to the above address your ideas about the desirability of such government help.

To what extent do you think the immigrant of your National Group would wish to make farming a means of livelihood, if such help were available?

The executive members of Austrian, Belgium, British, Czechoslovakian, Danish, Dutch, Esthonian, German, Greek, Hungarian, Italian, Norwegian, Polish and Swedish ethnic group organizations were among those circularized.

By early December only two replies had been received. These showed limited interest in their particular national group. A reminder was sent to the remaining fourteen groups on December 3, 1951. Three more replies were received; one indicated interest, one asked for more time to make an investigation, and another asked for a speaker to explain

the Committee's plan to their membership; a total of five replies from sixteen enquiries.

In view of the meagre interest shown by ethnic groups, no further action was taken on this plan. It must be remembered, however, that the organizations canvassed were not members of the Council when the scheme was projected. It appears evident, therefore, that because they did not have representation, they were not too interested in participating in the scheme.

The amount of interest that a voluntary organization can create in any community project, will depend to a large extent, upon the amount of cooperation and good liaison that the sponsoring group has with other voluntary organizations, and government agencies within the community. The success of one of the earliest projects of the Greater Victoria Canadian Citizenship Council, will illustrate what can be done when the cooperation and active participation of all community resources is achieved.

During the months from December, 1950, to February, 1951, the Immigration Hall, in Victoria, was crowded with newly arrived immigrants who were billeted on a temporary basis waiting for work which would be available in the early spring. The needs of these people were tremendous. The majority could not speak English, had no social contacts within the community, and very few amenities. Working in close liaison with the Immigration Inspector-in-Charge, the Greater Victoria

Canadian Citizenship Council managed to get English classes organized and obtained the services of fourteen teachers. The Council arranged hospitality for these immigrants, especially during the Christmas season when invitations were arranged and many newcomers were able to celebrate the festive season in Canadian homes. A public appeal was made for irons and radios and the response was gratifying. After a few weeks the English classes were transferred to the Victoria High School where volunteers taught twice a week on regular nights. An appeal was again made to the community for bus tickets, as the arrangements involved travelling, and again the response was outstanding. This Community response did not "just happen". It was the result of good planning and excellent cooperation between the Citizenship Council and other local organizations. If the Council had not had good liaison with the local Immigration Service, for example, it is doubtful if the project would have been successful.

Language and Vocational Difficulties

The English classes started as a voluntary project by the Victoria Citizenship Council were eventually taken over by the Greater Victoria School Board and continued on a nominal fee basis for all immigrants wishing to attend.

One member organization of the Co-ordinating Council on Citizenship in Vancouver, is now conducting a survey of the English classes available to newcomers in Vancouver, and at the same time inviting the groups being surveyed to participate in this vital work. Although the survey is not

yet complete, as the result of the enquiry, one additional class has already been started by a church group within the city.

Language classes were being provided by the educational authorities in Nanaimo, at the time the Nanaimo Citizenship Council was formed. Response was poor, however, and the Citizenship Council attempted to stimulate interest in these classes, and provided a social "get together" for graduating classes. Success was limited, however, because many newcomers lived in outlying districts and could not get transportation to and from the classes, which were held in the city.

Although the Council dropped this project, they did recognize the difficulties faced by immigrants who could not speak English. This matter was discussed at a general meeting, and in cooperation with the various ethnic group organizations within the community, the Council has been successful in obtaining the services of twenty-four interpreters representing such languages as Dutch, Roumanian, German, French, Chinese, and the Slavonic group.

The Vancouver Co-ordinating Council on Citizenship has also formed a committee to investigate the possibilities of instituting a similar service within their community. They are also investigating the possibility of the establishment of a rotating loan fund to aid young immigrants, who are endeavouring to finance themselves while taking vocational courses in the fields of their special aptitudes. The proposal is that the loans be non-interest-bearing, and that

they be repaid by the recipients after they have completed their courses, and have had sufficient time thereafter in which to establish themselves.

Accommodation

During the month of May, 1951, the District Superintendent of the Department of Immigration requested that the Vancouver Co-ordinating Council on Citizenship actively assist in the finding of accommodation for newcomers. The Council replied that the problem of housing should be handled by government and employer sources rather than by a volunteer group. However, they did provide the Immigration Service with a list of ethnic group organizations to whom they could turn for help with this problem.

Approximately one year later, the Council sent a letter to the Minister of the Department of Citizenship and Immigration in which the problem of housing was outlined. It contained the specific request that the immigration building in Vancouver be further renovated in order to accommodate more immigrants upon their arrival in Vancouver. The Minister replied that the provision of further permanent hostels for immigrants was not planned by the government. He did advise, however, that in the event of an emergency during the initial establishment period, immigrants may be provided with food and shelter at government expense.

The immigration building in Victoria is a large structure which was designed to accommodate Chinese immigrants during the era when they came to Canada in great

numbers. During the post-war period this building has been utilized to accommodate recent newcomers, and as the number of immigrants arriving in Victoria is less than the number destined for Vancouver, the situation has not been so acute. The Inspector-in-Charge has also worked very closely with the Greater Victoria Canadian Citizenship Council, the church organizations and the ethnic group associations within the city. Thus the problem of emergency accommodation has been handled most adequately within the community.

Although both Vancouver and Victoria have immigration buildings which can be utilized for emergency accommodation, Nanaimo has no such resource. The church groups and ethnic groups have been active in finding accommodation for newcomers, but the Nanaimo Citizenship Council has found the problem too large to be dealt with by their organization.

Health and Welfare

Early in 1952, the Vancouver Co-ordinating Council on Citizenship became concerned with the situation facing newcomers who, through no fault of their own, became ill or lost their employment through accident. Many were in occupations not covered by the British Columbia Workmen's Compensation Act, and because of lack of residence were not eligible for social assistance, or for the free medical care provided to recipients of this assistance. Therefore, on July 30, 1952, the Council sent a letter to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration concerning the welfare of immigrants upon arrival

in Canada. The Minister replied that the Dominion government would provide welfare services to immigrants rendered indigent through accident or illness during the first year following arrival in Canada, provided the Provincial Government would share the cost on a fifty-fifty basis. These welfare services would include hospitalization, medical care and rehabilitation assistance.

The Council took the matter up with the Provincial authorities and was informed that early in 1952 discussions took place between the Provincial Department of Health and Welfare, and the Federal Department of Citizenship and Immigration to arrange for payment of care which should be provided for the necessitous during the first year of residence. In December, 1952, the agreement was signed by the Province and sent to Ottawa. On March 24, 1953, the Provincial Department of Health and Welfare announced that "an agreement has been signed by the Federal and Provincial Governments in respect to assistance to immigrants which is retroactive to April 1, 1952. It is considered that the agreement will in a great measure meet some of the needs of this group of people....The Federal and Provincial Governments will share equally, for a period not exceeding one year, the actual cost of welfare assistance, medical treatment and

19 Welfare assistance means social assistance, including medical treatment to unemployed immigrants, the treatment and care of children, or allowances to mothers, in such amounts and under such conditions (with the exception of all conditions relating to residence, if any) as are respectively prescribed at the date hereof in or under the Social Assistance Act R.S.B.C., 1948, Chapter 310, or the Protection of Children Act R.S.B.C., 1948, Chapter 47.

hospitalization, including care in sanatoria for the tuberculous and hospitals for the mentally ill, in any case where application for welfare assistance or medical treatment has been approved, or hospital expenses have been guaranteed, within a period of twelve months following the entry into Canada of the immigrant; provided that the Provincial Government will not be responsible for any such expenses incurred prior to the entry of the immigrant into British Columbia." ²⁰

The matter of health and welfare has also been of concern to the Greater Victoria Canadian Citizenship Council which decided on February 25, 1953, to approach the British Columbia Medical Association with a view to working out a scheme of medical assistance similar to that by which the Bar Association now provided legal aid for indigents, to deal with the whole question of medical care, including preventive work and follow-up assistance for persons who have entered Canada under the assisted-passage scheme. At this time, of course, medical treatment for immigrants as provided for in the Dominion-Provincial agreement was not available, but, even though the pressure has been relieved in this respect, such a plan, if instigated, would be of inestimable value to those domestics, who, after one year of residence, find themselves unemployed but employable, and unable to meet the budget-shattering contingency which a major surgical operation presents.

20 Department of Health and Welfare, Social Welfare Branch, British Columbia, Circular letter Serial No. 267P/201M, dated March 24, 1953.

The Greater Victoria Citizenship Council has been extremely active in attempting to alleviate some of the problems faced by those immigrants who arrive in the community as domestic workers. The majority of these women are brought to Canada by the Federal Department of Labour under the assisted-passage scheme and also under contract. This contract reads as follows:

I do hereby undertake that on my arrival in Canada I will accept employment in domestic work. I agree to remain in such employment for a period of at least one year or until such time as the cost of my ocean transportation has been repaid in full to the Government of Canada.

I understand that if I remain in the employment as selected for me for a period of at least one year the cost of my inland transportation in Canada will be absorbed by the Canadian Department of Labour; but if I should leave my employment before completing one year, I shall be required to reimburse the cost of my inland transportation in Canada.

On March 8, 1951, Mr. MacNamara, who was then the Federal Deputy Minister of Labour, was questioned before a Senate Standing Committee on Immigration and Labour concerning the contract labour of domestics and he made the following statement: "Well, these people agree to stay in domestic service for a year. That does not mean there is a 'deep freeze'. They do not agree to stay with the same employer and we find a constant necessity for changing them....We move them around quite a lot."

21
21 Canada, Proceedings of the Standing Committee on Immigration and Labour, Ottawa, Queen's Printer, 1951, No.2, Thursday, March 8, 1951, p.31.

In spite of this, the Greater Victoria Citizenship Council has been concerned with the difficulty these women experience should they wish to repay the money advanced (especially for inland transportation) or change their employment. In part, this difficulty may be due to the amount of money owing for inland transportation, as women coming from Europe to British Columbia must traverse the continent and incur a much larger debt than those who remain on the East Coast. However, this is not the only difficulty, as may be illustrated by a case where the immigrant suffered from a skin eruption of the hands, and requested that the Department of Labour change her employment. She made several visits to the local National Employment Service, but was unable to convince them of her realistic need for a different type of employment. The Greater Victoria Canadian Citizenship Council intervened on behalf of the immigrant, and the matter was eventually brought to the attention of the Department of Citizenship and Immigration. A great deal of correspondence was incurred before this woman could be transferred from domestic work in a home to chambermaid work in a hotel where dishwashing was not required. In the interim she was required to remain in domestic work where her ailment was constantly aggravated.

The Greater Victoria Citizenship Council has encountered a large amount of misunderstanding among domestics. The Council has, therefore, requested that the Department of Labour make every effort to ensure that their Canadian representatives

overseas are made aware of the situation in this country. They should be instructed to inform prospective immigrant domestics, emigrating under the assisted-passage scheme, of the domestic employment picture in Canada; i.e., (a) that there is no labour code, (b) there is no labour contract - with stated hours of work or stated salary, (c) no unemployment insurance benefits are available, (d) there is no workmen's compensation and (e) women in domestic employment in Canada have at the present time no legal status whatsoever. The Greater Victoria Citizenship Council recognizes that this is especially important in view of the fact that the conditions of domestic employment are often very different in the homeland of the emigrating worker. Many European countries, for instance, include domestic service in their labour legislation, and provide safeguards for the domestic worker.

Creating Interest in Citizenship

The three Citizenship Councils studied have been most active in attempting to promote a Court House ceremony that is in keeping with the auspicious occasion of granting citizenship to new Canadians. They have met with varying success. How much can be accomplished in this regard depends entirely upon the attitude of the presiding Judge, and until a definite policy is laid down by the judiciary, the granting of citizenship will remain colourful and stimulating in some communities, drab and unimpressive in others. However, each Council is stimulating interest in citizenship within their respective

communities, by taking an active role in the planning and presentation of Citizenship Day ceremonies.

The Greater Victoria Citizenship Council has been especially active in this regard since 1949. They plan an extensive programme for the "I Am a Canadian" Citizenship Ceremonies which take place during mid-summer. A typical programme will include the introduction of Dominion and Provincial Government representatives, an address by a local community leader, a concert by a naval, military, or R.C.M.P. band, and some appropriate ceremony designed to highlight citizenship, e.g., administration of the oath of loyalty to Canada to selected immigrants. Miss Ellen Hart, a member of the Council, has written the following pledge, which is recited by the audience:

I am a Canadian citizen.

I inherit from those who have lived before me a vast and beautiful land, a land of forest and plain, lake, mountain and sea shore - a goodly land.

I am heir of a proud record, for the history of my country abounds in stories of the love of freedom, of courage, adventure, sober common sense and hard work.

I accept my inheritance humbly, knowing that a country's greatness springs from the wisdom and virtue of its people.

To my country I pledge my loyalty. I will try to be a good Canadian, a good neighbour, and a good citizen of the world.

Publicity

The Vancouver Co-ordinating Council on Citizenship has recently been promised space, on a weekly basis, in a

metropolitan daily newspaper in which the material to be published will be translated into various languages. This will provide an excellent opportunity to reach many immigrants who may be unaware of the services and resources in the community designed to assist them.

Another plan which has been formulated is the publication of a bulletin which will contain information of interest to the local group. Contact has already been made with other citizenship councils in the Province for an exchange of ideas and problems. These will be discussed in the bulletin.

The Greater Victoria Canadian Citizenship Council does not publish a bulletin, but it has been fortunate in enlisting the cooperation of the local press and radio as evidenced by the success of the appeal mentioned previously.

On the other hand, the Nanaimo Citizenship Council, probably because of lack of competition within the city, has not been able to obtain a great deal of service from the local press and radio.

Summary

It should be pointed out that this chapter has not been all-inclusive in presenting the work of the Citizenship Councils studied. Although the highlights have been arbitrarily selected, an attempt has been made to give a concise and fairly complete picture of what each Council is doing and how they have handled specific problems in order that some observations might be possible.

In the provision of housing, for example, although the Councils are aware of the important resource to be found in church and ethnic groups in providing temporary shelter, each realizes that the problem is too large for a voluntary group to handle adequately, and should be the responsibility of government or employer.

Every Council has concerned itself with the need for English classes. The Nanaimo Citizenship Council noticed that many immigrants were not too keen to avail themselves of these classes. However, there was not enough information available from the other Councils to draw any conclusions. The Vancouver Co-ordinating Council, for instance, is concerned with the lack of English classes, rather than the lack of immigrants to fill them if they are created.

Both the Vancouver and Victoria Citizenship Councils have been quick to place before the various levels of government the problems faced by newcomers, in an attempt to hasten action in this regard, and also to keep their members informed of recent developments in the area of welfare.

The Greater Victoria Citizenship Council has also illustrated what can be done when there is good liaison and cooperation between the voluntary group and government agency. The important result was that the immigrants faced with forced idleness because of the seasonal nature of employment available to them were given tangible evidence of the concern in the community, and of the interest in their welfare.

Finally, the co-ordination between Citizenship Councils is being made possible through the medium of the bulletin being issued by the Vancouver Co-ordinating Council on Citizenship. Although each Council is autonomous and should remain geared to the needs of its particular community, exchange of ideas and suggestions eliminates overlapping. This results in a co-ordinated effort by all Councils, aimed at stimulating interest and action by the federal, provincial and municipal levels of government.

CHAPTER IV

FUTURE ROLE OF CITIZENSHIP COUNCILS

Citizenship Councils have been organized as "community projects", and it is therefore not surprising that most of their achievements are at the local or community level, i.e., particular towns and cities. One contribution that they make to community life, which may be overlooked, is that their very existence is evidence of the interest of private citizens in the welfare of immigrants. Through their efforts, other members of the community become interested in the difficulties faced by newcomers. An example of this is the experience of the Victoria Citizenship Council when they made a public appeal for aid for immigrants who were temporarily unemployed, and billeted in the local immigration building. The co-operation of local press and radio facilities was enlisted, and the community response was encouraging. This positive response, in addition to creating general interest within the community, was tangible proof to the immigrant of the community's interest in him as an individual. He became aware that a voluntary effort was being made on his behalf. This knowledge had a reassuring effect at a time when he was facing many difficulties of adjustment, and when first impressions of his new environment were being formulated.

The Citizenship Councils have been actively engaged in an effort to eliminate some of the difficulties faced by newcomers upon their arrival in the community. Many voluntary man-hours

of work have been spent either in getting new English classes started, or stimulating interest in those already in existence. Council members have assessed housing needs for immigrants and have at least made community members conscious of this need. They have investigated the status of immigrant domestics in the community, and have created a loan fund which can be drawn on by an immigrant who wishes to improve his academic standing or vocational skill. As has been shown, success in these and other ventures has varied, and has depended to a large extent upon the approach taken by the Council concerned. In general, however, the Citizenship Councils have succeeded in creating an awareness of the needs of newcomers among responsible citizens in the community. They have also had success in making newcomers conscious of the fact that some members of the community are interested in their welfare.

Inadequacies in Canadian Immigration Programme

Unfortunately, there are difficulties faced by newcomers, which cannot be handled at the community level. This is well exemplified when an immigrant, brought to this country by the Department of Labour to fill a specific job, leaves his employment and moves to another section of the country. He arrives in the new community looking for employment, but cannot obtain any. If he is sent to the Immigration Service for assistance they are reluctant to help him, "because he is a Department of Labour responsibility". If he applies to the National Employment Service he receives scant consideration

"because he has broken his contract". If he is referred to the community welfare services, they are unable to grant him assistance "because he has not established residence within the area". The result is that some charitable organization takes care of him on a per diem basis until one of the agencies mentioned is finally persuaded to accept responsibility for him.

This problem is primarily the result of the dual responsibility shared between the Department of Labour and the Department of Citizenship and Immigration. Citizenship Councils are aware that competition between groups and organizations within a community must be avoided; yet "until this competitive element can be eliminated, no substantial gains are possible".²² In Vancouver, for example, there are specific organizations dealing with such problems as racial prejudice and minority group rights. The Vancouver Citizenship Council met this situation by offering these groups representation in their organization, in order to avoid overlapping and duplication of effort.

It may not be valid to state that competition exists between the two Government Departments involved, but certainly at times there appears to be overlapping and duplication of effort, and confusion easily arises if two government departments appear to be "responsible". There may be an integrated

²² Atwater, Pierce. Problems of Administration in Social Work, McCluin and Hedman Company, Minnesota, 1937, p.203.

policy regarding the selection and subsequent responsibility for immigrants laid down by the top levels of government, but it seems evident that this policy fails to sift down to the actual administrative level. It would appear, therefore, that Citizenship Councils should draw the attention of the federal government to the confusion that the present situation creates. This could probably be best accomplished by quoting cases in point to the local Member of Parliament, who is in a position to have the matter discussed at the appropriate level of government.

Role of Councils with Ethnic Group Organizations

This study has constantly referred to the ethnic group organization within the community, yet all too frequently these minority groups are neglected or even forgotten in community wide programmes. This is a problem that each community must solve in its own way. Immigrants tend to segregate, in varying degrees into isolated and insulated groups. With 685,000 immigrants entering Canada since World War Two, this problem will increase rather than decrease. For some of these people, especially displaced persons, Canada is not a country that has attracted them especially, but one to which they have come for assistance and a safe home. Deprived of security in their homeland, circumstance rather than choice has directed their steps to Canada. They have no strong desire to forget their own ways of doing things, their own customs and religion. In fact, after the insecurity of life in their

own land, it is likely that they will follow the ways of behaviour and religion which they understand, and which are meaningful to them, with renewed vigour when they are confronted with the strangeness of Canada.

In search of security, they group together with those of their own kind where support can be counted on, and where they are able to predict events with a reasonable degree of satisfaction. The entire immigrant family is usually included in this ethnic group association and this presents a special problem for the children. These children are exposed, in Canada, to an environment which expects from them substantial uniformity, yet their families encourage reproduction of alien ways. They are torn and confused by these conflicting values. With the often unwitting sanction of their school, they repudiate parental direction. Their alien home environment, and their lack of close contact with members of the majority culture group, make their problem of adaptation difficult.

It should be pointed out, however, that not all ethnic group associations are composed of displaced persons, or for that matter, of individuals faced with a language barrier. The Imperial Order of the Daughters of the Empire is just as much an "ethnic group organization", in the sense required by the present study, as is the Chinese Benevolent Society. It must be recognized that this process of banding together, of forming the "in group", is largely an unconscious one to the newcomer or the ethnic group member. Moral codes are non-rational and are emotionally charged. Thus it is that most

people do not analyze their culture; they live it, and their habits and customs have a deep emotional meaning for them - they cannot be legislated out of existence.

Helping these ethnic group organizations to accept the community and find acceptance within it, is perhaps the greatest single challenge facing Citizenship Councils. The Vancouver Council has made a start in this regard by holding their meetings at the various ethnic group headquarters. In this way, ethnic group members have an opportunity to meet members of the Council, which is representative of all aspects of community life. In Victoria, the various ethnic group associations have been encouraged to participate in citizenship ceremonies on "I Am a Canadian" day, and at a recent ceremony, citizenship certificates were granted to Polish and Chinese immigrants. Folk festivals should also be encouraged in order that each group may come to understand something about the culture of the other. It is only through this kind of practical, personal understanding that tolerance can be achieved.

Citizenship Training with the Community

The future role of the Citizenship Council within the community should be to show, by example, that a democratic approach to citizenship training is both valid and effective. Democracy must be practiced; it must not be considered only as a theoretical concept. As one noted Canadian has stated, "if we who live in the relative comfort of the liberal,

democratic, and nominally Christian traditions of the West, disapprove of the solutions that are being offered by the representatives of another political faith, it is time that we seriously bestir ourselves to prove that our way of life has something practical and effective to offer....Complacent preaching is not enough. Neither is military strength."²³

Unfortunately there is a tendency on the part of many members of the Councils studied to be content with complacent preaching. An example of this is the fairly large percentage of members of British origin who have not applied for their citizenship certificates, but who advocate that "immigrants" must make an effort in this regard.

This presents a dilemma, because the Citizenship Councils are committed to the task of making the community "citizenship conscious". Before this can be achieved, however, individual members must attain a real understanding of the nature, privileges, and obligations of citizenship. They must also be aware of their own motivation for joining the Council. One representative of a member group, of a Council studied, joined the Council with the specific purpose of advocating that Canada increase British immigration, and restrict the influx of "foreigners". Other members have joined to "investigate" the incidence of "communism" among the newcomers to Canada. These, of course, are the personal considerations of the individuals concerned, or sometimes of

²³ Keenleyside, Hugh, Is Military Defence Enough, Citizenship Items pamphlet No.29, (mimeographed), Canadian Citizenship Council, Ottawa, February 27, 1953.

particular groups they represent. Such considerations may be valid, but they should be contributed to a group where they can be openly discussed. The Council itself must have some degree of common understanding, and must recognize some balance in the Council's programme.

To be successful in interesting the community member in citizenship, the Citizenship Council must enlist the help of all relevant community groups. Their programme must include activities which draw in such groups as the Parent-Teacher Association, the Community Chest and Council, local government agencies, trade unions, religious organizations, ethnic group associations. An attempt to educate and inform executive members of these groups concerning citizenship, could result in the inclusion of citizenship education in their respective group programmes. The Citizenship Councils should also appeal to government sources for leadership and clarification concerning citizenship education on a national level. In this way an informed public opinion may emerge, as well as a more balanced and efficient effort, on the part of Citizenship Councils, to implement programmes of health, welfare, assistance, and citizenship education.

Appendix A

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