

Who stands on guard?

Since the first aboriginal people crossed the Bering Strait from Asia and their descendants made their way across the continent, to the time of the most recent arrivals, immigration has been basic to the growth and character of Canada. Some newcomers do not stay long.

Two questions are being asked. 1) Are we becoming a cost-to-coast-to-coast condominium in which diverse and isolated groups of people live but seldom meet? We all know large buildings in which hundreds of people come and go without either seeing or speaking to one another. Such places are store-houses not neighbourhoods.

2) Is this country a revolving door through which people enter only soon to leave again? I have friends who joke that they met one another in a turnstile and have been going around together ever since. Contrariwise, statistics show that naturalised 'New Canadians' leave us to live elsewhere at triple the rate than do native-born Canadians.

The implications are far-ranging. Canadian citizens have the right to return at any time.

They may have contributed little to our national life or economy but their right to come back puts pressure on our health care and welfare systems.

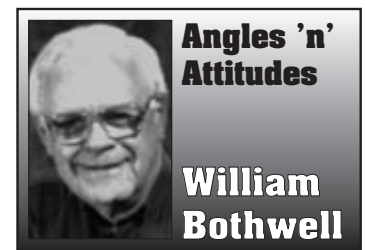
There are 2.8 million of them. Collectively they could be called our missing province of Expatria. It represents 8% of our population. About 60% of them live in the U.S., the U.K., Australia or Hong Kong. One of them, a 'Pakistani-Canadian', currently living in Chicago, is accused of masterminding a plan to murder employees of the Danish newspaper that in 2005 published cartoons of the prophet Muhammad, one of them with a bomb in his turban.

It may seem to be a democratic free choice for recent immigrants to give little thought to their Canadian rest stop before decamping. The egress has, of course, been going on for years. One of my Scottish great-grandfathers had a brother who after a few years in Toronto moved on to California. My grandfather had brothers who spent most of their adult lives in Michigan and Ohio. Their descendants whom I have met share the irritating notion that "America" consists solely of the U.S.A. and that that is the only

really free country in the world.

As we allow more and more foreign ownership of our industries and resources, see our professional and managerial classes lured south of the border, our expatriate 'province' will continue to grow. Many of them will return only to the family summer cottages or for medical services to which their Canadian citizenship entitles them.

Just under half of the population of Toronto, to the violence and shallowly-rooted communities of which we in Dufferin County are



Angles 'n' Attitudes

William Bothwell

closely tied, are still essentially aliens in this country. Even if 25% of them or theirs leave to return home or to live elsewhere the cultural and political impact of those who remain will be considerable. Long-time Canadian women give birth to an average of only 1.5 living children. Immigrants, at least in the first generation, are more fertile. That is particularly so of the large, 'visible minority' which is a very small minority in the nearby metropolitan area.

Ronald Reagan said in 1976 that God clearly intended the Americas to be the meeting place for immigrants who cross the Atlantic and the Pacific oceans. Where that left Australia and New Zealand was not mentioned but, down there as up here, the challenge of the immediate future will be to meld people who have a very different understanding of the delicate balance between law and personal freedom in to a peacefully integrated society. That problem deserves more frank and open debate.

The recent April 2009 amendment to the Canadian Citizenship Act became law almost surreptitiously. It restores Canadian nationality to who were forced to renounce it when they became citizens of another country. It also grants it to their children. The process is not automatic; they must apply for it.

One such was Will Wilkinson, a self-styled "thoroughgoing American" who lives in Iowa.

Now, just where is that? Mr Wilkinson is also a 'libertarian' member of the Cato Institute which would abolish all governments and borders. Meanwhile, he has decided to be "a so-called lost Canadian", to sport a Maple Leaf on his backpack when that is advantageous, to keep a Canadian passport handy and to stop disdaining Canada's "socialistic health care system", at least until his real homeland has its own.

Whether people like Wilkinson are other beavers in our lodge or camels with their heads in our tent is the question. His Saskatchewan-born father but long ago pledged allegiance to the Stats and Stripes. Does not that rebel state, born in a revolution that denied the civil rights of United Empire Loyalists, demand absolute and exclusive loyalty and reject any challenge to its independent sovereignty?

The 'Iowa-Canadian' said in a piece in the September "Atlantic" magazine, "I qualify as a Canadian through a weird technicality". Most genuine Canadians have little understanding of and are little informed about the immigration muddle that has recently been made 'muddier' by the federal government.

When have changes to our immigration policy been adequately discussed in the press or in newsletters we get from our elected representatives?

Auditor-general Sheila Fraser said a week or so ago that there are major problems with Canada's immigration system. Ottawa is making changes with little attention given to their long-term consequences. The Temporary Foreign Workers Act allows in low-skill workers without keeping track of them. Employers use it to bring in relatives who would otherwise not be far down the waiting line.

Peter C. Newman said years ago that a new Canadian citizen should first have been required to cross the country by car, bus or train. That odyssey would remind one that, despite constitutional indigestion, we are part of a national miracle that we should all see with glowing hearts.

It was said up top that two questions are being asked about our immigration policy. Opposite the armed 'Homeland Security' border bulldozers, who stands on guard on our side of the border crossings and at our ports of entry?

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Scrapped gun bill targeted the wrong people

It has been conveniently forgotten by the anti-gun zealots and feminist radicals in our midst that the madman killer Marc Lepine used a legally-obtained semi-automatic rifle to murder 14 women at the Ecole Polytechnique on Dec. 9, 1989.

Why does this matter? Because that horrible event, commonly known as the "Montreal Massacre," continues to be shamelessly exploited by the two aforementioned groups. Every time the subject of either violence against women or gun control makes the national agenda, the spectre of Lepine is thrown around as if this singular mad man a) is representative of all Canadian men and b) as if gun control laws would have stopped him.

Last week's House of Commons vote to scrap the billion-dollar boondoggle called the long-gun registry has once again energized those who long ago decided that Lepine was a convenient poster boy for the sort of left-wing agenda they would impose upon us all.

They refuse to accept the fact that the long gun registry has been a costly failure - a way of penalizing law-abiding gun owners while doing nothing to stop criminals who own guns, and - duh! - obviously don't register them.

It has also been used as a convenient way to demonize men - not just Lepine - but all men, as if we just can't wait for the opportunity to beat up those women who are closest to us.

A typical reaction came in a letter to the Globe and Mail from Julie Mason of Ottawa, a veteran NDP activist, who wrote that she was "deeply ashamed" of her party for allowing 12 NDP MPs to vote with the Tories (along with eight Liberal MPs) to scrap the long-gun registry, adding, "My thoughts are with 14 young women in Montreal, shot by a long gun, whose memory was desecrated by the vote."

What has one to do with the other? The only thing that desecrates the memory of those 14 murdered women is to suggest that the long-gun registry could have changed the course of history and to exploit that horrible tragedy for partisan ideological goals.

Keep in mind that when James Roszko killed four Mounties at Mayerthorpe, Alta. In 2005 - while the gun registry was in full force - three of the four guns he carried were unregistered and the fourth was registered to another person. Roszko has been banned from owning guns but - surprise, surprise -

people intent on the criminal use of firearms aren't concerned about the bureaucratic details of registration.

How many people on their way to rob a bank, say, will suddenly realize, "oh no, I can't rob the bank. My gun isn't registered?"

Scraping the registry does not mean the end of all controls over guns. For one thing, the handgun registry remains - although it too has had little, if any, impact on crime - and all gun owners will still require a licence and have to pass safety and background checks and follow the stringent rules of gun storage.

Yet even people who know this aren't above distorting the truth to make their case in favour of the useless long-gun registry.

Take Toronto Police Chief Bill Blair, for example, who recently made a big production of the seizure of a private gun collection, inferring it is a key part of his "Project Safe City," when it had nothing to do with crime, and everything to do with the simple expiration of a firearms permit.

Blair used the occasion to lobby the Commons to vote against the bill to scrap the registry, which he claims - with precious little evidence to back it up - is a valuable police tool in the fight against crime.

But Blair knows that the vote was simply to scrap the long-gun registry, not to end the licensing provisions.

He also knows more than 90 percent of firearms crimes involve illegal handguns, demonstrating how ineffective registries really are.

Another thing. Much media reportage focussed on the alleged rural-versus-urban scenario to explain why the majority of MPs voted against the registry. While most (but not all) of the 20 NDP and Liberals who voted with the government represent rural ridings, most of the 144 Tories come from such non-rural settings as Vancouver, Calgary and Quebec City.

What their critics are really saying is that because MPs from Toronto and Montreal support the registry, anybody who doesn't is a "rural," i.e. a country rube. (Not to mention anti-woman and pro-violence.)

For the record, no, I do not own a gun. But I know many people who do, both hunters and target shooters, and they're not the people the police and society in general need to worry about.

It's the bad guys, stupid. The ones who wouldn't be caught dead registering their weapons.

Masters of the botanical world

The National Geographic usually contains at least one very interesting story on vegetation in some of the world's exotic locations. The frontispiece of this year's October issue showed a picture of an enormous California tree, a giant redwood. To put its size into perspective one must look closely to see an ant like figure climbing on the trunk, a geographer reaching for the crown. My dreams include a visit to Sequoia National Park with trees so vast one can drive a bus through an opening in the base of one.

One of my favorite books is kept on the coffee table in the living room, "Remarkable Trees of the World" (Thomas Pakenham, 2002). Folk can't help but be amazed at some of our huge west coast trees such as the Douglas Firs on Vancouver Island which were saved by MacMillan-Bloedel in an era when uncut trees were considered to be standing lumber waiting to be harvested.

The awesome experience of walking through the Cathedral Forest was an example of a valuable Canadian tourist attraction. In fact many of the world's cherished botanical wonders have attracted visitors in different countries.

One can't help but be dumbstruck encountering a tree having a girth of over 90 feet or one which has been around for hundreds of years.

Pakenham included 'General Sherman' a Sequoia he described as the world's largest tree estimated to be 1,500 tons and a Bristle cone pine he named 'Old Methuselah' at 4600 years old.

Over the years I have thoroughly enjoyed seeing many interesting examples of exotic

trees. One of these has taken me back to my own experience with what I called the 'upside down' tree in Kenya, the Baobab. My name for it came from a trip to the coast of the Indian ocean and one huge, very short tree. I have a picture of a friend standing beside a mammoth Baobab, with a huge trunk hardly taller than the individual.

As this was the dry season there was no foliage making the top look more like a root system than a crown.

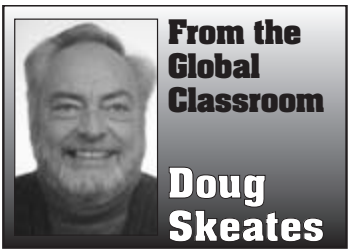
Under desert conditions this species produces leaves only a few days of the year at the start of the rains, appearing as a skeleton most of the time.

Two species I have especially appreciated in the tropics were the raintree and the mango. Both grow to immense size providing cooling shade in very hot and dry conditions. In the Philippines one remarkable mango tree occupied an area of about an acre which provided shade for village meetings.

I particularly enjoyed a village in Guyana where our party stayed for close to a week. The aboriginal people of 'Wikki' had never before had overnight visitors. As the village had no commercial accommodation we were 'housed' in hammocks in a school building during evening hours walking to town in the morning along a path through mango trees along the Berbice River. The forest 'floor' was littered with delicious mangos.

We vied with cattle to get the fallen fruit before they were eaten or crushed.

Another notable species was the raintree which was used as carving wood. One carved eagle I would dearly have loved to have in my living room was a chair



From the Global Classroom

Doug Skeates

from a single tree resembling a bird with two clawed legs as arms while the head and beak provided overhead cover. A carving village near Baguio City in the Philippines featured numerous carved North American cigarette Indians of various sizes up to 8' tall for sale in the Japanese market.

One of the prized possessions in my office is a table top eagle with outstretched wings cleverly carved from dark heartwood with beak, claws and wingtips of white sapwood from the outer part of the trunk.

I have many memories of nature's remarkable trees displayed around the house. Examples include red mahogany and jet black ebony carvings from Asian or African countries or cedrella from South America. There are also many beautiful hardwoods in my collection of sample woods from Costa Rica. Whether as standing trees or carved works of art, Mother Nature has given the world a wide variety of remarkable trees.

Your Weekly Chuckle . . .

By KEITH HUNTER

Facing hard times, the company offered a \$100 bonus to the employee who came up with the best way of saving money. The prize went to a young woman in accounting who suggested limiting future bonuses to \$10.

Dipping Into the Past

Blind Artemesia man proclaimed innocence in his wife's poisoning



both lived in Local Option towns.

Hiram Baker, of Toronto, formerly of Orangeville, was convicted in Toronto last week on charges of forgery and false pretenses and sentenced to two years less a day in the Central Prison. He is well-known locally, having lived in Orangeville for many years. His game was to get small sums of money from people by telling them ghost stories and passing worthless cheques.

The Dufferin Light and Power Co. men are busily engaged getting the poles in and wiring completed for the 50 incandescent street lights that are to take the place of the meager

supply of such lights that Shelburne has had for so long.

1909 will go down in history as "the year of the big potatoes" in Dufferin. A couple of weeks ago, James Law, of Granger, brought to H. White, & Co., 49 potatoes with a combined weight of more than 100 pounds. Last week George Buchanan, of Primrose, beat this record by delivering 44 potatoes which also weighed over 100 pounds, the largest weighing three pounds two ounces.

J. H. Attridge, of Shelburne, has sold his barbering business to James Gilpin, formerly of Alliston, who took possession this week.

75 YEARS AGO

Wednesday, November 15, 1934

W. J. C. Boak, of Thornton, was chosen last Thursday in Alliston to represent the Liberals in the federal riding of Dufferin-Simcoe, winning from E. J. Evans, former M.L.A., of Bradford, on the second ballot. Four others had dropped out after the first ballot, among them T. J. O'Flynn, of Shelburne. Mr. O'Flynn, who was the Liberal candidate in the 1926 election, said he found it rather hard going then, but thought Mr. Rowe was going to have the hard going this time. He said one choice the Conservative candidate would have to make would be whether he was going to a Bennett candidate or a Stevens candidate.

Highway 10 east of Shelburne was the scene of a regrettable accident Monday evening involving a car and a wagon and team of horses. Messrs. T. W. McBride and Cecil Reid were driving east, Mr. McBride taking Mr. Reid a Great War veteran, home to change his clothes preparato-

ry to attending the Veterans' Banquet that evening. Just in front of the quarries near the 2nd Line, they came upon the wagon driven by Mr. Thomas Carter of Mono Centre. The wagon was seen too late and a severe crash resulted, one of the horses being killed.

50 YEARS AGO
Wednesday, November 11, 1959

An Orangeville jury has awarded Owen Quinlan and Samuel Crombie \$27,349.65 in damages against John Wilfred Prince, of Toronto, driver of a car that struck Mr. Quinlan's car on Highway 9 as they were returning to their homes from Tottenham last August, badly injuring both plaintiffs.

25 YEARS AGO
Wednesday, November 14, 1884

A juvenile has been charged with two counts of first-degree murder in the deaths last week of Monique Babineau, 9, and her brother Daniel of Orangeville.