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Article abstract

Throughout the 1930s into the early 1940s, the University of Toronto was inundated with desperate letters for succor from European professors who were persecuted under Nazism. Many of the stories in these appeals outlined life and death situations. The university responded by hiring some of these professors, but vigorous debate erupted with the establishment of the Canadian Society for the Protection of Science of Learning in 1939. The Toronto Society, the most influential of the other, more smaller Societies in Canada, was struck as an organization to place refugee professors in Canadian universities. It is an excellent case study in analyzing the socio-economic, political, and intellectual responses to a humanitarian disaster. The Society brought to the fore the spectre of racism and anti-Semitism in various academic and social communities in Canada, and further supported the historical argument that the Immigration Branch in Ottawa had particular, oppositional agendas in dealing with refugees of particular ethnicities and cultures. The Society highlighted the tensions of altruism and practicality, accommodation versus discrimination, and intellectualism overwhelmed in a oft-times hostile anti-intellectual and defensive society. The rapid failure of the Society demonstrated that strategies used by Canadian professors to offer safe harbour for their fleeing European counterparts were far too powerless in the fight against entrenched beliefs and conformist understandings in higher education and society as a whole.

"Rescue Our Family From a Living Death:" Refugee Professors and the Canadian Society for the Protection of Science and Learning at the University of Toronto, 1935-1946[1]

PAUL STORTZ

Throughout the 1930s and early 1940s, President Henry John Cody of the University of Toronto was inundated with hundreds of letters from graduate students, aspiring academics, out-of-work scholars, and professors from universities within Canada and elsewhere seeking possible research and teaching positions. Despite a chronically-constricted job market – reflected in the largest university in Canada (including University College and various professional faculties) that in any given year between 1935-1945 employed 500 professors, lecturers, and associates and making only twenty to thirty new hirings per year[2] – the letters of inquiry were nonetheless hopeful. Letters from unemployed scholars were polite and formal, hoping for information on academic opportunities. References from sponsors, professors, advisors, and friends of graduate students were also numerous, most of which included glowing reports of educational success, committee work and extracurricular participation, intelligence, and other desirable personal attributes. Yet more correspondence dealt with the contemplation of new venues, enticing tenured, established faculty to and from Toronto. In 1940, a letter was received from a researcher at the University of Ottawa asking about the prospects of being hired in Political Science. The applicant included an extensive dossier of research and teaching background but added that "at the outset, I should point out that I fully enjoy my present work and have had fair success, and there seems to be good prospects for promotion here. However I would have no hesitation in

1 I would like to thank E. Lisa Panayotidis for her helpful comments on an earlier draft of this article, and Harold Averill of the University of Toronto Archives for his outstanding archival support. I would also like to acknowledge the anonymous readers for their comments. This paper is part of a larger on-going study of refugee professors in Canada. The collection of some of the data was facilitated by an earlier Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada Doctoral Fellowship.

2 These figures were calculated using the Statistical Tables in the Appendices of the *University of Toronto President's Reports* (hereafter *President's Reports*). They do not include the federated arts colleges Victoria, Trinity, and St. Michael's.

leaving if a more attractive position presented itself." Dr. S.B. Jones in Geography, meanwhile, left Toronto for the University of Hawaii in search of a less "rigorous," more "agreeable" climate.[3]

Scattered among these letters from academics searching for university positions and from faculty who were jostling for more favourable working conditions was a different kind of request imbued with an acute sense of urgency. One such letter was dated 1935 and contained the story of Richard Brauer, assistant professor at the University of Berlin, who, when Hitler assumed power, was summarily dismissed by the Prussian Minister of Education for being a Jew. He wrote that "the German anti-Jewish laws of 1933 made it impossible for me to get any other position in Germany ... all my relatives have felt the persecution of the Nazi government, some have been in concentration camps." In a 1938 letter from the University of Vienna, Dr. Max Lederer asked for academic asylum after he had to leave his post as Professor of Philology in the Austrian Ministry of Education because of "circumstances which I may suppose to be known to you." Hans Hirsch, a German Chemist, was "compelled to go abroad on account of well-known circumstances," and Kethe Frohlick, who managed to secure a temporary teaching position at Vassar College in New York, had to leave Germany for "political reasons." University Professor Dr. Friedrich Engel-Janosi wrote to George Wrong in history that "owing to the political changes in Germany, I have lost my position as a professor of Modern History at the [University of Vienna] ... I am not allowed to use any archives and libraries in Germany any longer. So it is impossible for me to continue my scientific work and earn my livelihood there. I ask you if there is no opening for Modern History at your University?" On standard letterhead, Janosi's home address in Germany is crossed out.[4]

Many letters chronicled the violent on-going social and political change in Europe, and a German nation redefining its citizenship. A document forwarded to President Cody in 1938 tells a story of Professor Carl von Seemann of the Organic Chemistry Department at the University of Munich, who, writing to an acquaintance, recounted that "I am half Jewish and therefore have no possibilities whatever in Germany. The political situation in Germany is developing in such a way that it points to the destruction not only of all Jewish people but all

3 University of Toronto Archives (hereafter UTA), Department of Political Economy (hereafter Political Economy), A76-0025, box 012, file 01/012 (01), 22 September 1940, William Twaits to C.A. Ashley. UTA, Office of the President Papers (hereafter OP), A68-0006/046 (02), 9 September 1940; /024 (03), 7 January 1936. See also OP, A68-0006/052 (02), 30 October 1941; /046 (02), 9 September 1940; /024 (03), 7 January 1936; /052 (02), 30 October 1941; Brady Papers, B86-0018/010/T1928-1938; Innis papers, B72-0003; Political Economy, A76-0025/012, *passim*.

4 UTA, OP, A68-0006/041 (02); Box 040. Thomas Fisher Rare Books Library, University of Toronto, William Stewart Wallace Papers (hereafter RB), MS-31, Box 27, 15 April 1939.

those who have any Jewish blood. The small amount of protection I have is the fact that I am Czechoslovakian, but this did not prevent me from being evicted from my home … I'd be grateful if you could find any possible place where I might continue my work."[5] A letter dated 1939 was written by a 41-year-old refugee, a surgeon who specialized in diseases of the kidney and bladder. "I had to leave Germany as quickly as possible to avoid the concentration camps. I was arrested quite innocently only for being a Jew and in spite of 4 years participation in the First World War and there twice wounded!" Dr. Ernst Pakuscher, a Judge at the German Court of Appeal and affiliated with the University of Berlin asked Cody for any vacancies in the Department of Law, with brevity stating "for reasons which I need not stress, I wish to leave Germany with all speed." Another letter, dated December 1938, concluded with: "German universities [are] now in the course of dissolution." A renowned international scholar of social politics in Vienna was dismissed in March 1938 simply "as a result of political events (non-Aryan)." Karl Bloch, a refugee professor of romance philology expelled from the University of Vienna, was in exile in London and according to his cousin Irene Granovsky in Canada, needed a job "right now." Bloch will work for free at low rank, she wrote, imploring Cody to "rescue our family from a living death ... [The] fate of the whole family rests with this decision."[6]

The considerable difference in purpose and tone of the letters received by Cody and others during the 1930s and early 1940s frames this study. The university was faced with a grievous problem of global proportions. Many quarters of higher education in Canada readily attacked the intellectual impoverishment of Nazism, from a 1936 academic article that argued that Nazism was "nothing more ... than a political coup for the mentally inferior" to the Principal of McGill University's 1940 public lambaste of *Mein Kampf* as intellectually irresponsible. Professors in Canada approached the social and political conflagration on the European continent equipped with the ammunition of knowledge which they applied in their classrooms and publications, and as government and military advisors.[7] When appeals from foreign professors arrived in ever greater numbers, however, the Canadian professoriate was pressed to make hard decisions that were to directly affect the livelihoods, welfare, and in some cases very existence of colleagues in distress. In so doing, the response

5 UTA, OP, A68-0006/037 (04), 11 December 1938, Dr. Carl von Seeman to Dr. Mendel.

6 UTA, OP, A68-0006/040, Dr. Eduard Muhsam to Cody; /043 (06), 19 July 1939; Political Economy, A76-0025/009 (20), 22 November 1938, Dr. Ernst Steiner; and OP A68-0006/042 (02), 29 June 1939.

7 H. Steinhauer, "The Intellectuals in the Third Reich," *The University of Toronto Quarterly* 4 (July 1936): 519; F. Cyril James, *Royal Society of Canada Proceedings and Transactions Third Series,* Vol. XXXIV, May 1940, 91.

to refugee professors tested some stereotypical claims that, historically, institutions of higher learning were oases of reason, humanity, morality, and critical objectivity.

The reaction of all sectors of society to the humanitarian disaster of refugee professors from the 1930s through the Second World War is important to consider – indeed, Canada had one of the worst records "of all the immigration countries in the world" in its receptiveness toward Jewish refugees[8] – but of particular interest in this study is the how university professors in Canada, and especially in Toronto, met the emergency. To be sure, the prevalence of discrimination, anti-Semitism, and questionable immigration policy during this time will always challenge claims of historical multiculturalism in Canada, but how professors responded to displaced and persecuted overseas colleagues clearly revealed a smouldering moral tension of basic altruism versus personal and professional predispositions and the practical considerations of allocating university resources. Academic cultures were shaped by socially-inscribed understandings of identity, and in some cases the precedence of discrimination demonstrated that agents and leaders in higher education were not impervious to socio-economic and institutional constraints, and presiding community values, even in the face of refugee professors' horrific circumstances.

Refugee professors

Letters of desperation and tragedy written by displaced European scholars barely reflected the total disruption of academic and professional life in Nazi Germany. Since the first National Socialist legislative measures in April 1933, such as the "Law for the Restoration of the Professional Civil Service" and other increasingly-harsh discriminatory decrees, numerous intellectuals were identified for segregation and persecution because of Jewish traits or backgrounds. They and many more were considered political or intellectual enemies of the state, resulting in social ostracism, dismissal from higher education or official posts, and in many cases ejection from their homes. Professors and intellectuals were under suspicion because they represented the old Semitic or Imperial order of bureaucracy that was antithetical to National Socialism. Their reputed capacity to publicly reason (if they so chose) against emergent government policies that advocated racial and social purity, and the threat posed by

8 From 1933 to 1939, approximately only 5,000 Jewish and non-Jewish refugees were admitted to Canada. Irving Abella and Harold Troper, "Canada and the Refugee Intellectual, 1933-1939," in Jarrell C. Jackman and Carla M. Borden, eds., *The Muses Flee Hitler: Cultural Transfer and Adaptation, 1930-1945* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1983), 259.

their penchant to espouse Marxist Socialism and its macroanalysis of society, made them a target.[9]

Professors were high profile in society, and through policies "designed to render them powerless," they were isolated along with many other intellectuals and middle-class professional, business, and community leaders. With the economic depression, political volatility, and the culture of demoralization in the Weimar Republic, and the methodological and deep-rooted dismantling of German society in the 1930s, university professors who refused to support radical social and political policies found working in higher education increasingly difficult. Working as civil servants within institutions that since the late 1920s were becoming ever more anti-Semitic, university professors faced large-scale faculty dismissals and closures of entire departments. At a dinner in his honour at the University of Göttingen, the Nazi Minister of Culture asked the assembled if Göttingen's famous mathematical institute had really suffered now that the Jews were gone. The answer came: "'Suffered? No, minister, it has ceased to exist'."[10]

The common response to the new social, political, and intellectual order was to leave the community or the continent altogether. As the Nazis solidified their grip on German society in the 1930s and expanded territorially, universities in Austria, Czechoslovakia, and Italy suffered the same fate as the reconstituted German institutions. By 1939, the previously vibrant and esteemed German and central European intellectual and artistic culture, of which Jewish

9 Claus-Dieter Krohn, *Intellectuals in Exile: Refugee Scholars and the New School for Social Research,* trans. Rita Kimber and Robert Kimber, with a foreword by Arthur J. Vidich (Amherst, MA: The University of Massachusetts Press, 1993), 12. Norman Bentwich, *The Rescue and Achievement of Refugee Scholars: The Story of Displaced Scholars and Scientists, 1933-1952* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1953). Krohn, *Intellectuals in Exile*, 14.

10 Herbert A. Strauss, "Jews in German History: Persecution, Emigration, Acculturation," in *International Biographical Dictionary of Central European Emigrés 1933-1945. Volume II: The Arts, Sciences, and Literature* (München: K. G. Saur, 1983), XVIII. *Displaced German Scholars: A Guide to Academics in Peril in Nazi Germany During the 1930s*, Studies in Judaica and the Holocaust, Number Seven, with a new introduction by Dr. Nathan Kravetz (San Bernardino, California: Borgo Press, 1993), 1-2. An instructive overview of the fate of academics in Nazi Germany is found in Herbert A. Strauss, Werner Röder, and others, eds., *International Biographical Dictionary of Central European Émigrés 1933-1945* Volumes II and III: The Arts, Sciences, and Literature. (München: K. G. Saur, 1983). See especially in Vol. II: Horst Möller, "From Weimar to Bonn: The Arts and Humanities in Exile and Return, 1933-1980," XLI-LXVI; and Herbert A. Strauss, "The Migration of Academic Intellectuals," in *International Biographical Dictionary* Volume II: The Arts, Sciences, and Literature (München: K. G. Saur, 1983), LXVII-LXXVII. See also Strauss, "Jews in German History," XXV; Max Weinreich, *Hitler's Professors: The Part of Scholarship in Germany's Crimes Against the Jewish People* (New York: Yiddish Scientific Institute, 1946); and Avraham Barkai, "Jewish Life in Its German Milieu," in *German-Jewish History in Modern Times. Volume 4: Renewal and Destruction, 1918-1945*, with an epilogue by Steven M. Lowenstein, ed. Michael A. Meyer (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), 51-52.

communities were integral, had been gutted. The loss to university culture, which enjoyed worldwide recognition and prestige, was inestimable.[11]

Demographically, how acute was the intellectual exodus? Figures are uncertain, given that the "timing of the dismissals varied significantly from one discipline to another and that different universities were affected to varying degrees."[12] Herbert Strauss quotes that a maximum number of all university faculty dismissed by the Third Reich was 3,120, which included 28% of all full professors. Another figure suggests that displacements were 45% of the total number of university positions. The Geneva Committee, after the war renamed "The International Committee for Aid to Intellectuals," cited that between 1933-1945, it alone had helped approximately 10,000 Western European (German and other nationalities) intellectuals (academics and independent scholars) restart life elsewhere.[13] A safe assumption can be made that a large majority of the professors – perhaps two-thirds or more – who lost their jobs were Jewish.[14]

The University of Toronto at war

How aware was the university of the seriousness of the plight of refugee professors? With a exigently focussed sense of purpose, the university was ready to meet considerable war-time demands, reflected in swift and efficacious changes to curriculum, program, and research mandates. The university was perceived as an institution important not only for its tangible contributions to

11 "It was an intolerable outrage for the [Nazis] that Jews, who were barely one per cent of the German population, filled one eighth part of the professorial chairs in the German Universities and had won a quarter of the Nobel Prizes awarded to Germans" (Bentwich, *The Rescue and Achievement of Refugee Scholars*, 2). Strauss, "The Migration of the Academic Intellectuals" (LXVII- LXXVII). Krohn suggests that in some universities, entire "research traditions" built on years of scholarship were eliminated (*Intellectuals in Exile* fs18, p.13). Brent Engelmann, *Germany Without Jews* trans. D.J. Beer (Toronto: Bantam Books, 1984), 38-58; Laura Fermi, *Illustrious Immigrants: The Intellectual Migration from Europe, 1930-1941* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1968).

12 Krohn, *Intellectuals in Exile*, 13. "Sources on the actual number of persons dismissed from ... university positions by the Third Reich vary widely because of war-caused losses of archives and ambiguities in the personnel records of universities that did not permit a precise separation of persons dismissed ... from persons leaving for other reasons, including retirement" (Strauss, "Jews in German History," XXIV).

13 Strauss, "Jews in German History," *International Biographical Dictionary* XXIV; Engelmann, *Germany Without Jews*, 99-102; Bentwich, *The Rescue and Achievement of Refugee Scholars*, 66.

14 This is based on the figure of 3,120 and one estimate that the number of German university teachers who were Jewish dismissed in just two years – 1933 and 1935 – was approximately 2,000 (Strauss, "Jews in German History," *International Biographical Dictionary* p. XXIV). See also Bentwich, *The Rescue and Achievement of Refugee Scholars*, 12. Similar to the difficulty in statistically determining university purges, tracing professors emigration is problematical. The *International Biographical Dictionary* cautions that the dates of dismissal should not be directly related to dates of departure. See Strauss, "Jews in German History," XXV. Möller, "From Weimar to Bonn," *International Biographical Dictionary*, p. L.

the war effort but as a weapon for a higher moral purpose. Revealing his theological background as a Church of England clergyman of high standing, throughout the war President Cody asserted that the university was a sanctuary of spiritual goodness and promoter of social progress. In 1941, he wrote that

> The universities are citadels of freedom; they cannot remain open in lands where freedom and justice have perished. Europe under the Nazi repression is practically now void of any real universities. Universities are the homes and guardians of those spiritual, moral, and intellectual values without which our democratic way of life would cease to be, or would lose all worth...The university had the crucial role of forwarding the welfare of that state and of the world through its contributions to truth, goodness, and beauty." A year later, Cody's remarks were no less noble. In reference to the "wealth of intellectual and spiritual resources which have been bequeathed to us from more ancient civilizations," he stated that "The colleges and universities must try to inspire students to self-discipline, that they may graduate into the work of the world realizing that they have not only privileges and rights, but also duties to God and man as citizens of a democratic community.[15]

Such sentiments were echoed by other members of the university and the media. For example, the alumni federation wrote to Cody that "we feel that graduates as well as undergraduates must join with you in your stand that the fight is not for democracy alone but for the spiritual values which make life worth living." *Saturday Night Magazine* seemed to agree. "It is a ... platitude to say that universities exist to form character and develop and enrich the natural intelligence of students ... Daily we have the proof before us that Canadian universities have helped rear a noble, unselfish and resourceful generation."[16]

In an atmosphere charged with majestic elocution, the situation of refugee professors was becoming more desperate, testing these laudable if unattainable moral ideals. In his *President's Report*, Cody mentioned the importance of professors as "agents for the discovery and dissemination of truth," and upon whom "the real importance and worth of a university depends."[17] Despite these pronouncements, between 1935-1945, numerous requests for academic positions from both refugee and non-refugee applicants were overwhelmingly met with Cody's or a department head's claim that any positions previously available were long since filled, or that because of the war, hiring was frozen.

Hiring faculty at the university was capricious and private. Filling the very few positions available each year was characterized by a faculty member, usually a department head, or high-level acquaintance who was often another university

15 *President's Report*, 1940-1941, 19; *President's Report*, 1941-1942, 17.

16 UTA, OP, A68-0006/042 (05), 20 November 1939; *Saturday Night Magazine*, 19 September 1942.

17 *President's Report*, 1935-1936, 23; 1937-1938, 1.

president, suggesting a qualified applicant. In this hierarchical and unilateral administrative structure, most hirings were completed solely with the approval of the university president, the interviews were not subject to open competition, and the process was seldom laid public. By 1945, with little fanfare, the University of Toronto had managed to hire twenty refugee European lecturers and professors, at least half of whom were Jewish, and almost all of whom were men. For the purposes of this study, the 1951 United Nations Geneva Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees' definition of refugee will be used, derived directly from the experiences of displaced people before and during the Second World War. If a refugee is someone who suffered persecution, and due to fear was forced out of the homeland, and circumstances made returning to the homeland impossible,[18] then refugee professors hired at the University of Toronto between 1935-1945 included, in alphabetical order and with departmental affiliation in parenthesis: Eric E.F. Baer (chemistry), Richard D. Brauer (mathematics), Peter H. Brieger (fine art), Theodore Eschmann (medieval studies), Hermann O.L. Fischer (chemistry), Jean Manfred Grosheintz (chemistry), Herta Hartmanshenn (German),[19] Bernard Haurwitz (physics), Karl Helleiner (political economy), Leopold Infeld (applied mathematics), Walther Heinrick Kohl (physics), W. Kohn (mathematics), Gerhart M.A.B. Ladner (medieval history), Bruno Mendel (Banting and Best Department of Medical Research), Egbert Munzer (political economy), Heinrich J.U. Rubin (comparative law), Aleksander Rytel (pharmacology), Robert Schnitzer (Connaught Laboratories), Carl Von Seeman (Connaught Laboratories), Alexander Weinstein (mathematics).[20] This list adds to the previously-claimed number of refugee professors at the University of Toronto and in the country as a

18 For the expanded definition of "refugee," see Gerald E. Dirks, *Canada's Refugee Policy: Indifference or Opportunism?* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1977), 4-5. See also Jacques Vernant, *The Refugee in the Post-War World* [London: George Allen and Unwin, 1953), 20.

19 Appointed in 1936, Herta Hartmanshenn was the only woman refugee professor hired at the University of Toronto during the years of this study. Women made up only a tiny percentage of the total professorial refugee population, as attested in Stauss and Röder, *International Biographical Dictionary*. Also see Sibylle Quack, ed., *Between Sorrow and Strength: Women Refugees of the Nazi Period*, Publications of the German Historical Institute, Washington, D.C. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), especially the chapters which deal with the occupations and professions of women émigrés, 215-282, 289-324. In "Everyday Life and Emigration: The Role of Women," Quack states that "women are mentioned all too infrequently ... It appears that the refugee historians were nearly exclusively men." (Hartmut Lehmann and James J. Sheehan, ed., *An Interrupted Past: German-Speaking Refugee Historians in the United States After 1933*, Publications of the German Historical Institute, Washington, D.C. [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991], 102-108).

20 These individuals were identified through cross-analysis of archival sources in the UTA and Thomas Fisher Rare Books Library at the University of Toronto, the *President's Reports* and *University of Toronto Calendars*, and various biographies, bibliographies, and indices, including the *International Biographical Dictionary*. Leopold Infeld is included in this list but was

whole.[21] It comprises only professors, privatdozens (private lecturers associated with a university), and individuals involved in full-time professional teaching, research, or scholarly activity in higher education before emigration to Canada.

The professoriate's response

The twenty refugee professors represented at least seven percent of all hirings into the ranks of professor, associates, lecturers, or assistants between 1935-1945. Three-quarters of these refugees were hired before the war started. The sheer volume of petitions by refugee professors and their sponsors helped preclude hiring refugee professors in any large number, let alone en masse, but efforts were underway in Toronto and elsewhere. Many emigrating professors received help from professor-based initiatives working with the High Commissioner for Refugees of the League of Nations, the Notgemeinschaft deutscher Wissenschaftler im Ausland, and the Federation of University Women in England.[22] By virtue of its vast higher education resources and net-

not a refugee from Nazi oppression as was the case with the other professors. Infeld felt the strain of anti-Semitism in Polish society ("Jewish students were beaten on campus"), and left the continent for a better academic prospect in Cambridge in 1934, and then after a brief return to Poland, left for overseas in 1936. See UTA Department of Graduate Records, A73-00026/167 (04), and Personnel Files, "Infeld"; Dorothy Howarth, "Worked with Einstein: Dr. Infeld Writes Book about Great Physicist," *The Telegram* (7 January 1939), 4; and Michiel Horn, *Academic Freedom in Canada: A History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999), 203-204.

21 Determination of the exact number of refugee professors admitted to Canada during this time and throughout the twentieth century is still being investigated by this author. In previous studies, the number of refugee scholars estimated to have been admitted to Canada has been conservative, but understandable considering the dearth of easily-accessible statistics and sources. See Lawrence D. Stokes, "Canada and an Academic Refugee from Nazi Germany: The Case of Gerhard Herzberg," *Canadian Historical Review* 57, no. 2 (1976): 150; Abella and Troper, "Canada and the Refugee Intellectual, 1933-1939," 259; Horn, *Academic Freedom in Canada*, 166; Irving Abella, "Presidential Address: Jews, Human Rights, and the Making of a New Canada," *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association* (Edmonton, 2000): 6; and Martin L. Friedland, *The University of Toronto: A History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002), 343.

22 European committees, set up by professors, included the Comité des Savants and Foyer Henri Heine in France, the Academisch Steunfonds (Netherlands), and the Comité International pour le Placement des Intellectuel Réfugiés (Geneva). Strauss, "The Migration of Academic Intellectuals," LXXII-LXXIII; Krohn, *Intellectuals in Exile*, 24-29; Bentwich, *The Rescue and Achievement of Refugee Scholars*, 15; Gerhard Hirschfeld, "German Refugee Scholars in Great Britain," in *Refugees in the Age of Total War*, ed. Anna C. Bramwell, with an introduction by Michael R. Marrus (London: Unwin Hyman, 1988), 155. Numerous international agencies existed with various commitments of assistance for refugees, such as the Office of the League of Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the Red Cross, and the British Coordinating Committee for Refugees. Literature on relief organizations for refugees is extensive. See for example, Claudina M. Skran, *Refugees in Inter-War Europe: The Emergence of a Regime* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995); and a contemporary work by Sir John Hope Simpson, *The Refugee Problem: Report of a Survey*, (London: Oxford University Press, 1939), especially 172-226.

works, the United States became a haven for escaping scholars with its host of private and voluntary relief denominational and non-denominational committees, and large philanthropies. Universities hired numerous European researchers, and the graduate division of the New School for Social Research – the "University in Exile" – in New York City was created by displaced professors.[23]

Through the sponsorship of individuals and organizations, many of the professors who escaped to England[24] or to the United States worked in universities on temporary assignments, yearly fellowships, or, if fortunate enough, in longer term and tenured positions. The relief Society in England that caught the eye of a group of professors at the University of Toronto was the overworked Academic Assistance Council, formed in 1933, later named the Society for the Protection of Science and Learning. Founded by professors in London through a network of committees in colleges and universities, the British Society acted as a clearing-house for academic scholars, taking on significant responsibility for exiled scholars. The British Society placed refugee professors in universities and helped subsidize their salaries or lectures for the first year or two, or initially found gainful employment for them off campus until they secured faculty positions.[25] From the approach of war to the early 1940s, the British Society was overwhelmed with applications, many of which by then had come from all over continental Europe. Due to the increasingly limited resources of stagnant university development in the country, as well as a growing obstinacy in Britain towards immigrants reflected in expressions of anti-Semitism and anti-communism, many of the petitions from refugee scholars subsequently made it to Cody's desk.[26]

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23 Figures vary for the number of refugee professors supported by American relief organizations. The *International Biographical Dictionary* estimates that 31% of its entries for university teachers emigrated directly to the United States; the figure rises to 42% for the United States as a final destination (Strauss, "Some Demographic and Occupational Characteristics," Tables 13 and 14, LXXXIV). See also Strauss, "The Migration of Academic Intellectuals," LXXIV-LXXV; Strauss, "The Migration of Academic Intellectuals," Table 17, LXXXVI; David Cleghorn Thomson, "The United States and the Academic Exiles," Queen's Quarterly XLVI (Summer 1939): 215-225; Abraham Flexner "Beyond the Graduate Schools: The Institute for Advanced Study," *University of Toronto Quarterly* 2 (January 1938): 178-183; and Timothy P. Maga, "The Quest for a Generous America: Varian Fry and the Refugee Cause, 1940-1942," in *Holocaust Studies Annual, Volume I, 1983: America and the Holocaust*, ed. Sanford Pinsker and Jack Fischel (Greenwood, Florida: Penkevill Publishing, 1984): 69-87.

24 Almost half of all German university and college academics emigrated first to Great Britain (Hirschfeld, "German Refugee Scholars in Great Britain," 153).

25 By 1938, permanent work was found by the Society for 550 academics in 38 different countries. See Bentwich, *The Rescue and Achievement of Refugee Scholars*, 97; Simpson, *The Refugee Problem*, 189; and *Skran, Refugees in Inter-war Europe*, 200.

26 Other reasons for refugee professors seeking succour outside of England included individual personal and professional preferences. See Paul K. Hoch, "No Utopia: Refugee Scholars in Britain," in *History Today* 35 (November 1985): 53-56; Tony Kushner, *The Persistence of Prejudice: Antisemitism in British Society During the Second World War* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1989).

Based directly on the British Society, the Canadian Society for the Protection of Science and Learning (hereafter, the Society) was organized in the spring of 1939. With a keen sense of history, William Stewart Wallace, a decorated war veteran, helped create the Society and rapidly became a major force in the organization's operations. At various times, Wallace was a history and english professor, and a "rebel against the orthodox treatment of history of his day" who, among his prodigious publications, wrote the first major history of the University of Toronto. He was a founder of the *Canadian Historical Review*, and in the 1930s and 1940s, was university librarian and "honorary editor" of the Royal Society of Canada annual publications. His industriousness was well documented.[27]

In the formative stages, the Society was given overwhelming acceptance by its mother organization. The British Society lauded the initiative in Toronto for its ingenuity in planning to place refugee professors in specific universities – the British Society only supplied relief funding, much like the charitable foundations in the United States – and for its strategy in pursuing private funding. The British Society, however, cautioned not to inhibit the temporarily-supported scholars' desire to seek permanent appointments in Canada and internationally if the opportunities arose.[28]

With the stamp of approval, members of the Society sought counsel from numerous colleagues in the academic community and from researchers in public and private industry, and bureaucrats and politicians in Ottawa. Back and forth, ideas were exchanged about structure, procedure, composition, and mission. A series of preliminary meetings in March 1939 of the organization committee was led by a small group of Fellows of the Royal Society of Canada at Toronto, chaired by A.G. Huntsman (biology) and V.E. Henderson (pharmacy and pharmacology), and included E.F. Burton (physics), C.T. Currelly (archaeology), J.R. Dymond (zoology and Director of the Royal Ontario Museum of Zoology), J. Ellis Thomson (mineralogy and petrography), George Wrong (history), and Wallace. A meeting on 27 March reported on the initial series of communication to outside academics, scholarly associations, and research institutions that affirmed the viability of the Society and the need to draw up of an official list of Society officers. The hope was to secure officers and trustees "for effectiveness and representation throughout Canada." Cody's donation of $100 helped jumpstart the Society.[29]

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27 "Dr. W.S. Wallace, Canadian Historian," *Globe and Mail*, 11 March 1970; W. Stewart Wallace, *A History of the University of Toronto, 1827-1927* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1927); "William Stewart Wallace," *Proceedings of the Royal Society of Canada* Series IV, Vol. VIII, 1970, 157. "W. Stewart Wallace, 1884-1970," *U of T Bulletin*, 2 April 1970, 4; "Wallace," *Proceedings*, 156.

28 RB, MS-31-28, 28 March 1939.

29 UTA, OP, A68-0006/037 (03), 22 March, 24 March, 5 April 1939; (02), 30 March 1939; Political Economy, A76-0025/010 (01), 8 March, "To Toronto Fellows of the Royal Society of Canada."

The formal launch of the Society came on 3 April 1939 in the Debates Room of Hart House. Forty-Three people attended, most of whom were well-known scholars and department heads at the university. Details were given on the reasoning behind the establishment of the Society, the goals being "to raise funds to bring to Canada, and to support for a limited period, carefully selected refugee scientists and scholars who are able to make a definite and valuable contribution to Canadian life. The object of the Society is primarily humanitarian; but its intention is also to bring to Canada outstanding scientific specialists in fields in which Canada is not fully equipped." The principles of the Society, enshrined in the appeals brochure sent out shortly after the meeting to solicit for subscriptions, was tripartite: "(1) There must be no displacement of Canadian scholars and scientists; and the advancement of Canadian students must not be blocked; (2) All research workers brought in and attached to Canadian universities ... must be supernumerary; (3) If, at the end of a reasonable period, such research workers have not been absorbed *on their merits* into Canadian economic or academic life, the Society must be understood as having discharged its duty towards them ... Canadian scholars and scientists cannot be indifferent to the tragic fate of their colleagues ... who have, in many cases, lost all but life itself.... They beg of you not to 'pass by on the other side'."[30]

The attendees appointed a governing body that included Sir Frederick Banting and Harold Innis as well as an impressive docket of past and present leaders in higher education, including Cody, Sir Robert Falconer, L.S. Klinck of University of British Columbia, Sidney Smith, then of University of Manitoba, Carleton Stanley (Dalhousie), G.J. Trueman (Mount Allison), W.A.R. Kerr (Alberta), and Sherwood Fox (Western). The list was extensive, encompassing dozens of professors at Toronto and elsewhere, and the presidents or principals of sixteen Canadian universities.[31]

The Royal Society of Canada was deemed to be the best place to start soliciting for donations and support, as it had originally formed a committee to provide relief for refugee intellectuals months before, but agreed to pass the torch.[32] From March to September 1939, Wallace and other members of the organizing committee were inundated with responses from professors and university administrators, public and private researchers, professionals, librarians, archivists, magistrates, politicians, and industrial and community leaders. The

30 RB, MS-31-27, n.d. "An Appeal on Behalf of...THE CANADIAN SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF SCIENCE AND LEARNING." UTA, B65-0029/001, "Canadian Society for the Protection of Science and Learning," n.d., "An Appeal on Behalf of The Canadian Society for the Protection of Science and Learning."

31 RB, MS-31-28, n.d., "Meeting April 3rd. Circular letter sent to all Fellows of Royal Society of Canada outside of Toronto."

32 RB, MS 31-28, 29 March, 4 April 1939.

address of the Society was the University of Toronto Library (to be made official through the Society's incorporation in May 1940), and the committee worked tirelessly throughout the months following the launch to send out circulars and respond to inquiries.

With membership and mission confirmed, and Wallace as Society convenor, a spirit of optimism and energy prevailed. Another meeting was held three weeks later on 27 April, attended by ten faculty members and the general secretary of the British Society. The meeting revolved around the need to form the crucial refugee selection committee, and acclaimed Wallace as secretary, Henderson as treasurer (Innis was to later assume the post), and Principal R.C. Wallace of Queen's University as chairman of the overriding Council. Before the meeting, Wallace wondered to Diamond Jenness of the National Museum of Canada if the Society should confine its appeal to people in academic life and research work, and if it should accept contributions from politically-motivated "non-academic people" which could "limit [the society's] freedom of action."[33]

During the summer of 1939, the objectives of the Society were confirmed, and processing of the increasing number of applications from refugee professors, sent to the Society from outside sources and from Cody, was underway. Subscription forms which included requests for donations were posted. Preparations were made to bring out the Society's first refugee professor, Karl Helleiner. Helleiner, a displaced Austrian scholar, was to be the feather in the cap of the organization: after 1940, he became the Society's *raison d'etre*. Helleiner's case was indicative of the sheer amount of paperwork needed, exchanged among the Society members, the refugee, university administration, Department of Mines and Resources (Immigration Branch), and the British Society, just to bring over a single professor.

The handling of Helleiner's case spanned the heights of the summer of 1939 to the end of the Society in 1946. As early as 5 July 1939, the Society had targeted Helleiner as a likely candidate for relief.[34] In the transfer of Helleiner from Europe to Canada, by the first week in January 1940, at least nineteen pieces of detailed correspondence was exchanged among the stakeholders – an average of approximately three missives a month. In December 1939, preparations for Helleiner's transit across the ocean generated four Canadian Pacific telegraphs, outlining in slightest minutiae the expediting of his permit to enter

33 RB, MS-31-27, 10 November 1939, Wallace to R.C. Wallace; 20 April 1939.

34 No existing documents could be found for the reasoning for the choice of Helleiner, or specifically for others short-listed from the hundreds of applications Wallace and the Society would receive up to the end of the war. Wallace noted that the decision on who to approach to help was a "long and tedious process" (RB, MS-31-28, 5 July 1939, Wallace to Cleghorn Thomson).

Canada. By 1941, Helleiner was attached to the Department of Political Science as an honorary lecturer, filling some of the duties of members of the department who were away on war service. He was to remain at the university for the remainder of his academic career.[35]

In fall 1939, two other professors were successfully supported. Egbert Munzer, a Jewish medical researcher was sought after by the Dean of Studies at St. Francis Xavier University in Antigonish, Nova Scotia. Wallace corresponded with Antigonish, Britain, and Ottawa between November and December offering help to prepare Munzer's papers for immigration. With the indispensable assistance of Wallace, Munzer eventually stayed on in Toronto for two years while also listed as faculty member at St. Francis Xavier. The other professor, Aleksander Rytel, former head of pharmaceutical research in Warsaw, was given minor funding by the Society for two years until he left for a research position at a Montreal hospital.[36]

Not all efforts were successful. Two professors who were considered for relief – biology professor Hans Kalmus of Czechoslovakia and Professor Engel-Janosi – were, in the end, not offered support. Kalmus had secured an academic position in Montreal, and Engel-Janosi (who had written to George Wrong, above) was caught in the tangle of Canadian immigration policies and American funding agencies, and remained working in the United States.[37]

In June 1940, the Society was incorporated, importantly allowing refugees to take out life insurance for the duration of their stay as Society charges. By 1941, a total of approximately $6,600 was raised, but it was to represent the apex of the Society's financial reserve. A large number of donors were professors, with many contributions ranging from $5 to $200. Through a massive amount of communication between Wallace and interested academic parties across Canada, local independent Societies were formed at Mount Allison, Dalhousie, McGill, Ottawa, Queen's, McMaster, Manitoba, Alberta, and UBC, with Toronto remaining the nerve center and knowledge base for the nationwide initiative.[38]

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35 RB, MS-31-28, 5 July 1939-8; January 1940; RB, MS-31-27, 2-11 December 1939; 8 December 1939; 6 October 1941, Wallace to Deputy Minister, Dept. of Sec. of State.

36 RB, MS-31-27, 9, 17, 22, and 24 November 1939; 4, 12, 16, 20, 19 December; and 6 January 1940; UTA, B65-0029/001, 24 November 1939, "Canadian Society for the Protection of Science and Learning."

37 In response to a letter from the Society regarding Engel-Janosi, on 2 December 1939, Chancellor Howard P. Whidden of McMaster University remarked that there's "nothing here...for him...How sad these cases are" (RB, MS-31-27).

38 RB, MS-31-27, 10 January 1941. UTA, Canadian Society for the Protection of Science and Learning (CSPSL), B65-0029/001; RB, MS-31-27, 3 June 1940, 6 February 1941, Wallace to VE Henderson.

Growing resignation

By the fall of 1939, Wallace had become the *de facto* kingpin of the Society. Between 1939-1941, the number of donations was still impressive, but the Society continued with much less enthusiasm, and at times discouraging periods of resignation. The war had affected university operations, and Wallace was realizing the daunting volume of work involved. Wallace privately admitted to R.C. Wallace that the British Society was "badly disorganized." He asked the Chair of the British Society on how to proceed with their obligations to Helleiner, and in a bout of frustration, declared that probably the best course of action would be to return all the collected money and disband the Canadian organization.[39]

This pessimism was remarkable considering that the Society had existed for merely a few months. The pressures of paperwork had started to take its toll, not helped by the government, university, and society that were now narrowly focussed on wartime operations. At the meeting on 14 September 1939, attended by only six members, Wallace suggested that a questionnaire be distributed to all subscribers on whether the Society should continue to solicit for money and to seek other refugee candidates. The responses to the questionnaire, many of whom by academics at the University of Toronto, were revealing. Extrapolating from the surviving documents, the YES's totalled thirty-six. The NO's totalled fifty-four, and showed the change in priorities among Society members to instead tighten institutional and personal purse strings. The results could not have heartened Wallace. Among the simple NO's were Cody himself, Burton, G.W. Brown (history), A. Brady (political science), E.A. Bott (psychology), Best, Gordon, F.B. Kenrick (chemistry), H.A. Logan (political economy), Faculty of Arts Dean Samuel Beatty, T.J. Meek (oriental languages), H.B. Sifton (botany), and Banting, some of the very founders of the Society.[40]

Only over a third of the questionnaire responses endorsed helping more refugee professors, the rest recommending instead that the Society discharge its duties sparingly. The attitude toward the Society was exemplified in a letter from George Wrong: "I am pondering the problem of the refugee scholar and I don't think I can give a simple 'Yes' or 'No' ... My own judgement would depend in some measure on ... the English society ... The pressure of the war is greater on them than on us, and if they can continue to do something considerable still, we too ought to try to go on." In just a few short months since the establishment of the Society, Wallace lamented that the Society had assumed a "wait and see" approach.[41]

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39 RB, MS-31-27, 30 October 1939; MS-31-28, 8 September 1939; 18 October 1939.

40 RB, MS-31-27, n.d., "Canadian Society for the Protection of Science and Learning"; October 1939, passim.

41 RB, MS-31-26, 13 October 1939; UTA, CSPSL, B65-0029/001, 14 September 1939.

The Society was appealing to hardened ears. Although still a considerable amount of money was raised through a second pledge drive, raising funds was as difficult as raising interest. In 1940, a letter to Innis from W.H. Martin (chemistry) included a cheque for $20 with a message: "This is the last payment I intend to make. So much water has gone over the dam since the plan was conceived that my attitude is now different. An injustice to a few scholars through exile is now dwarfed by greater catastrophes to millions." A letter from a faculty member at the Ontario College of Education read: "I shall have to renege on my promise to subscribe...The two war guests we have taken into our house are proving to be more costly...than...anticipated. This...coupled with the increase in taxes makes it impossible to support other forms of war effort." Yearly subscriptions plummeted to zero in 1942, followed by $100 each for 1943 and 1944. As the war progressed and reconstruction was rumoured, professors in Toronto and elsewhere were looking towards a future that did not include helping refugee professors.[42]

Nevertheless, belatedly, the Society's international profile increased, and Wallace continued to receive letters from abroad describing pain and distress. The Vatican's Librarian and Archivist, Cardinal Mercati, inquired about relief for a history professor in Turin. The refugee scholar was of "Hebrew origin," but baptized, and, as Mercati continued: "It is a pity that a scholar, so well endowed and so skilfully prepared ... should be so reduced to inactivity and to misery."[43] K.P.R. Neville, Secretary of the National Conference of Canadian Universities, asked Cody to draft a resolution for the next annual conference in 1940 which could then presented to the Polish Consul-General in the name of "Universitydom." After consulting overseas contacts, Cody spoke to the assembled members:

> The members of the Conference of Canadian Universities have learned with shocked horror of the cold-blooded brutality with which their fellow academicians of the University of Cracow in Poland have been treated by German invaders ... [T]he members of the teaching staff were anxious to attend a conference at which a German Professor was called on to explain the German attitude to Polish scientists. ... [T]his lecturer began 'in most vulgar manner to slander Polish scholars and scientists.' [T]he Polish teachers refused to sign a document recognizing the legality of the German aggression and occupation. All the Polish professors ... 160 in number, left the hall in protest only to find lorries awaiting them at the door. They were all arrested, deported to Germany, and interned in a Nazi concentration camp ... and the University was closed for the first time since its foundation [in 1364].

42 For pledge responses, see RB, MS-31-27 *passim*. RB, MS-31-28, 21 October 1940, W.H. Martin to Innis; 15 October 1940, Peter Sandiford to Innis; 9 February 1940, Goodwin to Innis; UTA, CSPSL, B65-0029/001, n.d.

43 RB, MS-31-27, 9 March 1940.

Cody continued by condemning the "abhorrence [of] a persecution that has no military justification and a deliberate act to suppress the culture and literature of the Polish people."[44]

Throughout the war, the Society had helped a total of five refugee professors – Helleiner, Kohl, Ladner, Munzer, and Rytel – find positions in Toronto.[45] Clearly, however, Wallace spent most of his time fielding inquiries from stranded foreign academics, and as the war progressed, corresponded with civilian and military internees in Canadian prisoner-of-war camps in an effort to secure their well-being. In 1940, Wallace assisted McGill University with the immigration, boarding, and lodging of the only woman refugee scholar mentioned at length in Society documents. Women refugee professors were far less numerous, or at least less known, as male émigrés, and Wallace mentioned that he was not regularly updated on women professors looking for help.[46]

In 1942, the Society had wound down to the point where it was virtually a one-man operation. Local university committees formed across Canada after the start of the war had slowed operations or folded entirely. Annual meetings in Toronto were meagrely attended and Wallace had even stopped informing R.C. Wallace of many of the events. For at least one subsequent meeting, Wallace wrote to R.C. Wallace not to bother attending as "there is nothing of importance to come up." In April 1943, Wallace decided to return any leftover subscribers' money, and asked R.C. Wallace if the Society should even proceed with holding any future gatherings. In February 1944, Wallace wrote to R.C. Wallace recommending that the Society surrender its charter. In March, the Society received a handwritten letter from Helleiner when he was cut free from Society responsibilities. "If I may use a Canadian colloquialism, thanks a lot." Wallace mundanely reported that the Society was "in a sort of suspended animation."[47] With the Society essentially moribund, the charter was finally surrendered in spring 1946, an afterthought, and the Society's Sisyphean struggle was over.

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44 UTA, OP A68-0006/043 (06), 15, 29 February 1940.

45 Rytel was given a small subsistence fund in the fall of 1939 and spring 1940. The Society facilitated the paperwork among the British Society, Immigration, and Cody for the other three professors.

46 RB, MS-31-28, 23 September 1940, Wallace to Dorothy Turville, President of the Canadian University Women's Federation; MS-31-27, 7 November 1940, Wallace to T.E. Matthews, Registrar, McGill University. In a letter to the British society in spring 1940, the chair of the Montreal committee wrote that "I suppose there are far fewer women refugees than men..." (5 March 1940, Chairman of Montreal Committee to Esther Simpson).

47 RB, MS-31-28, 11 March 1942, Wallace to R.C. Wallace; UTA, CSPSL, B65-0029; RB, MS-31-28, 7, 12 April 1943, Wallace to R.C. Wallace; 25 February 1943; 24 February, 10 March, 23 March 1944, Wallace to R.C. Wallace.

Reaction to the Society

Initial reaction to the Society was swift. Between March and September 1939, expressions of support were rife but with regrets for being unable to attend the announced meetings. Expository and thoughtful letters to the Society included variations on being "sympathetic to the cause," and debating the merits of starting up local Societies.[48] Some letters, however, demonstrated less-than unbridled enthusiasm, and exposed the socio-intellectual and political tensions in the university and society that were to eventually enervate the Society's momentum and place the movement towards providing relief in unremitting jeopardy.

These letters illustrated a complex response to the dire situation of others. Here, the practical met the ideal; economic reality vied with humanitarianism, and the nature of the university, intellectualism, and society were debated. Seemingly, the full situation, as described by a refugee professor, of the "many misfortunes, disorders and very much hate" in Germany was not fully understood. A librarian at McGill University, quipped: "[Has] Science and Learning [dripped] piteously into the UofT and ask to be protected ... [?]," a comment that spoke to interdisciplinary and inter-university rivalry among academic communities, the Toronto-centrism of higher education in Canada (knowing this, a reason why Wallace asked R.C. Wallace of Queen's to be president of the Society), but also perhaps to an underestimation of the seriousness of the crisis.[49]

Several responses mentioned the needlessly overlapping objectives of the Society with other committees and organizations, noting that the British Society was providing relief for refugee scholars, and that the Royal Society of Canada as well as the Canadian National Committee on Refugees and Victims of Political Persecution, and the Canadian Jewish Committee on Refugees, were also working on the problem. In short, others were doing it. Carleton Stanley, for example, wrote supportively to Wallace in March 1939, but remarked that several other organizations were helping refugee intellectuals, citing a meeting of Jewish people in Toronto a few months before. G.W.H. Norman of the Geological Survey in Ottawa envisioned instead a far-reaching international organization on the basis that humanitarian calamities saw no local boundaries. J.J. O'Neill, the Dean of Graduate Studies at McGill, mentioned that an earlier and better-funded American "scheme" to bring forth refugee intellectuals into Canada failed to get much support. "If the universities refused to co-operate in the former scheme, they probably would not do so with

48 The letters of support are too numerous to list here. See RB, MS-31-27/28, March-September 1939, *passim*.

49 RB, MS-31-26, 26 May 1939, Dorette Calef to Cairine R. Wilson, Senator; UTA, Political Economy, A76-0025/009 (20), Dr. Ernst Steiner, 22 November 1938; RB, MS-31-26, 23 January 1941, Kyle to Wallace.

the present one." Many letters equated the duplication of cause with the unnecessary expenditure of energy and resources in this time of governmental and university financial constraint. R. Newton, Director of the National Research Council, wrote to Huntsman that the Council membership could not afford the annual membership, and questioned the need for a "branch organization." Might it not be simpler, Newton asked, to use the "well-organized machinery" of the parent Society? Many people also alluded to the "heavy burden" of trying to raise private money.[50]

A constant concern aired from the start of the Society was encapsulated in the Society's first governing principle: that refugee professors chosen must not encroach on the employment opportunities of Canadian graduates and unemployed scholars. Outcries over displacing Canadian candidates for academic positions were numerous, uniform, and vocal. W.H. Alexander, a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada, was willing to help out the new Society, but went on at length asking if "a country like Canada" was in a position to expose its own scholars to further outside competition. President Smith at Manitoba worried that Canadian universities cannot put "on the bread line members of their staffs, or make it impossible for promising young Canadians to get a foot on the first rung of the academic ladder." Cody noted to O.D. Skelton, the Under Secretary of State for External Affairs that "one cannot have too many" refugee professors as long as it would not "seriously interfere with...providing for the advancement of our own younger men." Although the Society received very little public press, the newspapers generally highlighted the role of the Society in a positive light, but emphasized that no Canadian academics or workers should be usurped by the relief effort.[51]

The mission of the Society revealed a duality that was later to prove ambivalent. In the circulated document which outlined the plan for the Society in spring 1939, the organizing committee wrote that "persons of science and learning...are in abject poverty and are subject to degrading humiliation, starvation, torture of the body and torment of the mind ... [T]he problem has two aspects. One is humanitarian, to aid people of our own type; the other is to do something to save the wastage of trained minds and knowledge." This statement set in motion the almost schizophrenic nature of the Society that pitted an

50 See Irving Abella and Harold Troper, *None is Too Many: Canada and the Jews of Europe, 1933-1948* (Toronto: Lester & Orpen, 1983), 44-45; 57-58. RB, MS-31-28, 31 March, G.W.H. Norman to J. Ellis Thomson; 1 April. J.J. O'Neil to A.G. Huntsman; 1 April, E.G. Young to A.G. Huntsman; 30 March 1939; 1 April, R.C. Wallace to A.G. Huntsman. See also 28 March, Reverend C. Cameron Waller to [undisclosed]; and 30 March, A.G. Dorland to Wallace.

51 RB, MS-31-28, 28 March, W.H. Alexander to Wallace; 28 March, W. Sherwood Fox to Wallace; MS-31-26, 5 April 1939, from Smith to Huntsman; MS-31-28, 19 May 1938, Cody to O.D. Skelton. MS-31-28, 19 July 1939, *Globe and Mail*, "Toronto Dons to Find Posts For Refugees"; and 11 August 1940, *Toronto Star*, "Will Help Refugees Find Canadian Posts."

altruistic ideal against what could practically be done given the circumstances. Importantly, for some people, it also provided an excuse to deem a refugee professor unworthy of aid.[52]

At the University of Toronto, the lack of transparency characteristic of hiring decisions obscured related faculty politics and tensions. Outside of the Society, few documents remain that detail the hiring of individual refugee professors. Innis was well known for his unambiguous views on the subject, however, and was responsible for keeping Helleiner unpromoted until Innis died in 1952. Innis had Cody's ear, and on numerous occasions was actively involved in university policy. In the summer of 1939, Innis called "... the present arrangement for the solution of refugees [unsatisfactory]," Innis wrote that the Society must consider the names of all refugee professors in light of "the future development" of the political science department. Innis warned that the university was in danger of setting up a second hiring committee that forgot about the importance of securing men who could help the university through expertise and knowledge. "The [selection] committee is apt to be guided by the immediate humanitarian problem without thoroughly appreciating the ultimate humanitarian problem as to how successfully an appointment will conform to [departmental interests]."[53] Innis was in a position to be blunt with the president, and the gradual impotence of the Society on campus may be further evidence that Innis' views did not go entirely unshared.

A major qualification for allowing refugee professors into Canada was the need to ensure the refugee's potential contribution to academic knowledge bases and that the scholar will assimilate without difficulty into society and academe. Given the meagre resources of the Society and a country in Depression, several letters indicated an inherent problem with determining who would be "appropriate" for the Canadian economy, society, and universities. A professor at Dalhousie Law School noted the "danger in getting unsuitable men," asking what safeguards were in place "to insure that men of competence will come ... and fit into our life." H.T. Gussow, Dominion Botanist in the Department of Agriculture queried how to define within a person "exceptional ability and training," and that the Society must conduct checks on a candidate's scholarly publications. In April 1939, J.R. Dymond, a founding member of the Society, wrote to the Director of Science Service in the Department of Agriculture in Ottawa that the Society must "take into account not only...personal qualities and training, but...also...the niche into which they may fit in this country." Dymond continued that since the resources are small and the number

52 UTA, OP, A68-0006/038 (04), "Canadian Society for the Protection of Science and Learning," n.d. See also RB, MS-31-26, 5 April 1939, Smith to Huntsman.

53 Christopher Helleiner, telephone interview by author, 28 March 1999, to Halifax, Nova Scotia. UTA, OP, A68-0006/044 (04), 30 June 1939, Innis to Cody.

of applicants are high, "it will be ... a rather rigid selection. This may sound like a hard-hearted point of view, but ... we cannot hope to make a very large impression on the general problem." This is an interesting comment coming from a major organizing figure of the Society in the days of optimism – indeed, the letter is dated only one day after the launch of the Society – that an underlying feeling of helplessness may have prevailed from the start.[54]

The draft mini-constitution of the Society included notes on selection. "[T]he selection of personnel, if based ... on fitness, is a very difficult matter ... [It should be] based on ability, age and suitability for fitting into the new environment." Importantly, scientists were sought after more than professors in the liberal arts or humanities, as the university in the 1930s and 1940s was changing emphasis on activity from teaching to research, a process started a few decades prior. Cody helped secure refugee professor Hermann Fischer's permanent position at the university by noting that Fischer had brought with him his famous father's "unique" collection of chemicals and chemical library. What could the refugee do for the university? W. Gallie, Dean of Surgery at the University of Toronto, was unimpressed with an application by a refugee researcher, writing to Cody that the "university would gain nothing by inviting him here." Humanitarian causes for relief often appeared to take second place.[55] Further, the Society received a letter from J.L. Synge (mathematics) who was on a research trip to Princeton University. Synge recounted a remark by Albert Einstein, who, when referring to a refugee professor in need of work, said that "no university could be expected to take on a man of 50." Seemingly, a refugee professor had to be faultless, including meeting the challenges of ageism.[56]

Some evidence exists that professional territories precluded accepting refugee professors, especially in medical research. One letter cautioned that the Canadian Medical Association "has recently pronounced against the admittance of foreign medical doctors" due to the overabundance of recent graduates. Referring to Draconian immigration policies and professional suspicion, the message continued that the policy of the Dominion Government was not to

54 RB, MS-31-28, 20 June, G.F.C. to Wallace; 5 April, H.T. Gussow to Huntsman. See also MS-31-28, 17 July 1939, F.C. Blair to Wallace. MS-31-28, 4 April, J.R. Dymond to W.A. Clemens; 4 April 1939, Dymond to J.M. Swaine. Wallace himself noted on several occasions that the professors must be able to fit into the academic and social environment. MS-31-28, 13 May 1939, Wallace to W.D. Woodhead.

55 The draft outline is found in RB, MS-31-28, typed on carbon, n.d., no author. UTA, OP, A68-0006/038 (05), 14 November 1938, Cody to Rinfret; RB, MS-31-28, 17 May 1938, Gallie to Cody.

56 RB, MS-31-26, 27 February, Synge to Huntsman. T.F. McIlwraith also mentioned age as a general factor in hiring at the university: At "43 or 44...I do not know whether [the candidate] would have the enthusiasm of a younger man" (UTA, OP, A68-0006/051 [02], 4 July 1941).

admit foreign medical men, and that "... foreign medical men are employing all kinds of subterfuges in order to get into Canada ... [A] useful plan [would be] to attach the foreigners to universities as research fellows at minimum salary and let them work out their own salvation."[57]

Anti-Semitism and the refugee professor

What exactly did "fitting in" mean? Into the 1940s, when anti-Semitism and ethnicity became more prominent factors in the selection process, the debate raged in Society correspondence. Several letters reveal the spectre of Anti-Semitism in Canadian society, and the notion that the "suitability" of a refugee candidate was more complicated than mere economic contribution. Brought on by socio-economic conditions and the geopolitical stress of Nazism and Communism, Canada in the 1930s was a volatile and sensitive country. In uncertain times with relatively scarce resources, community and social class animosities easily flared.

This environment promoted an anti-intellectual culture that was less concerned with minority interests. Stanley Smith in the Department of Physics at the University of Alberta wrote to Huntsman that in its effort to help refugee professors, the Society should promote the "the protection of academic persons in this country [in] the defence of freedom of thought and expression." Academic freedom was not extinguished in Canada as it was in the midst of the on-going "intellectual terrorism" in Germany, but Canadian society was not adverse to discrimination directed towards Jewish people. For several years, the egregious Jewish situation in Europe was relatively ignored, a mindset discriminatory in its neglect. A member of the Fisheries Research Board of Canada, for example, admitted to the "complexity" of selecting refugee scholars, but "I do not think your Committee would be wise to limit itself to Jews. There will probably be Czecko-Slovakian refugees, and ... those of other nationalities to care for." The British Society itself advised its Canadian counterpart to remain "non-political and non-sectarian" so that relief efforts can target not only Jewish professors but displaced scholars from all parts of Europe. Indeed, the professor who the Society supported to the largest extent, providing living expenses and a secure job, was Helleiner – a Roman Catholic (his wife was from a Jewish family).[58]

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57 RB, MS-31-28, 5 April, A.G. Nicholls to Huntsman. MS-31-27, 20 November 1939, Wallace to H.C. Cooke. See also MS-31-26, 2 May 1940, where the opposition of the Canadian Medical Association to refugee medical scientists was considered "strong"; and UTA, OP, A68-0006/055, 1 October 1942, Malcolm to Cody.

58 RB, MS-31-28, 28 March 1939, Smith to Huntsman. Strauss, "The Migration of Academic Intellectuals," in *International Biographical Dictionary*, Volume II, LXXV. RB, MS-31-27, 30 March 1939; MS-31-28, 27 March 1939.

Discrimination existed in various forms. In some communities, the Depression had long ingrained the need to protect the few jobs available. During this time, Cody was paternalistically and particularly concerned over how the university was perceived by the general public, and similarly Wallace was constantly worried about the kind of publicity the Society would receive and the public's reaction to such press.[59] The role of the university in admitting Jewish professors was closely scrutinized. Anti-Semitism and the rise radical intellectual leftist politics[60] were oft-times seen as a dual-edged sword. "I could scarcely believe my eyes," wrote F.J.A. Davidson to Cody in 1935, "when I read in to-day's [*Star*] that Karl Marx is to be taught in a University Extension Course and by a Jew ... the University harbours a C.C.F. Club, Student League, Young Communist League, Worker's Party, Friends of the Soviet Union and the Student Peace Movement 'controlled by the more radical element,' ... But this teaching of Marx in the University is the last straw." Davidson threatened to stop the university using the taxpayers' money "to disseminate Moscow propaganda." Cody replied by assuring Davidson that "[t]he Jew is a graduate of our own University, not a communist ... In no part of this University are the instructors seeking to make disciples of Karl Marx." The "hysteria" building in the early 1940s over the proposal to admit a number of refugee Jewish students at the expense of hundreds of Canadian applicants – in 1943 one mother wrote to Cody protesting the enrollment of these German "creatures" – did not help an already tense atmosphere off campus. Cody's official response to the controversy was that the university was acting in a "truly British and Christian fashion," which, although not anti-Semitic and was sincerely altruistic, was nonetheless a perspective historically not always conducive to promoting Jewish interests in Canada.[61]

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59 Cody and department heads fielded many letters of concern on the teaching and publications of faculty members. See, for example, UTA, OP, A68-0006/043 (06), 21 September 1939; and UTA, Political Economy, A76-0025/008 (16), 28 October 1938. See also R. Douglas Francis, *Frank H. Underhill: Intellectual Provocateur* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1986); Michiel Horn, *Academic Freedom in Canada: A History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999); and D.C. Masters, *Henry John Cody: An Outstanding Life* (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1995). RB, MS-31-26, 28 April 1939, Wallace to B.K. Sandwell (editor of Saturday Night Magazine).

60 Michiel Horn, *The League for Social Reconstruction: Intellectual Origins of the Democratic Left in Canada, 1930-1942* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980).

61 UTA, OP, A68-0006/021 (01), 1 October 1935; /054, 24 November 1942, 19 March 1943, W.J. Deadman to Cody; /059 (09), 1943 (n.d.). A reference outlined that "[b]ecause of the difficulty which Jewish students find in securing appointments, I do not encourage them to proceed to graduate work"(UTA, Political Economy, A76-0025/010 [22], "*Section V*," n.d.). Jewish students had less difficulty in being admitted to the medical program at the University of Toronto compared to other universities, and this may have fuelled public frustration directed at Cody's office. For the broad admission policy towards Jewish medical students, see W.P.J. Millar, "'We wanted our children should have it better': Jewish Medical Students at the University of Toronto, 1910-51 *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association* (Edmonton: 2000): 109-124.

Discrimination towards refugee professors who were Jewish came in multifarious ways. In a laudatory column in the *Toronto Star* in 1939 about the "noble," "altruistic," and "romantic ... enterprise" of the Society, a reporter quoted A.R. Gordon, a member of the Society, as stressing "[n]o special favouritism" towards any group of refugee professors, "... though we recognize the separate hardship the Jews have to bear." In the next line, the reporter insensitively asked "When do you expect the arrival of the first batch on order?" A few months earlier, a letter to Wallace from the Department of Mines and Resources in Ottawa rationalized that "the duty of science [is] to care for its own and to salvage what it can from the wreck of European culture ... However we may deplore, and be personally unaffected by it, we must recognize ... a certain amount of general antagonism ... against the racial strain ... The danger in Semitizing our institutions is greater than its mere fact; it is a danger of raising antisemitism from a latent to an active public factor that may get out of control." One respondent at the National Research Council saw it a different way, applauding the establishment of the Society as an effort to "prevent bigotted ... or ignorant action impeding the advance of science and learning in this country." In responses to the new Society, the discussion often reverted back to what the refugees could contribute to Canada.[62]

Anti-Semitism in French Canada also encumbered bringing foreign intellectuals to Canada. The Rector of the University of Montreal, Oliver Maurault, noted that the University of Montreal found offering relief to a refugee scholar difficult because of the "feeling of internal protection due to the employment crisis ... in our Province." Maurault elaborated that in this "embarrassed economic situation ... xenophobia is very keen in Montreal." A faculty member at McGill University recounted that the Department of Genetics was unsuccessful in providing aid for refugee professors. "[I]t is very up-hill work. Perhaps it is a little harder here than elsewhere in view of the strong anti-Semitic reactions of the French Canadian."[63] Some evidence suggested racial turmoil at McGill. A. Norman Shaw, Director of the MacDonald Physics Laboratory, advising against depriving Canadian graduates of academic jobs due to placing refugee professors, wrote:

> ... [I]n the domain of physics there are at present several able men who have positions far below what they are capable of holding, and also others who have no permanent position at all. Among these, those who are Jewish are having

62 UTA, Graduate Records, Andrew Gordon, A73-0026/121 (76), *Toronto Star*, "Sir Robert First to...Bringing Foreign Scientists," 20 July 1939; RB, MS-31-28, 31 March, Department of Mines and Resources to Dymond; MS-31-26, 28 March, C.C. Macklin to Huntsman; MS-31-28, 28 March, R.W. Boyle to Huntsman.

63 RB, MS-31-28, 27 March, 1 April 1939; 21 April 1939, Maurault to Wallace. 4 April 1939, Department of Genetics to Huntsman.

> particular difficulty ... During the last five years there have been several cases like this, and ... we must face the fact that prejudice against foreigners and also against Jews exists ... Fear that a man who is little different may not fit in satisfactorily with his associates seems to constitute a most serious obstacle.

In response, Huntsman, Chairman of the Society organizing committee, wrote that "The Jewish aspect of the matter is a very difficult one ... [A]ny foreigner has to face prejudice, and apart from that it is very difficult to fit him in ... when he has a very different outlook and background."[64]

Demarcating people was common in some social and academic communities in Canada in the 1930s and 1940s. Physiognomy (inferring character or disposition from physical attributes) was a tool of discrimination, for example when the Editor of the *Financial Post* in Toronto wrote to Cody about an unemployed colleague sponsored by the Carnegie Foundation who "is what they call Non-Aryan which from his looks seems extremely unlikely." The term "Jewish" could carry with it vague connotations. Letters for succour received by Cody and the Society often identified someone as a "Jew," but to ascertain if this distinction was for informative, supportive, or discriminatory purposes is difficult. While Cody himself considered the Jewish people a "race" or a particular candidate "Jewish by blood," many academics remained unconvinced on the popular usage of the word. Griffith Taylor, the chair of geography and a well-known international scholar in the 1940s, published a number of important tracts on race, ethnicity, and demography. He argued that the term "Jew" was a "man-made [condition]," and it referred to a religion only. George Tatham, a faculty member and close friend of Taylor's, remembered a discussion with the departmental secretary who thought that everyone commonly understood that the Jewish people were a race. Tatham corrected her by saying that the Jewish people were actually a cultural group.[65]

Intellectuals could stereotype or express prejudice towards others when it suited the purposes of conformity. In an internal organizational memo that discussed contacting members of the Royal Society of Canada about the Society, at least one member "seemed afraid that the committee was proposing to bring communists into Canada." In a 1942 letter to the Board of Governors in Toronto, Samuel Beatty noted that, despite the community protests, almost all

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64 RB, MS-31-28, 3 April, A. Norman Shaw to Huntsman; 6 April, Huntsman to A. Norman Shaw. See also MS-31-26, 30 March, D.A. Keys to Huntsman.

65 UTA, Political Economy, A76-0025/013 (11), 3 September 1941, Brady to Coupland. UTA, OP, A68-0006/036 (03), 12 December 1938, F.S. Chalmers to Cody. See also OP, A68-0006/045 (04), 22 April 1941, Cody to Coleman; (02), 28 October 1940, Cody to Judge Lovering; and /057 (09), 21 January 1943, Cody to Myers. OP, A68-0006/024/02, Griffith Taylor, "Aryan, German, Nordic, Jew," reprinted from *The University of Chicago Magazine*, November 1935. UTA, Oral History, B80-0017, George Tatham, Tape 1.

the staff was ready to welcome Jewish students. Almost as if a matter of policy, Beatty avowed "to try on them Canadian standards and methods of study and more generally to insinuate the Anglo-Saxon approach to life." H. Wasteneys (head of the department of biochemistry), who attended the first meeting of the Society in 1939, when studying the background of a released internee looking to be admitted into a Canadian university, exclaimed: "What a German he is!" A document from Frank B. Kenrick (chemistry) certainly falls into the set of evidence of anti-Semitic remarks uttered by professors at the University of Toronto. In writing to Innis, Kenrick commented on how well a research assistant was faring, noting that "he has none of those qualities of his race which some people find distasteful."[66]

Immigration: Institutionalized racism

The general reaction by the federal government to the Society was tempered. Two important political and bureaucratic figures were apprehensive. In the midst of considerable energy towards creating the Society, Wallace was disappointed that General Andrew McNaughton, the president of the National Research Council, did not "feel disposed to act ... [and] we have encountered similar reluctance on the part of one or two other official positions in Ottawa." Perhaps on the basis of political exigencies and the fact he "may have heard it all before," when asked to attend the 3 April 1939 organizational meeting, Prime Minister MacKenzie King sent impassive regrets. As the war progressed, the government had forgotten about the Society, taking an increasingly unsympathetic attitude towards refugee professors. In February 1943, the Commissioner of Income tax of the Department of National Revenue wrote to Wallace about his suspicions over the funds raised to support Helleiner. "It seems strange that a man of Dr. Hell's [sic] evident capacity should be obliged to depend upon the bounty of your Society for his livelihood at a time when every person is so busy and ... that your Society has been unable to find some gainful occupation for Dr. Helleiner." The Commissioner concluded that he wanted to see "further documentation and letters of patent about the society."[67]

66 UTA, OP, A68-0006/057 (09), 7 October 1942. RB, MS-31-28, 31 March; n.d. "Mr. Chairman:"; MS-31-28, ca. October 1940 [exact date unknown], handwritten to unspecified recipient. UTA, Political Economy, A76-0025/010 (22), Kenrick to Innis, n.d. Michael Bliss recounts an early harrowing remark by medical researcher and discoverer of insulin Frederick Banting: "... [I]f I'd known so many Jews had diabetes, I don't think I'd have ever gone into it." *Banting: A Biography*, second edition (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992), 100-1.

67 RB, MS-31-27, 18 May 1939, Wallace to Jenness; MS-31-28, 27 March 1939; 11 March 1942, Wallace to R.C. Wallace; UTA, CSPSL, B65-0029; 5 February 1941; RB, MS-31-28, 7, 12 April 1943, Wallace to R.C. Wallace; 25 February 1943, National Revenue to Wallace. On King's reaction to the new Canadian National Committee on Refugees and Victims of Political Persecution, see Abella and Troper, *None is Too Many*, 45-6.

While the federal government was largely non-committal to the Society, the Department of Mines and Resources, Immigration Branch, was hostile almost from the start. A perpetual thorn in the side of the Society, immigration authorities played an instrumental part in the Society's eventual failure. In the most important study on the topic of immigration in Canada and its relation to anti-Semitism and discrimination in society in the 1930s and 1940s, Irving Abella and Harold Troper state three important themes: one, that the Immigration Branch had an abjectly low profile in Ottawa: "it receded...into the shadows of government priorities"; two, that Director Frederick Charles Blair, a star in the "unholy triumvirate of the Immigration Branch, the cabinet and, to a lesser degree, the Department of External Affairs" that blocked immigration of Jewish refugees, was himself discriminatory and anti-Semitic towards applicants. Indeed, as found in this current study, Blair insisted that the Society include the racial origin of each refugee applicant. Three, that immigration policy, among anything else, was "economically self-serving." All three factors combined to make the work of the Society extremely difficult if not ultimately impossible.[68]

The Society's initial contact with Immigration was promising. In April 1939, Wallace received an ostensibly supportive letter from Blair that clarified that the professors brought over by the Society had to be "beneficial to this country as well as themselves." Blair continued that the Society was to give his department the full specifics of the selected refugee, and, once done, Immigration would be able to have the candidate named in a special Orders-in-Council for approval to enter the country. Wallace excitedly wrote to Cody the next day that Immigration was in support of the refugee policy and mandate of the Society.[69]

Reality turned out to be much different. Once the war started, and social and economic priorities shifted to emergency planning in government, immigration procedures became ever more Byzantine, discriminatory, and painfully slow. Frustration set in almost immediately. On the very day of war, Wallace lamented about the difficulty in getting any action out of the Immigration Branch, particularly when arrangements were in process to select refugee candidates. Wallace wrote to R.C. Wallace that the Society had officially contacted two European professors to be brought over (Kalmus and Helleiner), but that he could not get any response from Blair.[70]

After August 1939, Canadian society became noticeably more suspicious of foreigners, especially those who looked, talked, or acted similar to people from enemy countries. The determination of character, allegiance, and loyalty

68 RB, MS-31-28, 12 April, 29 September 1939, Blair to Wallace. Abella and Troper, *None is Too Many*, 5-9, 50, and *passim*. See also RB, MS-31-28, 5 July 1939-8, January 1940.

69 RB, MS-31-28, 12 April 1939; UTA, OP, A68-0006/039 (04), 13 April 1939.

70 RB, MS-31-28, 1, 8 September 1939; 18 September 1940; 16 September 1939.

was important in selecting refugees and for people working near sensitive wartime research projects primarily at the University of Toronto and McGill University. The term "enemy alien" carried dehumanizing connotations, and throughout the early war years, Wallace and Cody were forced to prove that the Society was not harbouring refugee spies. Blair cautioned Wallace in late September 1939 that if Kalmus, a professor for whom the Society was organizing paperwork for offering relief, was still in Czechoslovakia, then it would now be "impossible to get him out under war conditions." In terms of Helleiner who was being processed by Immigration, he could be considered an enemy alien and required to report regularly to local immigration authorities. Blair mentioned that because of this status, Helleiner could possibility be detained. Naturalization granted by the Secretary of State was equally inflexible, as, in contrast to the United States where refugee professors were automatically granted citizenship upon entry into the country, Canada required five years of residency closely watched by a supervisory agency or accredited sponsor.[71]

The process of emigrating to Canada was slow; attaining the status of "friendly" citizen was equally sluggish. Cody wrote to the Under Secretary of State in Ottawa, in reference to Richard Brauer, refugee professor "of Jewish extraction," who was applying for naturalization: "I know that during the war you are naturally very loathe to grant naturalization without some special reason." Wallace mentioned to refugee E.L. Munzer in Antigonish that securing more people from Europe would be difficult as the government "has been under attack in the House of Commons because of the number of Germans it has recently admitted." The government machinery in Ottawa seemed to have landed fully on the side of exclusionary policy.[72]

Immigration policy became more rigid into the 1940s. Blair, either out of practicality or for a more disreputable reason, imperiously oversaw admittance down to the individual case. In a facile explanation about Immigration's obstinacy in allowing refugee professor Leopold Kohr into the country, Blair suggested that the admittance of Kohr would open the floodgates to other people. His entry into Canada "would be followed almost immediately with an application to save the other members [of his family] from Germany...[This will] not solve the family's difficulties." Kohr had siblings who were medical doctors, and Blair felt that opposition in society and the profession would likely be insurmountable. Any specious reasoning from institutions or individuals,

71 RB, MS-31-27, 29 September 1939; 2 October 1939, Wallace to Helleiner. See UTA, OP, A68-0006/041 (04), 12 October 1939, Cody to Coleman,; /042 (04); 049 (03), 24 September 1941; and RB, MS-31-28, 4 October 1940. See also Abella and Troper, *None is Too Many*; John Bryden, *Deadly Allies: Canada's Secret War, 1937-1947* (Toronto: McLelland and Stewart, 1989); Steve Hewitt, The *RCMP's Secret Activities at Canadian Universities, 1917-1997* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002); and Horn, *Academic Freedom in Canada*.

72 UTA, OP, A68-0006/045 (04), 23 June 1941; RB, MS-31-26, 15 June 1940.

however, is overshadowed by a speech at the Conference of Churches in Toronto in 1943. Discussing the question of refugees, a woman, whose husband was a member of the Dutch Parliament, described how Jews fled to Holland during their persecution under Hitler. "[My husband and I] decided to take care of as many Jewish [orphans] as we could. By 1940 we [were] looking after 1,500 ... Jewish children ... Then in 1940 Holland is invaded and we [fled] ... and Canada gives us great hospitality ... [b]ut ... Canada would not let me bring [any] of [the Jewish] children with me ... Don't you know now these children may be all dead! There are nice people here in Canada ... [b]ut you don't realize what cruelties you have been doing."[73]

Conclusion

How does one approach the history of the Canadian Society for the Protection of Science and Learning without regrets and moral ambivalence? Canadian society in the 1930s and 1940s was broke and nervous, and insidious social and political distrust as seen, for example, in the reactionary rise of leftist politics, was more evident than in the prior decades. The time was characterized by rapid change, from the relatively politically and economically stable 1920s to the social upheaval of the Depression, to the outrage of Nazism, to the silver lining of reconstruction. Throughout the war, Leopold Infeld noted, the atmosphere in Toronto was "sad and depressing. The heavy clouds under which we all lived began to lift only when Germany was beaten."[74] Anti-Semitism and discrimination were products of these uncertain years, as people often felt more attracted to others in the community of similar outlook, religion, language, ethnicity, and in some cases, appearance and ascribed personal characteristics.

The university was not adverse to these effects, demonstrating that institutions of higher education in the middle part of the twentieth century were not islands, but very much attuned to the vagaries and vicissitudes of off-campus turmoil. After all, most professors did not live on campus – they merely worked there. Hence, not surprising was the susceptibility of supposedly objective, critically-minded intellectuals to the crassness of utilitarian argument, that the refugee professor could really only do much good if he or she was a perfect fit in society, industry, and the university without displacing equally qualified Canadian graduates. These conditions placated some opposition. Humanitarianism was a variable to be sure, but social and academic planning based on pure altruism that would grant refugee professors greater freedom to enter Canada and work at local universities was severely compromised.

73 RB, MS-31-28, 17 July 1939; Victoria University Archives (University of Toronto), Pam d809.c2c6, Rev. A.E. Cooke, "Canada and the Refugees: Address at "THE SUNDAY EVENING FORUM" in St. John's United Church, Vancouver, B.C., 1943. See also RB, MS-31-26, 13, 27 November 1939; MS-31-26, 27 November 1939.

74 "As I See It," *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, February 1965, 10.

The problem of refugee professors forced a polarized reply by university faculty, which in the end mostly favoured inaction. Throughout the 1930s, to Cody's credit and to avoid protest, hiring a handful of refugees to mostly minor faculty positions deliberately remained discreet. Cody, an avowed friend of the Toronto Jewish community,[75] saw offering succour to Jewish intellectuals as more personally a spiritual mission. The voyage of the *St. Louis* in 1939, which saw hundreds of Jewish refugees stranded at sea, prompted some members of the university faculty and administration to galvanize an impassioned plea to the Canadian government to offer the ship haven, but it was to fall on remarkably callous Immigration ears.[76] Genuine humanitarian perspective, if defined by considering others more so than oneself, was otherwise rare. Once the war was underway, and the Society drew public attention to the trials of refugee professors, the issue became socio-politically and morally ostracized, and the hiring of refugees virtually stopped. At the University of Toronto, anti-Semitism was expressed overtly in only a few instances, but the reasons behind the decisions of some professors not to support the Society, or to stay mute altogether, can be roughly inferred.

Giving more than available resources was undoubtedly problematical, testing individual and collective moral character. The Vice-Chairman of the Board of Governors of Dalhousie University wrote to Wallace, frustrated, asking for guidance on how to efficaciously deal with such a complicated crisis as refugee professors. "Frankly, I find it difficult to know how to do my duty in the midst of such misery and conflicting needs."[77] Further politicizing the issue, intellectual and academic competition revealed the importance of certain knowledges. The Society was most interested in scientists and mathematicians in comparison to scholars of languages, classics, liberal arts, and the humanities, many of whom were suffering from the same overseas pogrom. When forced to choose, the university preferred men of a particular discipline and research agenda, and not coincidentally, so did society at large.

Academia could be argued as a microcosm of Canadian society, characterized by contextual and shifting identities brought on by uncertainty. In its pursuit of "truth" and "knowledge," professorial culture in general had laudable goals, but it was fundamentally diverse in mission – at times acrimonious, and also patriarchal – but in terms of social and academic power, Anglo-Saxon and Christian. Intellectualism, as embodied in the professorial staff at the university, was in ideological and moral ferment, and persistently overwhelmed by an anti-intellectual and defensive society. It represented another paradigm, this one of reason, that was no more immune to illogic and bias vis-à-vis systems

75 Masters, *Henry John Cody*, 216-218.

76 Abella and Troper, *None is Too Many*, 63-64.

77 RB, MS-31-28, 27 March 1939, J.C. Webster to Wallace.

of organization and conformist thought off campus. When circumstances demanded it, many professors upheld the same entrenched value system as the community in which they lived. Despite professors who arguably were more intellectually rigorous than people of other occupations, apathy, discrimination and anti-Semitism may have been an easier response to émigré academic nomads whose lives were constantly under threat on the European continent, on the ocean, and in international ports.