

Morris Davis
Joseph F. Krauter

U.S. Citizens as Canadian Aliens

You might well imagine no need for an article on this topic. The United States, that elephant with which Canada perforce beds down, has long frightened and fascinated Canadian people. Surely such concern would have elicited a spate of systematic studies about those many persons from the United States who live in Canada's midsts. But the inference is in fact faulty, and publications along that line are scarcely to be found.

In retrospect, as so often in retrospect, the actual state of affairs makes sense. After all, most sectors of the Canadian public are far more sensitive to demographic characteristics like mother tongue (French, English, neither) or ethnicity than to prior citizenship; and in these former respects the U.S., like Brazil and Argentina seems notably uninteresting. As Kalbach remarks, "All three countries were settled by European immigrants, and do not possess a unique ethnic identity of their own within the definition of the concept of ethnic and cultural origins as used in Canadian censuses and immigration statistics."¹ It is not surprising, therefore, that of the fifty-seven CIPO ("Gallup") polls over the years on immigration and population that are reviewed by Tienhaara, none specifically asks about persons of U.S. origin.² Similar reasoning presumably explains why Bulletin 92-728, "Citizenship and Immigration," from the 1971 Census is so slim and contains so few revealing cross-tabulations.

We are not trying here to exhaust all aspects of our subject. Indeed, even in a cursory fashion the examination is limited to two sub-themes, First, what can one say intelligently about the actual numbers of U.S. citizens who become Canadian aliens? Second, what sorts of rational motives have lately impelled their movement to Canada? Information applicable to the first question is most readily presented in a statistical format, though statistics are always open to interpretation. Information on the second question is given in a more anecdotal manner.

The tabular arrays in the next section are not meant to be intimidating. To the contrary, they all contain nothing more than raw

figures or simple arithmetical computations, such as percentages, that derive from those figures. Anyone who can follow baseball standings should have no trouble with these data. Nor should the vignettes in the final section be scorned for being "only qualitative," though clearly far more detailed study would be desirable. At the same time, one should realize that many other subthemes just as worthy of attention are being largely passed over. Little is said, for example, about the impact of U.S. citizens resident in Canada on the Canadian employment situation or about the socio-psychological realities of U.S. citizens living an alien life here. Such topics await another article.

1. The Distribution of U.S. Citizens Resident in Canada

Table 1 provides data as of 1971 on the incidence across Canada of persons born in the U.S. and of persons retaining U.S. citizenship.³ This is the most recent year for which such information is available. The abbreviated interdecennial count of 1976 did not inquire about these attributes. And not only is 1981 not yet upon us—at least as we write—but census publications are often quite slow in finding their way through the printers.

As Column B in Table 1 indicates, slightly more than three hundred thousand residents of Canada were born in the United States. The largest number of U.S. born are found in Ontario. British Columbia ranks second in American born and Alberta third. Quebec comes fourth, its relatively low position traceable perhaps to the unease of (generally) anglophone Americans in a francophone province. The rank order for U.S. citizens, given in column C, is quite similar. (These may be considered the "aliens," properly speaking, to whom the title of this paper points.) The top four provinces remain the same though Quebec and Alberta exchange places.

While more could be said directly about the raw data in columns B and C, a better strategy would involve percapitizing them. This would help make allowance for the fact that Canadian provinces⁴ in 1971 ranged in population from just over eighteen thousand to 7.7 million, and that they also contained markedly disparate numbers of foreign born. Percapitizing lets one ask, for example, not just whether Ontario contains the most U.S. citizens (which it does, of course), but whether this is an extremely high figure given Ontario's total population. Some of the derivative indices for 1971 are shown in Table 2.⁵

As column E indicates, those born in the U.S. constitute between 9 and 10 percent of Canada's total foreign born. Figures differ con-

siderably from province to province, though. Throughout the Atlantic region, more than one in five foreign born is from the U.S., a proportion reached elsewhere only in Saskatchewan. In P.E.I. and New Brunswick, the American contribution to the foreign born rises to more than one in three. The second highest proportions of U.S. born among foreign born are found in the two western-most provinces and in the territories. The central colossi (Quebec and Ontario) along with Manitoba are at the bottom on this criterion, with Ontario particularly low. Indeed, its percentage score is scarcely a sixth of that in P.E.I. More U.S. citizens may move to Ontario than to any other province, but they are a comparative drop in the bucket in terms of the entire flow of foreign born into that part of the country.

U.S. citizens in 1971 amounted to considerably less than one percent of Canada's total population. (See column F.) Indeed, they exceeded one percent only in the two western-most provinces and the Yukon, a fact that suggests a certain drawing power for petroleum and other mineral exploitation. The relative presence of U.S. citizens is also somewhat above average in Ontario, though as just noted, it is small compared to the total foreign born population there. Conversely, the percentage of U.S. citizens is lowest in Newfoundland, despite comprising a fairly large slice of its outsiders. Next lowest, omitting the Northwest Territories, is Quebec, which, as columns E and F together imply, attracts persons from the U.S. neither in comparison to its total population nor even its (relatively modest) roster of foreign born. The remaining provinces lie closer to, but below, the national average on this measure.

Our interpretation of column G depends on the following twin simplifying assumptions: that all persons born in the U.S. entered Canada as U.S. citizens and that all persons who are American born and reside in Canada but are not U.S. citizens are in fact Canadian citizens. Naturalization presumably accounts for the difference.⁶ The presumptive rate exceeds 50 percent for Canada as a whole. Low figures—for the Atlantic provinces (except New Brunswick), Ontario, British Columbia, and the Yukon—may reflect such characteristics within the U.S. originating population as relatively fragile commitment to permanent residence in the country and recency of arrival. The Quebec score, which is slightly above average, suggests that on balance many (of the relatively few) U.S. citizens who choose to arrive do so in no light-hearted manner. The very high naturalization rate for Saskatchewan (better than 4 in 5) also deserves notice, though we have no ready explanation for the finding.

Immigration from the United States has tended to constitute a weightier portion of the total flow inward in recent years, and therefore American born as a percentage of foreign born has also tended to rise, even if more slowly. Between 1955 and 1960, 7.2% of all immigrants into Canada had the United States as their country of last permanent residence. For 1961-65, the figure rose to 12.5%; and for 1966-71 it was 12.4%.⁷ Recent yearly patterns of immigration and naturalization have demonstrated an interesting fluctuation. (See column J of Table 3.) Until 1973, the U.S. contribution to the immigrant flow was higher—and in 1970-72 considerably higher—than the 12.5% it had averaged in the decade 1961-1971. Since then (or at least through 1977, when our time series ends) it has been somewhat lower.⁸

As a joint perusal of columns H and I makes evident, however, these percentages must be interpreted with caution. For example, while the U.S. share of immigration rose from 16.5% to 20.0% (1970 to 1971), the absolute numbers of U.S. originating immigrants stayed virtually the same (24,424 and 24,366). Conversely, U.S. percentages dropped from 18.5% to 13.7% (1972-1973), even though absolute figures rose from 22,618 to 25,242. Indeed, it was overall yearly immigration (shown in column H) that varied most between 1969 and 1974 and not counts for those coming from the U.S. After 1974, total immigration and immigration from the U.S. both dropped precipitously and at rather similar rates: total immigration in 1977 stood at 42.6% that in 1974 and immigration from the U.S. in 1977 at 48.6% of the 1974 figures.

Clearly, the general rise in numbers of U.S. originating immigrants between 1969 and 1974 and the subsequent sharp fall-off, and the even more impressive increase in the numbers of former U.S. citizens naturalized between 1969 and 1974 and the more recent dwindling of that pattern as well (column K), must not be treated in isolation from immigration trends as a whole. Viewed alone, the figures in columns I, J, and K would suggest the strong influence of Vietnam-related events. Once the war was over in 1974, the need for Americans to emigrate to Canada in order to avoid being caught up in the military's demands, or their desire to become Canadians in order to express revulsion toward the apparent moral decay of the times, would diminish, and hence the decrease in both immigration and naturalization of former U.S. residents. No doubt such facts and reactions to facts did play their part. Yet, as column H shows, the subsequent decline in immigration from the U.S. paralleled a decline

in world-wide immigration to Canada generally. And the latter can hardly be explained in Vietnam-War terms.

As Table 4 makes abundantly clear, recent immigrants from the United States—1973 is chosen as an illustrative year—have settled across Canada numerically in much the way of their predecessors, and in reasonably similar fashion to that of foreign born as a whole. The rankings and overall configurations of columns L, M, N, and O are mainly alike. In a few instances (Newfoundland, Quebec, Manitoba) percentages do not vary by more than two points across categories. But several dissimilarities are worth noting, too. The immigrant distribution from the U.S. to the Atlantic Provinces as a group in 1973 (10.6% summing the scores for Newfoundland, P.E.I., Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick) is considerably higher than any of the comparable 1971 percentages (6.4%, 7.1%, 2.2%). Ontario has become relatively more attractive for U.S. immigrants of late (compare columns L and N to column M), though its allure, as noted earlier, is even greater for persons originating in other countries (column O). British Columbia's drawing power for Americans has risen a bit, Alberta's has dropped somewhat, and Saskatchewan's has apparently plummeted. All things considered, though, the shape of the American bodily presence in the various provinces over the near future is not likely to be much different from what it was in earlier decades, even if absolute magnitudes do increase a little.

All statistics possess a certain ambivalence. Their "meaning" depends upon the background against which they are displayed. That is why a party in opposition may complain of a jump in inflation while the party in power congratulates itself for slowing down the rate of inflationary increase. And "the facts," of course, can support both sets of claims. Such ambivalence has already characterized much of our discussion—e.g., about Ontario's attractiveness to U.S. citizens or the Vietnam War as an impetus for movement from the U.S. to Canada. And it is even more implicated in the question of whether immigration from the U.S. to Canada or emigration from Canada to the U.S. is larger. In absolute numbers, recent emigration exceeds immigration, as Table 5 shows, by a factor of approximately three. But again, the interpretive problem is: against what background is this to be viewed.

In terms of the pools from which these permanent border-crossers are drawn—i.e., with the United States containing approximately ten times as many people as Canada—former Canadian residents are migrating south at about thirty times the rate of former U.S. resi-

dents moving north. At the same time, however, the effect on Canada of persons entering from the U.S. would be more than three times that produced by Canadian immigration into the U.S. Indeed, for Canadians settling in the U.S. between 1955 and 1971 to have had the same impact on their country of destination as people from the U.S. moving to Canada, some two-and-a quarter million would have had to make the transfer, a statistical finding that strikes us as far more poignant than any metaphors about elephants.⁹

This is about the extent of the systematic information on U.S. citizens as Canadian aliens that one can readily gather from official compilations. To be sure, a few other numerical data can be gleaned here and there. For example, funds brought by immigrants from the U.S. exceeded those brought by all European-originating immigrants in the years 1964, 68, 69, 71 and 72.¹⁰ Persons from the U.S. apparently had far fewer adjustment problems on arrival than immigrants from non-English speaking countries.¹¹ Between 50 and 60 percent of immigrants from the U.S. during 1961-1971 intended to enter management or professional occupations, a higher proportion than that for those originating in any other area except South East Asia prior to 1967.¹² And, more quaintly, while most persons immigrating to Canada entered by land in 1973 (and 10% by plane), some 65 individuals did arrive by ship.¹³ If one is to go much further, though, quantitative material will generally have to be foregone and accounts that are chiefly descriptive, speculative, and even anecdotal relied upon. It is with a few brief statements along this latter line that the paper concludes.

II. The Impetus for Movement from the U.S. to Canada

The clarion call "Go north, young man, go north," has never been sounded loudly in the United States. The general drift of Americans seeking new horizons, employment, fame, and fortune has instead been to the west and south. Even so, many U.S. citizens have come to Canada and some have remained as resident aliens. Why are these people in Canada? In one sense, the number of reasons is as large as the number of people who have entered. But some common patterns are also apparent and deserve commentary.

For example, relatives of French Canadians living in the New England states frequently visit family members who have remained in Quebec. The visits may become prolonged; and after several years, such former visitors may shade over into becoming working members

of the Canadian family. Similarly, persons of German ancestry who live in North Dakota, Montana, and Wyoming often cross into Canada to labor on farms operated by Canadian relatives. Mexican-Americans, some of whom are U.S. citizens, are trucked into prairie provinces each year as migratory farm workers. Mohawk Indians from New York may join their Canadian counterparts as construction workers on skyscrapers and high tension towers.

During the 1960s, Canadian colleges and universities burgeoned, as large numbers of students born in the "baby-boom" of the late 1940s and early 1950s sought entrance. To meet staffing requirements quickly, institutions of higher education began actively recruiting faculty from the United States. Some idea of the success of this endeavor, if "success" is the right term, is revealed in a survey conducted in Ontario, which showed that the American portion of the faculty ranged from 6% to 28% in that province's colleges and universities. U.S. citizens were especially dominant in the social sciences.¹⁴ Most of these U.S. originating faculty members still teach in Canada. Some have become naturalized Canadian citizens, while others remain resident aliens.

Students from the United States may enroll in Canadian colleges, too. When they graduate, most return to the U.S., but some stay on in Canada. Church groups — for example, religious orders of the Catholic Church like Jesuits, Viatorians, and Oblates — may train American candidates at Canadian seminaries. After matriculation, some remain in Canada for a time serving in parishes or working as missionaries and teachers.

On occasion, communications media and the entertainment world attract Americans to Canada. Bands, singers (including a small number of Blacks), and theatrical performers may spend considerable periods of time in Canadian cities, International sporting events, like the Olympics, also attract foreigners to Canada, including Americans. And while the athletes usually return home quickly, some support personnel may remain for months.

Canadian business firms and industries actively recruit engineers, scientists, and technicians from the United States. Oil explorations, mining developments, and pipeline projects also attract many skilled workers. Because of the transitory nature of such employment, these foreigners (including Americans) usually would not think of changing their citizenship. The same applies to workers in salvage-type operations. For example, when U.S. firms buy used or surplus Canadian mining equipment, they usually dispatch technicians from

the states to direct the dismantling operations. Once the project is completed, such personnel returns to the U.S.

Beginning in the late 1960s, many men of draft age fled the United States for Canada because of their opposition to the war in Vietnam (or at least to their own participation in it). Their movement affected official immigration statistics (which are given in Table 3 and discussed in our first section) less profoundly and unambiguously than one might have thought likely. It is quite certain that additional U.S. citizens, impelled by similar motivation, crossed the border and stayed on without bothering to inform officialdom. By its nature, this sort of *de facto* immigration is difficult to estimate accurately. Figures that are bandied about — and some ran as high as 100,000¹⁵ — must all be treated with extreme caution.

Most of the immigrants from the U.S., legal and illegal, who entered Canada because of and during the Vietnam War, apparently chose to live in the larger cities, particularly those of Ontario. Some of these aliens kept themselves afloat by engaging in minor forms of private enterprise, such as running a small hobby or craft shop. Some attended Canadian colleges and universities. Some found jobs in business, industry, or agriculture. Still others were unemployed, and subsisted on funds from relatives and friends in the states or from organizations opposed to the U.S. involvement in Vietnam. In the end, some of the war resisters returned south when President Carter's amnesty program was instituted; others slipped back across the border and relocated in areas away from their home towns; yet others elected to remain within Canada. Here too, reliable estimates are unavailable.

Overall, U.S. citizens seem to come to Canada because of some implicit calculus in regard to employment or the socio-political climate. The motive force may be something attractive about Canada — jobs, relatives, educational opportunities, no draft — or something unattractive about the United States — industrial sluggishness, high tuition, a war, and the like. Often there is a combination of pull and push. But the grounds of the decision can change with circumstances; and with this the probabilities of U.S. citizens immigrating into Canada also alter.

In particular, only another unpopular foreign military engagement by the U.S. will reactivate Canada's role as refuge for war resisters. As Canada increases its pool of Canadian-born and Canadian-trained technicians, scientists, and engineers, the tendency to recruit in the United States will wane. (Fears of added restrictions on the purchase

of land and real estate also dampen potential American investment and relocation in Canada.) Some students from the U.S. will continue to attend Canadian colleges, but their numbers should decline both absolutely and relatively, as room becomes more and more available in American universities. American faculty at Canadian colleges is no longer increasing. Canadian institutions are now adequately staffed, and the growing resentment against Americans with contractual teaching positions has virtually eliminated new foreign recruitment.¹⁶ Finally, to conclude with our initial theme, cross-border bonds of kinship and ethnicity with French, German and other nationality groups will weaken as the tolling of generations lengthens and common origins grow dim. The result will be a decrease in the number of ethnically linked resident aliens residing with families in Canada.

By and large, the fact that some U.S. citizens live as resident aliens in Canada has been of benefit to both countries. Canada has often received the assistance of persons already educated, already skilled, already experienced. It did not, for example, have to spend time and money training the pipeline workers who came from Texas and Oklahoma. American resident aliens are unlikely to become public charges in Canada. Not only are they employable, but many are already under an employment contract at the time of entry. Others bring funds with them and so remain self-supporting.

There have been advantages for the United States too. American students have found places in Canadian undergraduate and professional education programs when there seemed no room for them closer to home. All sorts of U.S. workers — newly hatched Ph.D.s, displaced farm laborers, people with construction experience — have acquired jobs in Canada that suited their needs and capabilities. Clearly, it is not just by providing a haven for war resisters during the Vietnam era that Canada has proved a useful safety valve for the United States. Its willingness to permit U.S. citizens to dwell as aliens within its borders has reduced many other sorts of tensions felt by its southern neighbor as well.¹⁷

NOTES

1. Warren E. Kalbach, *The Effect of Immigration on Population* (Ottawa: Information Canada, 1974), p. 8.
2. Nancy Tienhaara, *Canadian Views on Immigration and Population* (Ottawa: Information Canada, 1974). Indeed, only one question—from CIPO poll 241 of February 1955, reported on p. 62—shows the U.S. figuring explicitly in the reported response pattern.

3. A brief comment on sources for the five tables in this article is in order. All numbers are taken from, or computed from, various publications of the 1971 Census, with the following exceptions. Columns H, I, and J of Table 3 depend on figures provided by the Department of Employment and Immigration. Column K of Table 3 presents information relayed by the Citizen Registration Branch, Secretary of State. Column L of Table 4 is from a Manpower and Immigration publication. Table 5 is obligated to Louis Parai, *The Economic Impact of Immigration* (Ottawa: Information Canada, 1974), though the data in column Q ultimately comes from a U.S. source.
4. Throughout this article "province" denotes the Yukon and Northwest Territories as well as the 10 provinces proper.
5. Column E is simply $100 (B/D)$; F is $100 (C/A)$; while G is $100 [(B-C)/B]$.
6. While the error terms implicit in this computation are unknown, they are probably rather small; and to some extent they would tend to cancel out.
7. Kalbach, p. 10. Also see Parai, p. 88.
8. These computations are based on official figures, which may have seriously undercounted during the late 1960s and early 1970s through failure to record illegal immigrants. The issue is pursued a bit further in our next section.
9. The U.S. population in 1970 was 203,235,298, or about 10 times that of Canada (which was 21,568,315 in 1971). Migration southward from 1955 to 1971 was approximately 3 times that northward (678.9 thousand as against 225.7 thousand). Therefore, the propensity of Canadians to make the move was some 30 times (10×3) greater than that of Americans. But the impact on Canada would be more than 3 times as large ($10 \times 1/3$). For the effects to be equivalent, Canadian emigration to the U.S. would have to be 10 times the size of U.S. immigration into Canada, or 2,257,000. To bring that about, the Canadian propensity to shift country of residence would have to be 100 times (10×10) that found in the U.S. This whole discussion assumes that all persons count equally, a simplification that is not on average misleading.
10. Parai, p. 115.
11. Anthony H. Richmond, *Aspects of Absorption and Adaptation of Immigrants* (Ottawa: Information Canada, 1974), p. 22.
12. Kalbach, p. 25.
13. Manpower and Immigration, *1973 Immigration Statistics* (Ottawa: Information Canada, 1975), p. 16.
14. Freda Hawkins, *Canada and Immigration: Public Policy and Public Concern* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1972), p. 399, n.21.
15. Hawkins, p. 41.
16. Ian Lumsden, *Close the 49th Parallel: The Americanization of Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1970), p. 29.
17. An earlier version of this article was prepared for the Fifth Biennial Conference of the Association of Canadian Studies in the United States, held in Washington, D.C., September 1979.

TABLE 1

- (A) TOTAL POPULATION
 (B) NUMBER BORN IN THE U.S.
 (C) NUMBER OF U.S. CITIZENS
 (D) TOTAL FOREIGN BORN
 --- ALL BY PROVINCE, 1971

	A	B	C	D
Canada	21,568,315	309,640	143,325	3,295,530
Newfoundland	522,105	1,885	1,205	8,940
Prince Edward Island	111,645	1,300	705	3,705
Nova Scotia	788,960	8,780	4,680	37,185
New Brunswick	634,555	7,950	3,650	23,735
Quebec	6,027,765	46,475	20,280	468,925
Ontario	7,703,110	101,440	58,785	1,707,400
Manitoba	988,245	12,090	4,765	151,250
Saskatchewan	926,245	23,785	4,025	110,690
Alberta	1,627,870	47,515	16,500	282,260
British Columbia	2,184,620	57,720	28,375	496,655
Yukon	18,390	435	250	2,545
Northwest Territories	34,805	270	110	2,250

TABLE 2

- (E) U.S. BORN AS PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL FOREIGN BORN
 (F) U.S. CITIZENS AS PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL POPULATION
 (G) THOSE NOT RETAINING U.S. CITIZENSHIP AS PERCENTAGE OF U.S. BORN
 --- ALL BY PROVINCE, 1971

	E	F	G
Canada	9.4	.66	53.7
Newfoundland	21.1	.23	36.1
Prince Edward Island	35.1	.63	45.8
Nova Scotia	23.6	.59	46.7
New Brunswick	33.5	.58	54.1

Quebec	9.9	.34	56.4
Ontario	5.9	.76	42.0
Manitoba	8.0	.48	60.6
Saskatchewan	21.5	.43	83.1
Alberta	16.8	1.01	65.3
British Columbia	11.6	1.30	50.8
Yukon	17.1	1.36	42.5
Northwest Territories	12.0	.32	59.3

TABLE 3

- (H) TOTAL IMMIGRATION INTO CANADA
 (I) NUMBER OF IMMIGRANTS WITH U.S. AS COUNTRY OF LAST PERMANENT RESIDENCE
 (J) I AS PERCENTAGE OF H
 (K) NATURALIZATIONS OF FORMER U.S. CITIZENS
 --- ALL YEARLY, 1969-1977

	H	I	J	K
1969	161,531	22,785	14.1	1,462
1970	147,713	24,424	16.5	1,573
1971	121,900	24,366	20.0	1,944
1972	122,006	22,618	18.5	2,458
1973	184,200	25,242	13.7	3,381
1974	218,465	26,541	12.1	4,742
1975	187,881	20,155	10.7	4,454
1976	149,429	17,315	11.5	3,357
1977	114,914	12,888	11.2	2,670

TABLE 4

- PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTIONS BY PROVINCE OF
 (L) 1973 IMMIGRANTS WHOSE LAST PERMANENT RESIDENCE WAS THE U.S.
 (M) U.S. BORN (AS OF 1971)
 (N) U.S. CITIZENS (1971)
 (O) TOTAL FOREIGN BORN (1971)

	L	M	N	O
Newfoundland	1.3	.6	.8	.3
Prince Edward Island	.7	.4	.5	.1
Nova Scotia	5.2	2.8	3.3	1.1
New Brunswick	3.4	2.6	2.5	.7
Quebec	14.0	15.0	14.1	14.2
Ontario	39.4	32.8	41.0	51.8
Manitoba	3.1	3.9	3.3	4.6
Saskatchewan	1.6	7.7	2.8	3.4
Alberta	9.3	15.3	11.5	8.6
British Columbia	21.4	18.6	19.8	15.1
Yukon		.1	.2	.1
Northwest Territories	.4	.1	.1	.1

TABLE 5

(P) EMIGRATION FROM CANADA TO U.S.
(Q) IMMIGRATION FROM U.S. TO CANADA
--- BOTH BY FIVE YEAR PERIODS

	P	Q
	(in thousands)	
1955-60	257.2	64.6
1961-65	244.0	62.6
1966-71	177.7	128.5
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Total 1955-71	678.9	225.7