

**“GOOD CANADIANS IN EVERY SENSE:”
THE CITIZENSHIP COUNCIL OF MANITOBA
1948 - 1975**

BY

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**A Thesis/Practicum submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of The University
of Manitoba in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree
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Master of Arts**

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Abstract

Most historical literature on citizenship examines its national development as a set of legal entitlements. Social historian Charles Tilly has been influential in proposing an interpretation of citizenship in which it is examined as part of a larger, dynamic, cultural identity. This thesis seeks to understand what citizenship has meant within the everyday lives of Canadians by tracing the growth and evolution of the Citizenship Council of Manitoba between 1948 and 1975. By looking at the Council within this period it is possible to examine how two pieces of government policy – the Citizenship Act of 1947 and the Multiculturalism policy of 1971 – were given meaning within a local community organization.

The Citizenship Council's understanding of citizenship and its attitudes toward immigrants changed during this period. During its early history, Council members were paternalistic in their attitude toward immigrants since they offered their own Canadian identity as the model of "good" citizenship and tried to decide what was in the best interests of newcomers with almost no contribution by immigrants themselves. Over time this sense of paternalism was replaced by an understanding of Canadian citizenship that was more pluralistic in nature. During the late 1960s and early 1970s the Citizenship Council adopted and developed a vision of Canadian multiculturalism that served as a reinterpretation of citizenship, providing immigrants with more room for deciding how they wanted to "belong" as Canadians. The Citizenship Council's understanding of "good" citizenship came to include an expectation of cultural diversity rather than of cultural conformity.

The issues of gender, religion and class were central to the Citizenship Council's identity as a group, influencing how it understood citizenship and how it related to immigrants. By assuming greater leadership of the organization within this period, women were instrumental in bringing about more direct immigrant participation. As the group became less overtly Christian during this period its rhetoric became less religious and more political in nature. The Citizenship Council's class identity evolved as well, and by the 1970s its membership and leadership reflected greater ethnic and social diversity, thereby portraying a broader interpretation of what it meant to belong as a "good" Canadian citizen.

CHAPTER ONE

“GOOD CANADIANS IN EVERY SENSE:” THE CITIZENSHIP COUNCIL OF MANITOBA, 1948 - 1975

On 1 January 1947 Canada enacted its first citizenship legislation. The act was designed to create a sense of unity among Canadians. As secretary of state and author of the citizenship act, Paul Martin Sr. hoped to encourage a “feeling of legitimate Canadianism.” and stated that it was “of the utmost importance that all of us, new Canadians or old, have a consciousness of a common purpose and common interests as Canadians.”¹ Almost twenty-five years later the Canadian people and their government were still searching for a Canadian identity that could encompass the experience of “new Canadians or old.” On 8 October 1971 the federal government introduced an official policy of Canadian multiculturalism. Like the citizenship act before it, this policy was intended to forge a common “sense of belonging,” only this time “belonging” was to be grounded upon a sense of Canadian diversity and ethnic pluralism rather than in a common idea of “Canadianism.” These two pieces of government policy represent a profound shift in the way Canadians thought of themselves and the ways they accommodated newcomers in their midst. Although the government held the authority to determine who could legally belong to the Canadian society, the Canadian population was also engaged in defining what it meant to be a citizen and in communicating to immigrants how they could “belong.” It was at the level of the local community that these government initiatives were interpreted and tested as part of the Canadian identity.

This thesis traces how the meaning of citizenship changed over time within one community organization in Winnipeg. In 1948 Winnipeg's Central Council of Social Agencies created the New Canadians Committee, renamed the Citizenship Council of Manitoba in 1957. This organization was formed to oversee the integration of immigrants in Winnipeg. The group's mandate soon changed to include the promotion of good citizenship among all Canadians, both "new" and "old." By looking at the development of programs and activities, the changing nature of leadership, and the ways in which Council members interacted with new immigrants, it is possible to discern how the very concept of "good" citizenship evolved in the generation between 1948 and 1975.²

During the Citizenship Council's early history, its members were paternalistic in their attitude toward citizenship and immigrants, implicitly defining the parameters of the Canadian identity by assuming that immigrants should adopt the values and habits of the host society. In the 1948 annual report of the Central Council of Social Agencies, its executive director charged the fledgling New Canadians Committee with the responsibility of "making these newcomers good Canadians in every sense."³ This approach called for members to take an interventionist role among new immigrants, guiding their integration into the mainstream of Winnipeg life. The Committee intended to provide not only a warm welcome to the immigrants, but offer their own Canadian identity as the model of good citizenship. This paternalistic approach to citizenship was seen especially in the services offered to immigrants; these were designed according to the hosts' perception of how best to meet immigrant needs.

Between 1957, when the Committee was renamed the Citizenship Council of Manitoba, and the early 1970s, the tide had turned from a paternalistic attitude toward immigrants to an understanding of citizenship that was pluralistic in nature. Over time the Council's work changed and came to include an emphasis on creating intercultural understanding and a greater awareness of the cultural contributions of immigrants. A greater diversity among member groups, closer interaction with newcomers, the introduction of official multiculturalism, and a new generation of leaders introduced an interpretation of citizenship founded on diversity rather than conformity. Increasingly, immigrants took an active role in implementing programs and determining the Council's agenda. By 1975, the immigrants who were associated with the Citizenship Council had a stronger voice in determining their own process of integration. The Citizenship Council's understanding of "good" citizenship now included a willingness to acknowledge immigrants' own navigation of the path to belonging.

This study argues that the sense of citizenship and the ways in which citizenship was embodied in the community were informed by the Council's own cultural identity. Various factors such as gender, religion, and class played a role in shaping the way in which Council members understood citizenship and influenced the ways through which these ideals were communicated to immigrants. Gender was important as the participation and leadership of women, specifically their willingness to invest in personal relationship with newcomers, facilitated the move toward more direct immigrant participation. The religious identity of the Council member groups and leaders influenced the groups' interpretation of citizenship since, especially in the early years, the social values of evangelical Christianity were associated (and sometimes equated) with

“good” Canadian citizenship. The Citizenship Council of Manitoba was also a predominantly middle class, mainstream organization, and its programs and attitudes carried the marks of its members’ class-based assumptions.

By examining the complex cultural identity of the Citizenship Council of Manitoba and by looking at how it interacted with new immigrants, this thesis seeks to contribute in three ways to an understanding of Canadian history during this period. This is a case study that examines what citizenship has meant in the “everyday” lives of Canadians by exploring a cultural rather than a political context. It looks at citizenship as a part of a wider cultural identity rather than solely as a set of rights and obligations. The subject of this study also represents a “middle ground” in the area of immigration studies. The Citizenship Council of Manitoba provides an opportunity to examine the process of immigrant integration from the perspective of the host society rather than from the perspective of the government policy-makers or from that of the immigrants affected by those policies. Finally, by looking at the varied cultural elements of gender, religion and class, in connection with the issue of citizenship, this study provides a composite picture of the Citizenship Council’s evolving identity between 1948 and 1975. In this way it seeks to contribute to the much-debated history of the “Canadian identity.” These three themes draw on ideas from a wide range of historiography.

In the area of citizenship studies, T.H. Marshall’s 1950 publication of *Citizenship and Social Class* is a significant benchmark. In this seminal essay Marshall identified three stages in the evolution of citizenship rights - civil, political, and social - and proposed that the further development of the civic rights and entitlements of citizenship

in the twentieth century would help to create a greater level of social equality.⁴ Marshall's interpretation prevailed within the academic literature for several decades after 1950, but recently it has been the subject of much revision. Among the criticisms of Marshall's work are that he focused too exclusively on the rights of citizens within the liberal democratic welfare state, and did not discuss the concomitant duties of citizens. Marshall also defined culture as a relatively static structure, and his thesis offers little help for understanding pluralistic societies that must deal with dynamic issues of poverty, gender, race, and ethnicity.⁵

Social historian Charles Tilly has challenged Marshall's interpretation of citizenship and group identity. Tilly, along with historians such as Benedict Anderson, Eric Hobsbawm and others, argue that culture and identity are not static or linear, but are changeable and constructed concepts. Their research has, therefore, examined the historical origins of complex individual and corporate public identities.⁶ On this subject of citizenship as an identity, and not just a set of rights and obligations, Tilly's volume *Citizenship, Identity and Social History* is especially relevant. Tilly proposes a cultural interpretation of citizenship. As he states in his introductory essay, scholarship in the area of citizenship studies has turned away from its focus on "power politics."⁷ Citizenship studies should instead see citizenship as "a set of mutual, contested claims between agents of states and members of socially-constructed categories: genders, races, nationalities and others."⁸ Tilly views citizenship as an evolving identity, something that is constructed and negotiated by individuals and groups, and is "incessantly open to interpretation and renegotiation."⁹ Given the fluid nature of public identities, therefore, Tilly encourages scholars to use the tools of social history to think through "how, why,

and with what effects citizenship formed, and more generally how struggles over identity have occurred in the past.”¹⁰ By looking directly at the “everyday organization of production and reproduction” it is possible to examine the intersection of large processes with small-scale social life.

Even with the resurgence of citizenship studies as a whole, much of this scholarly interest has been focused on the meaning of citizenship as a national identity. Few historians have looked at citizenship as a factor in the everyday lives of Canadians. A 1993 book, *Belonging: The Meaning and Future of Canadian Citizenship*, is an example of this national focus. Editor William Kaplan proposes that the lack of scholarly writing on this issue is due to the fact that “many, if not most, Canadians take their citizenship for granted and until recently have given it little, if any thought. Canadians clearly have not turned their citizenship into a source and symbol of national pride.”¹¹ He concludes that even historically, “Canadian citizenship has never been a source of national unity and strength.”¹² Kaplan maintains that the history of Canadian citizenship is the story of “opportunities lost,” and the volume includes several essays that examine these opportunities.¹³ Historian Robert Bothwell traces the concept of “subject” and “citizen” through the past two centuries of Canadian history, but rarely descended to the everyday experience of those citizens. Peter Neary examined the evolution of citizenship in Newfoundland during the 1930s and 1940s, but looked at it in terms of economic development and mostly through the perspective of government and business interests. Other articles in *Belonging* look at the “hard” obligations of citizenship during the Second World War, the changing nature of citizenship in a “post-modern dominion,” and the connection between citizenship and Canadian nationalism.¹⁴ All these authors

acknowledge that citizenship is an evolving cultural concept. As Desmond Morton states, "Citizenship is both a legal and an emotional concept. It is a means of categorizing individuals and of giving them an identity."¹⁵ They all focus their analysis, however, on how citizenship shaped the Canadian peoples' relationship with the state.¹⁶

It may be true, as the authors argue, that citizenship has not, ultimately, unified this increasingly diverse country. It would be a mistake, however, to ignore the role citizenship has played in the lives of the Canadian people. If citizenship is, indeed, a dynamic cultural construction, then much of that process of negotiation takes place on the local level. And if citizenship is an emotional concept, as stated by Morton, then citizenship is also constructed in the minds of individual citizens. This thesis hopes to enhance the existing literature by exploring what citizenship has meant to Canadians on a more personal scale. Citizenship describes a person's relationship with the state, but it also has implications for relationships within the community. For many Canadians, citizenship has shaped their identity and must, therefore, be understood within this context.

Another way this study seeks to contribute to the history of citizenship is by looking at it in connection with Canada's policy of multiculturalism. Like other works, this study sees citizenship and multiculturalism as related concepts.¹⁷ Leslie Pal, for example, links the two concepts in her examination of the Canadian Nationalities Branch during World War Two. Pal asserts that the introduction of a multiculturalism policy in 1971 was really the continuation of the government's war-time and post-war efforts, which included the citizenship act, to find a way to integrate immigrant, "ethnics" and Canadian-born citizens into a unified "Canadian way of life."¹⁸ In the Citizenship

Council of Manitoba citizenship and multiculturalism functioned in very similar ways. By the late 1960s and into the 1970s the Council's earlier, more paternalistic understanding of citizenship no longer seemed relevant within Canada's changing social context. The Council's overwhelming support of multiculturalism, therefore, was really a new formulation of citizenship that granted greater prominence to the culture and heritage of ethnic communities, and allowed immigrants greater influence in defining their own path to belonging.

The 1971 policy of multiculturalism has been repeatedly evaluated in the years since it was introduced. Many authors have criticized the policy describing it as Liberal opportunism, and an attempt to procure a broad base of political support among ethnic voters in the face of the Quebec independence movement. Some scholars also contend that the policy's implementation has been ineffective in fashioning any kind of collective identity for the country.¹⁹ Despite criticism leveled by scholars, however, multiculturalism has become imbedded in Canadian mythology. Its perseverance is partially responsible for the contemporary myth that Canadians never engaged in "Canadianization" among immigrants like their assimilationist American neighbours. Although the Citizenship Council had engaged in more explicit "Canadianizing" in its early years, by the late 1960s and 1970s the Council was developing a more pluralistic view of Canadian society. Multiculturalism was celebrated mostly through song, dance, food and costumes with little acknowledgment of social justice issues such as racism and class inequality that were also part of this pluralistic society. Although it was interpreted quite simplistically, that is ethnicity was looked at as somewhat static and stereotypical,

multiculturalism did become a significant part of the Council's members' understanding of their own Canadian identity.

This study examines the Citizenship Council's understanding of citizenship and its relationship with new immigrants between the time of the introduction of the citizenship act in 1947 and the multiculturalism policy in 1971. It argues that the Council's interpretation of the meaning of "good" citizenship evolved from one that was characterized by paternalism to an understanding of citizenship that could accommodate cultural pluralism. It is true that paternalism and pluralism are not parallel terms; the former represents an attitude while the latter describes the existence of diversity within a social system or community. Both terms function aptly, however, as characterizations of the way the Citizenship Council interacted with newcomers and how its members understood the place of immigrants within the wider Canadian society. The Citizenship Council's earlier understanding of citizenship was paternalistic since its members presumed that it was their responsibility to guide and shape the integration of newcomers into the mainstream of Winnipeg life.²⁰ They also implicitly offered their own white, Christian, and middle-class identity as the model of a "good" Canadian citizen. Over time, the Council's sense of citizenship evolved into one that was characterized by pluralism. Their definition of "good" citizenship expanded to include ethnic, racial, religious and economic diversity.

Paternalism is not prominent idea within the literature on citizenship.²¹ Reinhard Bendix used the term in his study of transforming political authority, and described a change from paternalism to modern individualism. Patrimonialism, however, denoting the management of household and domains by royalty, and not paternalism, is the concept

used most extensively throughout his work.²² Clearly this term carries implications that did not apply to postwar voluntary associations. The absence of paternalism as a defining concept may be partially attributed to the fact that most authors are not concerned with the subject of how Canadians tried to teach citizenship to immigrants. Only the attitudes of nation-builders like J.S.Woodsworth several decades earlier are commonly assumed to be paternalistic. It is generally argued that these English Canadian reformers presumed that they knew best how immigrants should become good Canadians, and that they believed being a good Canadian entailed adopting the values and customs of the Anglo-Canadian mainstream. However, it is this same attitude that resonates with the Citizenship Council's understanding of citizenship in the 1940s and 1950s. Winnipeg society after World War Two was not as predominantly "Anglo" as earlier in the century, demonstrated by the visibility and public activity of groups such as the Germans and Ukrainians. Still, paternalism shaped the middle class's view of citizenship, even if the middle class was no longer homogeneously Anglo-Canadian or even Protestant. And it was this view of citizenship, the paternalistic project of nation-building, that shaped attitudes toward immigration. Gerald Friesen and Royden Loewen observe that it was not until the 1960s that scholars began to move past the nation-building thesis and acknowledge evidence of pluralism in Canadian history.²³

Only in the 1960s did Canadians begin to understand immigration, and indeed Canadian society as a whole outside of the nation-building theory and more in terms of what J.M.S. Careless described in 1969 as "limited identities." National identity now was no longer concerned with the "social qualities that differentiate people," but with the "human qualities that make them the same."²⁴ From the 1960s and on, pluralism and

multiculturalism became central concepts both in historical writing and in Canadians understanding of their own identity. Since that time, pluralism has become an important issue in the area of citizenship studies as a whole. Canadian philosopher Will Kymlicka has written in this area, analyzing, and indeed promoting the strategies through which Canadians have accommodated ethnocultural diversity.²⁵ Given the fact that the question of citizenship within a pluralistic context is gaining prominence as a significant field of study, this thesis seeks to understand how individual Canadians have interpreted this issue in the past.

By looking at citizenship in the context of the relationship between the host society and new immigrants this study also draws on and seeks to contribute to the vast field of immigration literature, hopefully extending the scope of previous research in some ways. Much work on host society attitudes toward immigrants has focused on the period between 1900 and 1939. Contemporary studies reveal ethnic stereotypes of immigrants, and as Franca Iacovetta has explained, they “can also be read as primary sources documenting how contemporary Canadian perceptions of immigrants were framed by Anglo-Celtic cultural chauvinism.”²⁶ J. S. Woodsworth’s well-known 1909 *Strangers Within Our Gates* reveals early twentieth century attitudes toward immigrants. In his book, Woodsworth warned Canadians about the “important problem” presented by incoming tides of immigrants.²⁷ A central question focused his concern: “Foreigners in large numbers are in our midst. More are coming. How are we to make them into good Canadian citizens?”²⁸ The writings of Woodsworth and other reformers have allowed historians to analyze the attitudes of the host society toward arriving immigrants during this period.²⁹ These studies reveal how members of the Canadian host society intervened

to “Canadianize” immigrants and mould them to fit a predominantly “Anglo” image. Historians have emphasized the importance of the host environment that pre-World War II immigrants encountered.

Within the postwar period, however, the subject has not received as much attention.³⁰ The contemporary Canadian “mythology” of a multicultural mosaic has suggested that immigrants were not subjected to cultural interference. The goal of “making” immigrants into “good Canadian citizens” did not end, however, when the social gospel and urban reform movements began to fade. In 1948, the founders of the Citizenship Council also hoped to “make good citizens.” While the strategies and assumptions with which this goal was pursued were different from those of earlier generations, the intent of shaping the Canadian character of arriving immigrants remained the same.

Historians have also examined the Canadian host environment by tracing the evolution of official immigration policies. In his analysis of immigration history between 1890 and 1988, Robert Harney has argued that Canada never received immigrants without certain conditions. Immigrants have been an essential ingredient for survival and growth, but immigration policy over the past century has also been dictated by convenience.³¹ Harney and others assert that after the Second World War Canada’s immigration policies evolved away from strategies of racially-based selection for the purposes of settlement, and toward policies built upon the need for labour within a growing capitalist economy.³² Considering the Canadian government’s power to determine the numbers and ethnic origin of arriving immigrants, it is understandable that federal policies remain an important focus.³³ Ninette Kelley and Michael Trebilcock’s

recent study in this field supports Harney's findings by arguing that immigration has been regulated according to the interests of government, business, and influential communities. Kelley and Trebilcock make a valuable contribution by looking to community and national institutions to understand the public debate over interests and issues that shaped immigration policy.³⁴

In contrast to studies that approach immigration from the perspective of government policy is the body of literature that seeks to understand how immigrants themselves chose to adapt to their new environment. Iacovetta describes this approach as "new immigration history," with an emphasis on "agency" and the view "from the bottom up."³⁵ "Internal" histories have made valuable contributions by "reconstructing the material, emotional, and social worlds of immigrants in the old society and the new, documenting the internal dynamics of the ethnic community, and charting...the rise of ethnic group identities."³⁶ The literature in this area is vast and quite diverse; labour and women have recently been popular subjects, and so too the everyday life of immigrant communities consisting of single ethnic groups.³⁷ This approach has gone a long way towards validating the voices of immigrants, and has been an essential step in correcting ethnic stereotypes and fostering an understanding of ethnicity, class and gender as culturally constructed and dynamic categories.

While acknowledging the value of both the policy-centred and internal approach to immigrant adaptation, there is a need for middle ground. Official policies invariably influence the range of choices available to immigrants, but the immediate context of immigrant integration is the community in which they settle. This thesis attempts to provide such a balance by examining the local context from a cultural perspective.

Franca Iacovetta's study of the Canadian host society after 1945 provides a valuable example.³⁸ Iacovetta rejects the historical tradition that viewed immigrants "merely as the object of host society policy makers and observers or as simply a victim of economic forces." But she warns against insular histories in which "immigrants emerge as heroes" without a sense of the wider Canadian context.³⁹ Iacovetta describes the interventionist role played by professional and volunteer counselors at the International Institute of Toronto who sought to ensure that their immigrant clients would successfully integrate into postwar Canadian society. Focusing on class, racial, and gender relations that characterized the encounters between social workers and clients, Iacovetta argues that staff at the International Institute sought to "Canadianize" immigrant families by reshaping them in line with the prevailing postwar assumptions about the ideal companionate marriage.

The Citizenship Council, like the International Institute of Toronto, was involved in "making new Canadians," and it portrayed a particular definition of the Canadian identity. Especially in the Council's early years of operation, the cultural assumptions of service providers more explicitly defined the organizations' response to immigrants than did the needs of those they served. Unlike Iacovetta's model, this study of the Citizenship Council includes the concept of citizenship amongst service providers as a subject of analysis. Through Council involvement, members gave expression to a particular kind of citizenship and it was this identity that they tried to teach to immigrants. The Citizenship Council's ideas regarding citizenship and multiculturalism were naturally influenced by the rhetoric put forth by the government and media. The fact that Council members absorbed and interpreted these messages and then were in a

position to communicate directly with new immigrants, makes the Citizenship Council a valuable source for analyzing the host society, or “middle ground” of immigration studies.

Because it focuses on an evolving cultural identity, this thesis touches on still other areas of historiography including the wider history of Canadian society after World War Two, as well as gender, religion, and class. The Council’s interpretation of citizenship and its own changing identity evolved within the cultural context of Canadian society between 1947 and 1975 and was affected by the grand societal changes historians have noted.⁴⁰ The Citizenship Council’s journey toward a more pluralistic understanding of Canadian society was part of a nation-wide change in that direction. During the 1960s and 1970s Canadians experienced a collision of old and new values as sections of the population like women and ethnic groups gained a greater public voice and began to question previously uncontested societal assumptions.⁴¹ The rise of feminism in the 1960s instigated a general upheaval concerning women’s roles in the family and workplace. Women began to claim a more prominent place within public and professional spheres. Christian churches had experienced an initial resurgence in attendance and confidence immediately following the Second World War. By the 1960s, however, church attendance declined and congregations struggled to remain relevant in an increasingly secular and diverse context. Canada’s “ethnic” population was gaining political influence, and together with Quebec nationalists, transformed the national political environment. By the 1970s the issue of cultural pluralism was inescapable in Canada. The Citizenship Council of Manitoba responded to the societal change around it and experienced this evolution within its own ranks.

The issue of gender is significant in the history of the Citizenship Council during these years. At the time, however, the question of women's role in the association was not an arena for conflict as it was in many other public organizations. Women were easily accepted as participants and eventually as leaders in the Council's work primarily because, until the early 1970s, all positions were unpaid and voluntary, and because the work of preceding generations of Canadian women had brought community service, and specifically the care of immigrants, within the boundaries of approved women's public involvement. Despite the absence of an explicit debate on this subject, gender was a determining factor in the Council's evolution and in the nature of program development.

Women on the Citizenship Council played a role in determining the kinds of issues to which the association paid attention. Women seemed specifically interested in the needs of immigrant women and children, and it was their willingness to become personally involved with immigrants that brought these needs to the fore. This was similar to the role of women in the Canadian Youth Commission between 1942 and 1948. Linda Ambrose contends that these women not only worked, but saw to it that "their ideas permeated commission discussions and shaped the final reports."⁴² Ambrose observes that the women "exerted personal influence to promote the interests of the commission... and they voiced positions on issues which they considered important to society generally, and to women specifically."⁴³

Often on the Citizenship Council, gender seemed to be a more pronounced variable than class. Winnipeg women exhibited a level of gender solidarity through their attempts to empower immigrant women to leave situations of domestic abuse or by specially designing language classes to suit the schedules of stay-at home, lower income

women. In most cases, however, their efforts were not in conflict with, but were often reinforced by, their middle-class values. Ambrose also addresses this issue, questioning whether the women on the Canadian Youth Commission, despite their interest in issues related to domestic servants, simply provided another example of middle-class self-interest.⁴⁴ She concludes that these women demonstrated gender solidarity over class interest by pursuing greater rights for female domestics.⁴⁵ The issue of gender can, therefore, be looked at in a variety of ways within the Citizenship Council. The Council's development reflected the changing role of women in Canadian and society, and women's presence within the association was also a factor that motivated change.

The religious identity of the Citizenship Council's leaders and membership was another factor in its evolving interpretation of citizenship. Many members of the Council joined the association as delegates from their local church. The Citizenship Council, however, was less religiously oriented than another Winnipeg service agency, Manitoba Interfaith Immigration Council, that also has its roots in the postwar period. Manitoba Interfaith was founded as a coalition of local Christian groups interested in helping immigrants from their own religious traditions settle in Winnipeg.⁴⁶ In contrast, the Citizenship Council was neither ethnically nor religiously specific in orientation, but, especially in the early years, the Council's membership had significant Christian representation. The marked difference between Interfaith and the Citizenship Council is that that Council provided settlement services from within an overt philosophy of citizenship. Even with the opportunity to serve immigrants through an explicitly religious agency such as Interfaith, many churches chose to partner with the more secular Citizenship Council.

Although perhaps more secular than Manitoba Interfaith Immigration Council, the religious identity of the Council's members still shaped its programs and attitudes. Nancy Christie and Michael Gauvreau address a related issue in their analysis of Protestant churches and social welfare in Canada between 1900 and 1940. The authors have argued that until the late 1930s, "almost every facet of social investigation and social policymaking fell under the aegis of Christian leadership."⁴⁷ They include an important qualification, however, that from the 1930s onward, the broad spectrum of social reform activism within Protestantism caused churches to partner more closely with secular organizations.⁴⁸ While Council representatives were not exclusively Protestant, Catholics and Jews providing the notable exceptions, the role of religious groups in the Citizenship Council can be understood within this context. Many of the Council's volunteers were drawn from mainstream Protestant denominations, most notably United Church congregations. These groups articulated a strong desire to shape the character of Canadian society, especially in the aftermath of the war.⁴⁹ With a few exceptions, participation of church groups on the Citizenship Council did not directly translate into programs with an overt missionary message. Churches, however, were seen as a primary venue through which immigrants could integrate into Canadian life and, during the council's formative years, the characteristics of good citizenship were equated with Christian values.

Still, the Citizenship Council's evolution paralleled the process of secularization and increasing religious pluralism that took place throughout Canada in the decades after 1945. John Stackhouse, for example, has argued that "the shift... from the broadly evangelical consensus dominating Anglophone Canada in the nineteenth century to the

pluralism of the later twentieth,” was first noted during the 1960s.⁵⁰ As Christian churches failed to maintain the level of cultural hegemony they had once enjoyed, the Citizenship Council’s definition of good citizenship expanded to include a wider range of religious expression. Its rhetoric gradually became less religious and more civic in nature.

Finally, class is a third issue determining the nature of the work of the Citizenship Council of Manitoba. The founding generation of Council members, and particularly its leaders, represented predominantly middle class, urban, European-Canadian organizations and values. The Council’s activities satisfied the needs of many individuals to demonstrate their own virtue as citizens by participating in nation-building through work with immigrants. Within the optimism and prosperity of the postwar period, many Canadians believed they lived in a class-less society. The members of the Council, however, enjoyed a different level of community status and material existence than most of the immigrants with whom they interacted. Initially, the Council made little effort to challenge the realities and limitations of the class structure into which immigrants entered.

A study by Robert Lanning provides a useful framework for understanding middle-class community organizations. Lanning addresses an earlier period, but his conclusions easily translate into the postwar years. Lanning’s work is also helpful in synthesizing the economic and cultural definitions of class consciousness. Lanning concedes that class is primarily the “formation into a group of like-situated people, based on their material conditions of existence,” but adds that economic relationships are translated into non-economic cultural expressions through social institutions.⁵¹ It is their

“collective self-confidence, their ideal of service, and their common interests” that signal a group’s middle class identity, and its assumption that these interests will “independently assume the form of general interests,” for society as a whole.⁵² When class interests are then expressed through institutional frameworks, they become formal expressions of power. The early records of the Council reveal a decidedly middle class character that contributed to the paternalistic assumption that its own interpretation of citizenship and the Canadian identity should serve as a normative definition for others.

A paternalistic approach to citizenship led the Council to treat symptoms of social and economic inequality without seeking and addressing its causes. Immigrants were provided with jobs without being educated about how to find employment in Canada or to pursue further studies with the goal of achieving higher levels of employment. By the 1970s the Council began to pay more attention to the educational needs of immigrants. This represents an important symbol in the Council’s evolving approach to services because it signals a step toward providing immigrants with the tools for upward mobility. It was during the late 1960s that many Canadians began to examine class as a variable within Canadian society. In 1965 John Porter wrote *The Vertical Mosaic*, stimulating significant changes in how Canadians thought about class and ethnic groups. Porter asserted that the myth of a classless existence, in which all citizens shared equal access to opportunity and resources was, although pervasive, nothing more than a myth.⁵³ Porter replaced this idea with evidence that the Canadian mosaic was vertically, not horizontally arranged, and that the Anglo-Saxon charter group enjoyed increased power and status, and monopolized the educational avenues necessary for upward mobility.⁵⁴ Although the members of the Citizenship Council never explicitly dealt with the issue of class within

their association, by the 1970s the group's leadership and staff was no longer confined to members of white, European, middle-class communities.

Clearly, citizenship was meaningful in the lives of Citizenship Council members beyond its description of the relationship between the individual and the state. Their understanding of citizenship motivated individuals and groups to take an active role in their community by paying attention to the needs of new immigrants. This work made citizenship a real part of everyday life where it could blend with other aspects of Winnipeg's cultural experiences. In this way, the history of the Citizenship Council of Manitoba provides a glimpse of the "Canadian identity" during this period.

NOTES

¹ House of Commons, *Debates*, 20 March 1946, p. 131, and House of Commons, *Debates*, 22 Oct. 1945, pp. 1335-7, as cited in Paul Martin, "Citizenship and the People's World." *Belonging: The Meaning and Future of Canadian Citizenship*, ed. William Kaplan, (McGill-Queen's University Press, 1993) 73, 70.

² This thesis utilizes a number of primary sources including the records of the Central Council of Social Agencies, two boxes of papers, letters, and annual reports collected by Sonja Roeder and later donated to the Citizenship Council of Manitoba, hereafter called Sonja Roeder Papers, as well as an oral history collection of thirty-two taped interviews conducted in 1989.

³ Provincial Archives of Manitoba (hereafter PAM), P649, 1948, Central Council of Social Agencies, annual report.

⁴ T.H. Marshall, *Citizenship and Social Class and other Essays*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1950).

⁵ This list is provided by Bart van Steenberg in the introduction to his volume in the series on politics and culture. The three volume series includes: Bart van Steenberg,

ed. *The Condition of Citizenship*, (London: Sage Publications, 1994), Bryan S. Turner, ed. *Citizenship and Social Theory*, (London: Sage Publications, 1993), and Ian Culpit, ed. *Welfare and Citizenship*, (London: Sage Publications, 1992). This series argues that many of the assumptions of the dominant model of Marshallian citizenship are no longer relevant, including full employment, the sexual division of labour in the public and private domains, and the stable nuclear family. (Turner, xii). The authors contend, however, that the notion of citizenship is still valid and “has become an indispensable component of modern social theory as a perspective on social rights, welfare issues, political membership and social identity.” (Turner, ix).

⁶Benedict Anderson. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, rev. (London: Verso, 1983), and Charles Tilly, ed. “Citizenship, Identity and Social History,” *International Review of Social History*, 40 (1995). The collected essays in Tilly’s volume explore citizenship and identity in different contexts, including early Meiji Japan, youth networks in Brazil, nineteenth-century England, and France.

⁷ Tilly, 1.

⁸ Tilly, 6.

⁹ Tilly, 12.

¹⁰ Tilly, 3.

¹¹ William Kaplan ed., *Belonging: The Meaning and Future of Canadian Citizenship* (McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1993), 3.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ *Belonging*, 10. Robert Bothwell, “Something of Value? Subjects and Citizens in Canadian History.” Peter Neary, “Ebb and Flow of Citizenship in Newfoundland, 1929 - 1949.” In *Belonging*, ed. Kaplan. Other works that look at Canadian citizenship on a national scale include: Kenneth Carty and W. Peter Ward, “The Making of a Canadian Political Citizenship,” in *National Politics and Community in Canada*, Leslie A. Pal, “Identity, Citizenship and Mobilization: The Nationalities Branch and World War Two,” *Canadian Public Administration*, [Canada] 1989 32 (3): 407 - 426, William R. Young, “Building Citizenship: English Canada and Propaganda during the Second World War,” *Journal of Canadian Studies*, [Canada] 1981 16 (3-4): 121 - 132.

¹⁴ J.L. Granatstein, “The “Hard” Obligations of Citizenship: The Second World War in Canada,” Robert Fulford, “A Post-Modern Dominion: The Changing nature of Canadian Citizenship,” Desmond Morton, “Divided Loyalties? Divided Country?” in *Belonging*, ed. Kaplan.

¹⁵ Demond Morton, "Divided Loyalties? Divided Country?" in *Belonging*, ed. Kaplan, 50.

¹⁶ Historian William R. Young has looked at Canadian citizenship in the context of immigrants and ethnic communities, but he too focuses on a national, state level. Young looked at the role of propaganda during the World War II in the process of "building citizenship." Young's evidence supports the idea that the English Canadian community promoted the existence of a common national "way of life," and tried to create a sense of "Canadianism" that could encompass ethnic groups within that fold, and that the public was not entirely convinced that citizens of ethnically "different" background could indeed become "good" citizens. William R. Young, "Building Citizenship: English Canada and Propaganda during the Second World War," *Journal of Canadian Studies*, [Canada] 1981 16 (3-4): 121 - 132.

¹⁷ Examples include: Charles Ungerleider, "Immigration, Multiculturalism and Citizenship: The Development of the Canadian Social Justice Infrastructure," *Canadian Ethnic Studies* [Canada] 1992 24(3). Raymond Breton "Multiculturalism and Canadian Nation-Building," in *The Politics of Gender Ethnicity and Language in Canada*, eds. Alan Cairns and Cynthia Williams, (Toronto: The University of Toronto Press, 1986).

¹⁸ Leslie A. Pal, "Identity, Citizenship and Mobilization: The Nationalities Branch and World War Two" in *Canadian Public Administration* [Canada] 1989 32 (3): 426.

¹⁹ The positive and negative legacy of multiculturalism is also discussed in Stella Hryniuk ed. *Twenty Years of Multiculturalism: Successes and Failures*, (Winnipeg: St. John's College Press, 1992). And Leslie A. Pal, *Interests of State: The Politics of Language, Multiculturalism, and Feminism in Canada*, (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1993).

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²⁰ Paternalism is used in a different way in this thesis than is common in the scholarly literature. Within historical studies paternalism is generally used to describe an encompassing social system. As Sarah Potter Mackinnon defines it in her study of Loyalist women in Canada, "paternalism... involved a personal relationship between two unequal parties in which the subordinate paid deference to the superior and in return expected some tangible benefit." Mackinnon looks at both parties within a paternalism system, however, and in the case of the Citizenship Council of Manitoba, the records used for this study only reveal the attitudes and actions of the host. Mackinnon does provide a useful idea that relates to the Citizenship Council by stating that a commonly accepted definition of paternalism is "interference with people's liberty for their own good," or "when one person decides what is in the best interests of another." These more general definitions are used in this thesis. Sarah Potter Mackinnon, *While the Women Only Wept: Loyalist Refugee Women*, (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1993), 28.

²¹ The term paternalism is used commonly in studies looking at the history of slave-master relations in the American South, or between government and Aboriginal peoples,

or charity work. Two Canadian examples include: James M Pitsula, "'Educational Paternalism' Versus Autonomy: Contradictions in the Relationship between the Saskatchewan Government and the Federation of Saskatchewan Indians, 1958 - 1964," in *Prairie Forum*, 1997 22(1): 47 - 71; or Fraser Valentine and Jill Vickers, "Released from the Yoke of Paternalism and 'Charity': Citizenship and the rights of Canadians with Disabilities", *International Journal of Canadian Studies*, 1996 (14): 155 - 177.

²² Reinhard Bendix, *Nation-Building and Citizenship: Studies of our Changing Social Order* rev. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977), 39.

²³ Gerald Friesen and Royden Loewen, "Romantics, Pluralists, Postmodernists: Writing Ethnic History in Prairie Canada," in *River Road: Essays on Manitoba and Prairie History*, (Winnipeg: the University of Manitoba Press, 1996), 185.

²⁴ J.M.S. Careless, "'Limited Identities' in Canada," *Canadian Historical Review* 50 (1969): 1-10.

²⁵ Will Kymlicka, *Multicultural Citizenship: A Liberal Theory of Minority Rights* (New York: Clarendon Press, 1995) and Will Kymlicka, *Finding our Way: Rethinking Ethnocultural Relations in Canada* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1998).

²⁶ Franca Iacovetta, *The Writing of English Canadian Immigration History*, (Ottawa: Canadian Historical Association, 1997), 3.

²⁷ James S. Woodsworth, *Strangers Within our Gates or Coming Canadians*, (Toronto: The Missionary Society of the Methodist Church, 1909), 3.

²⁸ Woodsworth, 279.

²⁹ Richard Allen, *The Social Passion: Religion and Social Reform in Canada, 1914 - 1928*, (Toronto: The University of Toronto Press, 1971), George N. Emery, "The Methodist Church and the 'European Foreigners' of Winnipeg: All Peoples' Mission, 1889 - 1914." in *Historical and Scientific Society of Manitoba Transactions, Third Series*. n.s. 28 (1971 - 72).

³⁰ Many studies do exist on the existence of Canadian nativism and racism, and some study the period up until the end of World War II. Patricia Roy, *A Whiteman's Province: British Columbia Politicians and the Chinese and Japanese Immigrant, 1858 - 1914*, (Vancouver: The University of British Columbia Press, 1989), Howard Palmer, *Patterns of Prejudice: A History of Nativism in Alberta*, (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1982), Irving Abella and Harold Troper, *None is Too Many: Canada and the Jews of Europe, 1933 - 1948*, (Toronto: Lester and Orpen Dennys, 1982), Peter Ward, *White Canada Forever: Popular Attitudes and Public Policy towards Orientals in British Columbia*, (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1978).

³¹ Robert F. Harney, "'So Great a Heritage as Ours': Immigration and the Survival of the Canadian Polity," *Daedulus*, 117 (4), Fall 1988.

³² Works include Valerie Knowles, *Strangers at Our Gates: Canadian Immigration and Immigration Policy, 1540 - 1990*, (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1992), Peter S. Li, *The Making of Post-War Canada*, (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1996), and Charles Ungerleider, "Immigration, Multiculturalism and Citizenship: The Development of the Canadian Social Justice Infrastructure," *Canadian Ethnic Studies* [Canada], 1992 24(3).

³³ Valerie Knowles has examined how newcomers came to what is now Canada over the course of several centuries, Freda Hawkins has extensively explored the demographic impact of immigration policies, and Anthony Richmond has looked at how post-war immigration policies influenced specific ethnic groups. Valerie Knowles, *Strangers at Our Gates: Canadian Immigration and Immigration Policy, 1540 - 1990*, (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1992). Freda Hawkins, *Canada and Immigration: Public Policy and Public Concern*, 2nd ed, (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1988). Anthony H. Richmond, *Post-War Immigrants in Canada*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1967).

³⁴ Ninette Kelley and Michael Trebilcock, *The Making of the Mosaic: A History of Canadian Immigration Policy*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998).

³⁵ Iacovetta, "The Writing of English Canadian Immigration History," 5.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Iacovetta, "The Writing of English Canadian Immigration History," 8.

³⁸ Another example that looks at the host society's role in receiving immigrants is Angelika E. Sauer's "Christian Charity, Government Policy and German Immigration to Canada and Australia, 1947 to 1952," *Immigration and Ethnicity in Canada, Canadian Issues / Themes Canadiens*, eds. Anne Laperriere, Varpu Lindstrom and Tamara Palmer Seiler, (XVIII) 1996, 159. Sauer's work reinforces the notion that both government policy community "charity" work with immigrants was motivated by self-interest and economic opportunism.

³⁹ Franca Iacovetta, "Making New Canadians: Social Workers, Women and the Reshaping of Immigrant Families," in Franca Iacovetta and Mariana Valverde eds. *Gender Conflicts: New Essays in Women's History*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992), 264, 265.

⁴⁰ The evolution of societal change in post-war Canada is well documented and includes the following work. Alvin Finkel, *Our Lives: Canada after 1945* (Toronto: James

Lorimer & Company Ltd., 1997), Donald Avery and Roger Hall, *Coming of Age: Readings in Canadian History Since World War II*, (Toronto: Harcourt Brace and Company, 1996), Robert Bothwell, Ian Drummond, and John English, *Canada Since 1945 : Power, Politics, and Provincialism*, (Toronto: The University of Toronto Press, 1989), Doug Owsram, *Born at the Right Time: A History of the Baby-Boom Generation*, (Toronto: The University of Toronto Press, 1996).

⁴¹ Avery and Hall, 205.

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⁴² Linda M. Ambrose, "'Working Day and Night Helping Dick': Women in Postwar Planning on the Canadian Youth Commission, 1942 - 1948," *HSE/RHE* 3 (1), 1991, 76. Her study supports the notion that the internal records of the commission reveal more about the identity and attitudes of its members than about the youth which it studied.

⁴³ Ambrose, 79.

⁴⁴ Ambrose, 82.

⁴⁵ Another study that looks at gender and class within a community organization is Sara Z. Burke, *Seeking the Highest Good: Social Service and Gender at the University of Toronto, 1888 - 1937*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996). Burke's study looks at the early part of the century. The question of whether women should work within the Citizenship Council was not contested ground by 1947 because women were no longer stretching the boundaries of acceptable public roles for women.

⁴⁶ Manitoba Interfaith Immigration Council and the Citizenship Council of Manitoba merged significant portions of their programs in 1994. Together, the two groups run the International Centre and jointly counsel immigrants and refugees, paying particular attention to issues of social justice.

⁴⁷ Nancy Christie and Michael Gauvreau, *A Full-Orbed Christianity: The Protestant Churches and Social Welfare in Canada 1900 - 1940*, (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1996), xi.

⁴⁸ Christie and Gauvreau, 246.

⁴⁹ David Lochhead argues that the United Church thought of itself as the conscience of the nation. He states that United Church home missions among immigrant were designed to help these people integrate into Canadian society by "helping them... to become middle class, to fit in to Anglo-Saxon communities and to become United Church members and adherents." They were convinced that "the normative way of being Christian was very close to the normative way of being Canadian." David Lochhead, "The United Church and the Conscience of the Nation," in *Church and Canadian Culture*. ed. Robert E. Vandervennen, (Lanham: University Press of America, 1991), 30.

⁵⁰ John G. Stackhouse, *Canadian Evangelicalism in the Twentieth Century: An Introduction to Its Character*, (Toronto: The University of Toronto Press, 1993).

⁵¹ Robert Lanning, *The National Album: Collective Biography and the Formation of the Canadian Middle Class*, (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1993), 9.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ John Porter, *The Vertical Mosaic: An Analysis of Social Class and Power in Canada*, (Toronto: The University of Toronto Press, 1965), 3.

⁵⁴ Porter's study has received significant attention from sociologists since its publication in 1965. These works debate the extent to which ethnicity is a significant indicator of class position in Canadian society and include: Peter S Li, *Ethnic Inequality in a Class Society*, (Toronto: Wall and Thompson, 1988), and Raymond Breton, Wsevolod W. Isajiw, Warren E. Kalbach, and Jeffrey G. Reitz, *Ethnic Identity and Equality: Varieties of Experience in a Canadian City*, (Toronto: The University of Toronto Press, 1990).

CHAPTER TWO

THE NEW CANADIANS COMMITTEE: THE PATERNALISTIC SIDE OF CITIZENSHIP, 1947 - 1955

At a 1948 annual meeting of Winnipeg's Central Council of Social Agencies (CCSA) the plight of "displaced persons" arriving in the city was given a prominent place on the agenda. The federal department of labour was sending many immigrant workers to Winnipeg, and had asked the YWCA and the Catholic Women's League to take responsibility for their employment placement and their general social welfare. The Central Council's leadership was adamant:

Work with new Canadians, and their absorption into our Canadian pattern of living will become more and more important as more displaced persons come to this city. Many of our welfare problems of today [can] be attributed to the poor job that we did in this connection in the past. It is to be hoped that we will learn by our past mistakes and throw our energies into making these newcomers good Canadians in every sense.¹

This influx of newcomers, and the Central Council's concern, occurred in the wake of Canada's declaration of official citizenship legislation in 1947. The response of Winnipeg social agencies to the local integration of immigrants demonstrates their own efforts to fulfill the obligations of responsible citizenship and their desire to shape the character of potential citizens. Their proposed solutions to the "problem" of immigrant integration reveals their own assumptions about the Canadian cultural identity and the ways they felt newcomers could also belong to Winnipeg society. The Central Council's solution to this issue was the establishment of a New Canadians Committee (NCC) in 1948, which became the Citizenship Committee of Manitoba in 1951.

The New Canadians Committee responded to many of the issues raised in the national and local public discourse surrounding the introduction of the citizenship act. Both the government and public hoped that official Canadian citizenship could provide people with a sense of belonging that was rooted in a national rather than group or ethnic identity. These groups were also concerned, however, that immigrants integrate fully into “mainstream” society so as to avoid potential social problems.

The New Canadians Committee reacted to these concerns in several ways. In 1950 four subcommittees were established to look more closely at the areas of employment, education, recreation and welfare. Content to serve a mostly administrative role, the subcommittees examined immigration problems from the perspective of the host society through interaction with local social service workers and volunteers. Another strategy through which the NCC sought to embody its ideal of good citizenship was by introducing special citizenship day ceremonies. These ceremonies depicted the association’s understanding of the role of immigrants both in the country’s history and in contemporary society, and served as a way of communicating with the wider Winnipeg public about the importance citizenship should have in public life.

Between 1948 and 1956 both the New Canadians Committee and its successor the Citizenship Committee held attitudes and acted towards immigrants in ways that were characterized by paternalism. This was most clearly articulated by their assumptions that immigrant settlement was inherently problematic without intervention by Canadians, and that in order to be “good” Canadians, immigrants needed to adopt the values of the host society. The Committee’s work was certainly motivated by a genuine concern for the welfare of newcomers, but was also firmly based on the conviction that complete

integration was necessary, and that its implementation was the responsibility of the host society. The New Canadians Committee pursued this goal with little contribution or leadership from new immigrants themselves.

As Raymond Breton has argued, leadership is an important component in an organization's public identity, and the composition of those in positions of authority is a statement about the character of the group.² Breton states that institutions are "environments within which individuals and groups seek recognition of their identity and their historical and contemporary contribution to society."³ They provide a context for people to define their role in the community and in society, and represent a corporate search for meaning. Leadership on the New Canadians Committee was provided by representatives of "mainstream," middle-class organizations, many of which were church groups. Much of the Committee's membership was female, and women did provide informal leadership as volunteers and on subcommittees from the very beginning. Men most often served as the group's spokespeople during this period, however. For example, although women often outnumbered men at Committee and sub-committee meetings, there were no female presidents during these years.⁴

The marks of the middle-class, Christian, and gendered identity of NCC leadership are discernible in the kinds of issues the group pursued. The Committee was interested in meeting the needs of newcomers, but only according to its own perceptions of what those needs were.

In order to understand the New Canadians Committee's decision to take action in the area of citizenship and immigrant settlement it is necessary to situate their response

within the wider national and local public discourse. The New Canadians Committee's interest in citizenship was closely tied to the "problem" of integrating new immigrants into Winnipeg society. This concern echoed that of Canadian society as a whole and, indeed, that of the government. Leslie Pal has argued that the emergence of postwar citizenship was rooted in "the problem of ethnicity and its reconciliation within the wider political community..."⁵ During the Second World War, existing tensions between ethnic groups and the host society were exacerbated. Many decades of overt, if selective "Canadianization" had not succeeded in making many immigrants feel like equal members of society, and a portion of the Canadian public remained unconvinced of the loyalty of certain ethnic groups.

Some ethnic communities had sought greater acceptance by sending their sons to fight, hoping it would prove their value as "good Canadians." One Winnipeg immigrant woman, known in the press as Mrs. Stanley Mynarski, attended the first official Canadian citizenship ceremony in Ottawa, proudly wearing her late son's Victoria Cross on her chest and displaying the sacrifice they both had made for their country. The applause with which Mynarski was honoured was second only to that accorded Prime Minister Mackenzie King.⁶ Other ethnic Canadians, however, stubbornly resisted government conscription. This resistance sparked increased discrimination in some areas, and as a public opinion survey by the Wartime Information Board revealed in 1945, English Canadians continued to express dislike for "foreigners," and were not convinced that individuals from ethnically "different" backgrounds could become "good Canadians."⁷ The Wartime Information Board was not surprised that some ethnic Canadians chose not to enlist in the war effort since "these people" had suffered through "years of humiliating

discrimination because of their names, accents, or appearance.”⁸ The war emphasized the extent to which some ethnic residents remained segregated from “Canadian” society, and forced the issue of integration to the forefront of the country’s immigration agenda.

Canada’s first citizenship act addressed this issue of integration at a time in which the government was able to capitalize on postwar nationalism. Paul Martin, who had become Secretary of State during the war, was the primary author of the act in 1946. He credited a military cemetery at Dieppe for inspiring his vision of citizenship. Martin recalled that as he walked among the graves, he noticed the great diversity of names of the fallen soldiers, and became convinced that despite ethnic origin, these men were all Canadians.⁹ When the act was passed in 1947, however, it remained to be seen how a statesman’s ideal of an encompassing definition of citizenship would translate into the lived experience of Canadians and arriving immigrants.

In Winnipeg, as in other cities across the country, the anticipation of the citizenship act generated great excitement in the media. Local journalists echoed the postwar nationalist rhetoric by demanding the creation of separate Canadian citizenship as a necessary entitlement for returning service men.¹⁰ Most articles focused not only on the fact that Winnipeggers should realize the great value of the rights and privileges they gained with citizenship, but that they also should take seriously the related duties. These responsibilities were partially tied to arriving immigrants, as one journalist decried the fact that immigrants were naturalized “with about the same pomp and dignity as that surrounding the purchase of a dog license.”¹¹ *The Winnipeg Tribune* reported Paul Martin’s recommendation that every community establish a citizenship committee

composed of representatives of every “responsible body.” *The Tribune* expected Winnipeg to comply quickly.

The Winnipeg Tribune also ran a series of editorials authored by leaders from Winnipeg ethnic groups. Many of their comments were rooted in an understanding of immigration as part of nation-building, and also reinforced the need for immigrant integration. Frank Rekwald, from the German Canadian newspaper *Der Nordwesten*, advocated for increased intervention by Canadians in the citizenship education of immigrants. He felt that too many immigrants held a passive attitude toward public life, and it was of utmost importance that they actively accept “our way of life” and become partners in the citizenry of the nation.¹² With sustained effort at citizenship education, Rekwald was certain Canadians would be rewarded by “complete unity.” E.E. Hallonquist from the Swedish weekly paper *Canada Posten*, assured Winnipeggers of the loyalty of the Scandinavian community, saying their main aim was to play a full part in building the nation as full fledged Canadian citizens.¹³ Jewish and Ukrainian authors added similar sentiments, emphasizing the possibility for unity and equality that Canadian citizenship suggested.¹⁴

The subjects of ethnicity and immigrant integration were, therefore, an integral part of the national and local public discourse on the subject of citizenship after the introduction of the 1947 citizenship act. The Central Council of Social Agencies was looking for a way to address these issues and help immigrants learn to belong as Canadian citizens and to become a part of the host society. It is clear, however, that this process was viewed as potentially problematic. Back in 1946 the Central Council of Social Agencies noted the warning of “experts” who insisted that Canada could not

assimilate successfully a large increase in population, and at that time had agreed it would be best if the number of immigrants remained small.¹⁵ But by 1948 it was obvious that the number of new immigrants arriving in Winnipeg was increasing.

During the decade of 1947 to 1957, Canada received its largest number of immigrants since the first two decades of the century.¹⁶ Winnipeg was no exception with immigration levels rising almost steadily until they reached a peak in 1957. In that year, over eleven thousand immigrants arrived in Manitoba and the majority were destined for Winnipeg.¹⁷ Most newcomers to Manitoba were European with their numbers overwhelmingly exceeding those of British origin.¹⁸ Winnipeggers concern over the integration of immigrants was in response to a significant increase in the local immigrant population.

In 1948, therefore, in accordance with the interventionist social policy held by the Central Council of Social Agencies, and taking advantage of the concern of local volunteers, the first meeting of the New Canadians Committee was called in order to address the "plight" of newcomers.

The records of the NCC's first meeting reveal its member's views on some of the characteristics of Winnipeg society at the time. Clifton S. Monk, a representative of the Lutheran Aid Society and charter member of the New Canadians Committee, remembered that Winnipeggers were very welcoming hosts. Monk stated that the Winnipeg community was eager to respond to the issues of immigrant integration due to its history of receiving newcomers. Monk, however, was either ignorant of, or willfully neglected any history of ethnic discord in the city:

Winnipeg is the “gateway to the West.” Its not built on biases against anyone. All these people came through Winnipeg... the first place that many of them stopped. They found their place in Canada. Good climate, with no built in biases. Open to people of ethnic origins. After World War II all these began to surface... it didn't take much to generate concern.¹⁹

Monk was correct about the willingness of local community groups to pay attention to this issue. and the first meeting of the New Canadians Committee was held on 4 November 1948 and received a favourable response. Attendance included representatives from the Red Cross, Canadian Lutheran Immigration Aid Society, Canadian Women's hostel, the Canada Press Club, the Canadian Jewish Congress, United Hebrew Social Services, the Winnipeg Council of Women, the Jewish Welfare Fund, the Family Bureau, Canadian Lutheran World Relief, and the YWCA Local Council of Women.²⁰ One founding member of the Committee remembered that they were “practically all Canadians” with no representation by newcomers.²¹

Despite the presence of Jewish representatives, the new Committee's leadership seemed to be predominantly Christian. Their discussion demonstrates another societal characteristic of Winnipeg at the time. The minutes clearly reveal the group's placement of Christianity at the centre of Winnipeggers' sense of Canadian identity. At the November meeting the members of the New Canadians Committee agreed that it was imperative for new immigrants to develop a sense of belonging as part of the local community.²² The Committee concluded that the most important contribution Canadians could make to this process was to direct the immigrant to the church of their preference. This would facilitate assimilation into Canadian life.²³ Churches were seen as a primary means of communicating Canadian culture and values. It was the Committee's own

religious identity that influenced their interpretation of where new immigrants could most efficiently learn how to be “good” Canadian citizens.

Having received a positive response at its initial meeting, the New Canadians Committee continued to gather regularly. From the very beginning it was clear that the work of the NCC was an effort to take local responsibility for issues of national significance. The group often discussed the issue of whether immigrant integration was a task for the Dominion government or for local voluntary groups. Bessie Touzel of the Canadian Welfare Council in Ottawa was a frequent visitor during the first year and led the debate between national and local responsibility. As a national representative, Touzel informed the Committee about problems being addressed at the federal level such as the difficult task of educating immigrants in “Canadian ways” and language, as well as welfare problems caused by immigrants’ ineligibility for family allowance. Touzel emphasized that the personal assimilation of immigrants must happen within the local community and that segregation should be avoided. She assured the New Canadians Committee that their efforts among immigrants would, in time, be rewarded, because “every person arriving locally...would eventually become a productive Canadian citizen offering service to that community.”²⁴ This prompted the Committee to discuss how their own efforts as citizens could help others learn a new way of life.²⁵

Another national representative advocating for local responsibility was Constance Hayward from the Citizenship Branch of the Dominion government. Hayward agreed that the “burden” of immigrant integration rested with local groups.²⁶ She also encouraged the New Canadians Committee in their goal of citizenship education by promoting a new citizenship syllabus, arguing that the Committee should “encourage and

assist good citizenship, not only among new Canadians, but all Canadians.”²⁷ Having agreed, therefore, that immigrant integration could best be addressed in the context of the local community, the Committee set about looking for ways to pursue that goal.

The formation of the New Canadians Committee was certainly motivated by an undercurrent of citizenship responsibility, but the Committee’s immediate task was to review and remedy gaps in local services. The first method proposed in the Committee’s fact-finding mission was to write a questionnaire to be circulated among relevant agencies. This information was intended to serve as the foundation for the Committee’s mandate. To delve further into specific areas of concern, four new subcommittees, employment, education, recreation and welfare, were established during the winter of 1950. The subcommittees were the initial strategy used by the New Canadians Committee to understand the needs of new immigrants. Most of their activities reveal paternalistic attitudes toward newcomers and about the host society’s role in meeting newcomers’ needs.

The recreation subcommittee conducted research primarily among churches and the YWCA. They discovered that at least one local church operated a “hospitality” program that served lunches to mostly Polish immigrants. The YWCA highlighted language barriers as an important recreational issue. An inability to communicate effectively was keeping immigrants from making greater social contact with Canadians. Considering this limitation, the Committee admitted that it was natural for immigrants to cling together and prefer “their own group,” but decided, therefore, that “aggression in integrating new Canadians has to come from Canadians.”²⁸ The Committee recommended greater involvement of immigrants in community clubs, and more

acceptance of immigrants into “our” communities, but no strategy was included as to how this should be done.

The employment subcommittee began its work by issuing a questionnaire among local employers. Again, language acquisition and geographic and social isolation were highlighted as problem areas. The needs of sugar beet workers found a place on their agenda in 1950, since many found themselves without work during the off-season when they had been led to expect continuous employment.²⁹ The subcommittee passed its findings on to the New Canadians Committee at joint meetings but there is no evidence of action taken to address these concerns. Some members felt that, while integration was a local mandate, employment assistance and training fell under federal jurisdiction. The employment subcommittee discovered some resentment among existing ethnic groups on this subject, who felt that they had been “left to sink or swim” and struggle for themselves against poverty, and had not received the post-war assistance provided by the government.

The first task of the welfare subcommittee was to discover the number of recent immigrants living in Winnipeg and to list the challenges they faced. They estimated that Winnipeg had received 30,000 immigrants in 1950 and that language and feelings of insecurity caused the greatest concern. The sheer numbers of newcomers alarmed the Committee, and the YMCA representative cautioned that if too many more arrived, the city would have to implement “some machinery to effect more complete and rapid integration,” for “if they stay too long with ethnic groups difficulties arise.”³⁰ Unlike the employment subcommittee, the welfare subcommittee was not confident that the government would pay attention to immigrant welfare concerns or even provide

references to private agencies.³¹ This group took a practical step toward moving beyond fact-finding by collecting and distributing written information on available services among immigrant communities.

Issues surrounding language instruction provided the focus for the education subcommittee, including teacher training and funding for classes. Language programs were already being pursued by the Winnipeg School board and the National Council of Jewish Women. The subcommittee recommended that courses be offered to those about to receive citizenship, and that more reading material be made available for immigrants in suitably simplified English.

The New Canadians subcommittees conducted most of their research among leaders of voluntary associations whom they considered to be knowledgeable in the field of service provision. This strategy of research among “experts” in specific areas of community problems was a common practice of the CCSA. While it is true that many of these individuals did work closely with immigrants, they still served as an intermediary between the New Canadians Committee and newcomers. The committee considered Canadian agencies more authoritative than immigrants themselves regarding settlement needs.

Subcommittee records also reveal some of the prevailing host society assumptions about postwar immigrants. Despite Pastor Clifton Monk’s certainty that Winnipeg was free from biases, the New Canadians Committee had to grapple with subtle stereotypes about the city’s latest wave of immigrants. Committee members clearly viewed immigrants with a sense of otherness and were curious what could be expected of “them.” The minutes of the employment subcommittee report that the recent group of new

Canadians was a "much more intelligent group of newcomers than those that came to Canada around 1911."³² The fact that the Committee perceived an eagerness to assimilate was cited as evidence of this higher level of intelligence. The subcommittee had also done research among local employers to assess the value of immigrant labour. In response to the question of "Are they good workers?" the subcommittee reported that "Yes, the majority are good.... There are always exceptions and the few bad workers cause a lot of trouble and make a 'bad name' for other New Canadians. They are cleaner and not so insistent on high wages [but] the rumor that they work for low wages should be denied."³³ The NCC concluded that immigrants could work well provided they encountered a cooperative environment. Some Canadians, however, were "most unfair and call the new Canadians "DP's," a term which they long to forget....Some better educated new Canadians hold themselves aloof among less well educated Canadians workers. This causes trouble."³⁴ All new immigrants were treated as a homogeneous group and discussed as a single community. There was little acknowledgment of the cultural diversity among newcomers.

The subcommittees discovered early on a resounding need for coordination among service groups, convincing the New Canadians Committee to clarify its function in the community. By October of 1951 a steering committee began work to assess the Committee's role, increase membership, and pursue greater independence from the Welfare Council. They took seriously a report by Constance Hayward in which she stressed the need to "devote more time to the long range psychological process of integration, [and] place more emphasis on the problems of general citizenship and the practice and principles of democracy."³⁵ As a result, the steering committee decided to

broaden the NCC's membership to include better representation from agencies devoted to Canadian citizenship. Within a month the steering committee wrote the New Canadians Committee's first objectives: to provide links between government, individual immigrants and citizen organizations, and to develop consciousness of citizenship responsibilities among "old" Canadians.³⁶ Although the committee had been founded on principles of citizen responsibility and "making" newcomers into good Canadians, these new objectives awarded citizenship celebration and education a more prominent position within the group's mandate. By the end of 1951, the NCC chose to make citizenship a more formal part of its public program, adopting the new name of the "Citizenship Committee of Manitoba." Under this new banner, the group began to take responsibility for its own initiatives and move away from a purely administrative role.

As they began to move beyond a "fact-finding" capacity, the four subcommittees occasionally started to take action on certain projects. The employment subcommittee focused on accreditation for immigrant professionals in fields such as engineering, law, nursing, medicine, and pharmacy. They drew attention to the fact that immigrants should be aware of correct information about the limited possibilities of employment success before they arrived in Canada.³⁷ It is interesting to note that the committee took more action to address the employment problems of professionals than it did for lower income employees such as sugar beet workers.

The welfare committee was most active in assuming an advocacy role, looking at areas such as deportation, assistance at immigration hall, and relief eligibility, and assigned service groups such as the Family Bureau and Sisters of Service to work in these areas.³⁸ During 1953 the group discussed ways to oppose existing welfare legislation that

prohibited immigrant mothers who had not obtained citizenship from collecting mother's allowance. They also researched eligibility requirements for Old Age Security, Family Allowance, and "Blind Pensions" both provincially and nationally, and began to lobby for legislative amendments.³⁹ The recreation committee was slightly less active, but did spend time looking at ways for married women to have more opportunities for social interaction and day-nursery care. It is significant that these two groups, the welfare and recreation committees, had the highest level of female leadership, and devoted significantly more attention toward the needs of immigrant women than did the other subcommittees. The welfare committee, which had an entirely female membership, also made the greatest effort to understand first-hand the problems faced by immigrants.

These four subcommittees formed the backbone of the Citizenship Committee of Manitoba's activities until 1954. Several other endeavors were also undertaken, however, as the Committee sought to bring its message of immigrant integration and citizenship responsibility to an even wider audience. In 1953 an additional committee was organized to promote immigrant integration. By this time, however, it was designed to actually increase the level of contact between Canadians and arriving immigrants. The staff at the YWCA proposed a home hospitality program. The Citizenship Committee agreed that there was a need for immigrants to meet established Canadians in their homes in an informal setting. This decision was motivated by the fear that immigrants were not receiving the kind of personal interaction which would lead them to integrate into the Canadian community.⁴⁰ Using the postwar NATO home hospitality program as a model, the home hospitality committee weighed the potential value of such an approach. Members warned that the program include a thorough screening process so as not to

worsen relations between the two groups. Whereas NATO men would have acted respectfully in local homes because of their unwillingness to jeopardize their future in the armed service, it was felt that the immigrant was "much freer to act as he pleased and the chances of his causing an unpleasantness for his host is greater."⁴¹

It was decided that another questionnaire be sent out to gain a sense as to whether those already providing services thought that a home hospitality program was needed. Responses were mixed: several organizations saw no value in the plan, but the majority were in favor. Both sides, however, voiced a common concern about the possibility that the program would only serve to heighten the feelings of segregation between newcomers and Canadians. They feared feelings of inferiority would be aroused in some immigrants when comparing their own standard of living with that of their hosts.⁴² The hospitality program received sufficient support to be implemented; unfortunately the records do not include an evaluation of its success in creating positive, or lasting relationships between immigrants and Canadians.

Another new task of the early 1950s was an effort to expand Committee membership to include greater representation from local ethnic organizations. During 1952, membership lists began to expand, including representatives from the Swedish Council, the Japanese Canadian Citizens Association, the Loyal Finns in Canada and the Slovak Association for example, until about half the organizations listed in the directory cited an ethnic affiliation, with the other half representing church and women's groups. The Citizenship Committee was quite successful in recruiting ethnic groups since, according to the Citizenship Branch, there were forty-five ethnocultural groups in Winnipeg in 1954, and thirty-eight of those groups had some involvement with the

Committee.⁴³ There is no evidence that new representatives assumed significant leadership positions.

There is a hint, however, that a greater ethnic presence was disconcerting to at least one long-standing “Canadian” member of the Committee. The correspondence files of Mrs. McQueen, the Executive Director of the Welfare Council of Greater Winnipeg, document an episode between her and Mrs. Reycraft, the representative from the Winnipeg Council of Women.⁴⁴ On January 30, 1952, McQueen received a letter from Reycraft expressing her surprise over the description of the “re-organization slip” at the Citizenship Committee of Manitoba, and her indignation that since the committee now had “many experts, my services as a voluntary worker are nil, and while I am highly in sympathy with the purpose of the committee I feel my resignation is due.”⁴⁵ McQueen promptly responded saying: “I am sorry that you got the impression when we were endeavoring to strengthen the committee that we were leaving no place for the faithful members like yourself who have given so much time and thought to the work. Our intention merely is to have a wider representation of the ethnic groups.”⁴⁶ Mrs. Reycraft apparently softened with McQueen’s invitation to remain on the committee, and expressed her regret over the tone of her first letter. She agreed to continue working with the Citizenship Committee.⁴⁷ The question of who would be involved in defining and promoting good citizenship proved to be a contentious issue.

The work of the subcommittees demonstrates that there was significant interest among Winnipeggers on the issue of immigrant settlement. The New Canadians Committee attracted concerned citizens who seemed anxious to play a part in building and shaping their community following the war. For the most part, however,

subcommittees engaged in fact-finding, reporting, and discussing, seldom taking action on their ideas.

In addition to the work that the Citizenship Committee pursued specifically on the topic of immigrant integration, the association was also interested in the issue of how immigrants and ethnic groups should relate to the wider Winnipeg public. One way the Committee addressed this concern was through the introduction of citizenship day ceremonies. This program was part of the committee's plan to broaden its scope and assume a more tangible public presence. Gordon MacDonell remembered that when the New Canadians Committee had initially begun to meet in 1948 it mostly thought about citizenship in relation to helping immigrants and not in its "broadest sense."⁴⁸ During the early 1950s, however, when the postwar tide of immigrant lessened, the committee began to examine what citizenship ought to mean to all Canadians including those "who'd been around for a long time."⁴⁹ In 1952 a small group was selected to plan a large citizenship day ceremony. The Citizenship Committee's efforts were well received, with an attendance of over 800 at the legislative buildings for the first ceremony. The elaborate 1954 celebration received national acclaim; newsreel pictures of the celebration, featuring its elaborate historical pageant, were shown in theatres across Canada during the summer.

The ceremonies were intended to impress upon all Winnipeggers the rights, privileges and responsibilities of being a Canadian citizen. They were a genuine attempt to introduce that year's newest Canadians to the Winnipeg public and create a common feeling of pride among "new and old."⁵⁰ In addition to representation from those who had been naturalized in Winnipeg during the year, planners also awarded certificates to representatives of the Canadian-born young men and women who had turned twenty-one

years of age. *The Winnipeg Free Press* coverage in 1955 noted that new Canadians and “Canadian babies” were placed on “equal footing” during the ceremony.⁵¹ The committee’s choice to stage the event in this way was intended to promote an egalitarian image of citizenship.

Some of the symbolism at the ceremonies, however, indicated that being “Canadian” was to take precedence over immigrants’ ethnic identity. Planners attempted to add a sense of pageantry and nostalgia to Winnipeggers’ feelings about citizenship. The 1954 and 1955 ceremonies included elaborate productions, both including immigrants dressed in costumes and carrying their national flags. Ewart Morgan, the chair of the Citizenship Committee of Manitoba told the press, however, that the pageant was not meant to stimulate loyalty to “old lands” but that the “Union Jack flies above all other flags,” emphasizing the new loyalty of immigrants.

The 1954 ceremony also featured a tableaux and the last scene is striking in the image it provides of how immigrants were thought to relate to the wider society. The event was staged on the grand staircase at the Legislative buildings. As a grand finale, a woman, representing Canada, descended the stairs carrying a gilt ballot box. She was flanked on either side by children dressed in white who represented the various ethnic groups who had become Canadian citizens. When this trio reached the landing they were met by a man and a woman who cast ballots.⁵² The choice of children to represent immigrants ethnic groups, under the watchful eye of a mature Canadian, is a distinctly paternalistic image.

The rhetoric employed at Canada day ceremonies also demonstrates the place of Christian religion in the Citizenship Committee of Manitoba’s definition of “good”

citizenship. Both guest speakers at the 1952 ceremony, Judge Coyne and Premier Douglas Campbell underlined the importance of fulfilling duties to the church as a key responsibility of citizenship.⁵³ In the news-release advertising the 1953 ceremony the committee defined citizenship as “the ability to live with others and being a good neighbour. It is Christian principles in action.”⁵⁴ The citizenship ceremonies were heralded as the pinnacle of the committee’s efforts at public citizenship education, and were an important part of helping the group become better known in the wider Winnipeg community. They were also, therefore, instrumental in publicizing a paternalistic understanding of citizenship in which immigrants were expected to adopt the host society’s rather narrow vision of the Canadian identity.

Despite the Citizenship Committee’s eight years of work in the area of citizenship education and immigrant integration, at a general meeting in 1955 Jean Lagasse, the director of community development services for the department of welfare, posed the question: “Are we reaching the immigrants in Manitoba? If not, how can we?”⁵⁵ The group agreed that another review was necessary, nominating a committee to “look at the whole purpose and function and method of operating.”⁵⁶ The committee was aware it had not fully reached its goal of reaching ethnocultural groups and new immigrants.

The Citizenship Committee of Manitoba had a consistent record of activity between 1951 and 1956, yet still found itself doubting its success in achieving the primary goal of immigrant integration. One potential reason may have been an ambiguity over precisely what that goal meant. There seems to have been no consensus between 1948 and 1956 about whether the association had been working to “integrate” or “assimilate” immigrants into Winnipeg society. In many cases the two terms were used

interchangeably indicating a general lack of awareness that each represented a significantly different approach to settlement and to the interpretation of citizenship. The two national representatives, Touzel and Hayward, disagreed on their use of language. While Touzel encouraged local assimilation, Hayward specifically recommended that the committee's goal be integration, and not assimilation.⁵⁷

Some individuals may have used the term assimilation because they genuinely felt it best reflected the desires of immigrants themselves. One committee member recalled that immediately after the war it was popular for immigrants to "become anglicized," most commonly demonstrated by giving up their more complicated European names.⁵⁸ The NCC also concluded at a 1950 meeting that "new Canadians are very anxious to assimilate and do not want to stay only with the new Canadian group."⁵⁹ It seems that at least some Committee members assumed immigrants wanted to assimilate, but it is also apparent that throughout this period the group's approach to settlement reflected its own concern that social segregation led directly to welfare problems.

Despite this ambiguity, between the goals of assimilation or integration, the New Canadians Committee, and the Citizenship Committee of Manitoba that followed it, clearly approached citizenship and immigrant settlement with a paternalistic attitude. An article found in the Citizenship Committee's 1953 correspondence files summarizes this approach.⁶⁰ Alan Klein, a social worker from Toronto, wrote an essay that was distributed among citizenship council's across Canada and which found a place within the Committee's records. Klein told his audience that they could help "make newcomers good citizens by making them like Canadians."⁶¹ He also assumed that most Canadians were Christian, noting that "Citizenship is being a good neighbour. Citizenship is

Christian principles in action.”⁶² Klein felt confident that most Canadians did expect immigrants to assimilate.⁶³ It was, therefore, the Canadian citizen’s responsibility to ensure that immigrants did not remain segregated, and through direct interaction with Canadians the immigrant could learn that “he must change much of himself in order to fit into the Canadian way.”⁶⁴

Klein placed primary importance on the idea of social unity that was to be achieved through the pursuit of common goals and purposes. If immigrants were to find a sense of belonging, it could be done by following customs which affirmed and did not conflict with agreed upon goals. It was necessary that good Canadian citizens be responsible for overseeing this process for as Klein stated: “Which cultural traits will the newcomers pick up? What Canadians will he become like? What class pattern, whose values, what kind of citizenship?”⁶⁵ Klein assigned this task to community agencies within which Canadians could develop a sense of “citizenship in action,” and through which immigrants could learn about the Canadian identity. It is impossible to assess the extent to which this article influenced the thoughts of the New Canadians Committee, but Klein’s arguments resonate with the actions and attitudes expressed by the NCC between 1948 and 1956.

The identity of the New Canadians Committee and the Citizenship Committee of Manitoba was quite “traditional” during this immediate postwar period. In terms of gender, women within the association were pursuing voluntary work as community caretakers which for most of the century had already been assumed to be particularly suited to the woman’s sphere. The group assumed that Christianity was the normative

Canadian religion. The leadership provided by church groups, and the close tie between definitions of citizenship and Christian virtues demonstrate that churches maintained their place near the centre of Canadian identity for many Winnipeggers. The formation of the New Canadians Committee also reflected the self-confidence of the middle-class community, as it unquestioningly tried to educate both newcomers and indeed all of Winnipeg about the virtues of citizenship using its own definition as the normative model for others.

Paul Martin's desire to create a citizenship act that would help ethnic groups and immigrants feel fully Canadian received resounding support in Winnipeg from members of the New Canadians Committee and later the Citizenship Committee of Manitoba. Control over what it meant to be Canadian, however, was mostly one-sided at this time.

NOTES

¹ Provincial Archives of Manitoba (hereafter PAM) P649, file 1, 1948 Central Council of Social Agencies annual report.

² Breton, 29.

³ Raymond Breton, "Multiculturalism and Canadian Nation-Building," in *The Politics of Gender, Ethnicity and Language in Canada*, eds. Alan Cairns and Cynthia Williams (Toronto: The University of Toronto Press, 1986), 27.

⁴ The presidents from 1951 to 1955 were Judge Lindal, Ewart Morgan, Heinz Frank, Professor A.S.R. Tweedie, and Anthony Yaremovich.

⁵ Leslie A. Pal, "Identity, Citizenship and Mobilization: The Nationalities Branch and World War Two," *Canadian Public Administration* [Canada] 1989 32 (3): 424.

⁶ Paul Martin, "Citizenship and the People's World," in *Belonging*, ed. Kaplan, 76.

⁷ WIB records, Vol. 4, #66, June 1945, quoted in William R. Young, "Building Citizenship: English Canada and Propaganda during the Second World War," *Journal of Canadian Studies* [Canada] 1981 16(3-4): 124.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Paul Martin, "Citizenship and the People's World," in *Belonging*, ed. Kaplan, 66.

¹⁰ *The Winnipeg Tribune*, 25 August, 1945.

¹¹ *The Winnipeg Tribune*, 25 October, 1946.

¹² *The Winnipeg Tribune*, 6 January, 1947.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ *The Winnipeg Tribune*, 7 January, 9 January, 1947.

¹⁵ PAM, P644, file 8. 1946, October minutes, Immigrant Children Committee.

¹⁶ Manpower and Immigration, *Immigration and Population Statistics*, (Ottawa: Canadian immigration and Population Study, 1974), 8. Although Canadians were interested in the issue of immigrant integration in the immediate postwar period, nationally there was very little controversy over immigration issues. And even though immigrants arrived in Canada from mostly European nations, this period did witness the admission of a more diverse group that had been admitted to Canada earlier in the century. Ninette Kelley and Michael Trebilcock. *The Making of the Mosaic: A History of Canadian Immigration Policy* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998), 311.

¹⁷ Department of Citizenship and Immigration, *Immigration Statistics*, (Ottawa: Statistics Section, 1957), 15.

¹⁸ Ibid, 8.

¹⁹ PAM, Clifton S. Monk, C2052.

²⁰ PAM, P644, file 46, 1948, November minutes, New Canadians Committee.

²¹ PAM, Anthony Yaremovich, C2065.

²² PAM, P644, file 46, 1948, November minutes, New Canadians Committee.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ PAM, P644, file 8, 1949, January minutes, New Canadians Committee.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ PAM, P644, file 8, 1949, February minutes, New Canadians Committee.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ PAM, P645, 1950, April minutes, New Canadians recreation sub-committee.

²⁹ PAM, P645, 1950, April minutes, New Canadians employment sub-committee.

³⁰ PAM, P645, 1950, March minutes, New Canadians welfare sub-committee.

³¹ Morrish, 74.

³² PAM, P646, file 16, 1950, March minutes, New Canadians employment sub-committee.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ PAM, P645, 1951, October minutes, New Canadians steering committee.

³⁶ PAM, P645, 1951, November minutes, New Canadians steering committee.

³⁷ Morrish, 77.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ PAM, P646, file 15, 1953, minutes, New Canadians welfare sub-committee.

⁴⁰ PAM, P724, 1953, December minutes, Citizenship Committee of Manitoba home hospitality committee.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² PAM, P724, 1954, April minutes, Citizenship Committee of Manitoba home hospitality committee.

⁴³ PAM, P723, 1954, March minutes, Citizenship Committee of Manitoba.

⁴⁴ In 1951 the Central Council of Social Agencies and the Central Volunteer Bureau combined to form the Welfare Council of Greater Winnipeg.

⁴⁵ PAM, P699, correspondence file, Citizenship Committee of Manitoba, 1951-1952.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Ibid. The emphasis is original to the primary source.

⁴⁸ PAM. Gordon MacDonell, C2068.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ PAM, P645, 1952, May minutes, Citizenship Committee of Manitoba.

⁵¹ *The Winnipeg Free Press*, 20 May, 1955, in Morrish, 85.

⁵² PAM, P646, 1954, March minutes, Citizenship Committee of Manitoba.

⁵³ PAM, P699, 1952, May minutes, Citizenship Committee of Manitoba.

⁵⁴ PAM, P723, 1953, March 10 news release by Citizenship Committee of Manitoba.

⁵⁵ PAM, P724, 1955, December minutes, Citizenship Committee of Manitoba. Jean Lagasse was a prominent educator in Manitoba at this time, and he worked particularly with "Indian" and Metis communities. He argued strongly that marginal groups should assimilate into the "Canadian" community. Unpublished report, Jean H. Lagasse, *A Community Development Program for Manitoba*, Winnipeg: Department of Welfare, 1962.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ PAM, P644, file 8, 1949, February minutes, New Canadians Committee.

⁵⁸ PAM, Mary Panaro, C2048.

⁵⁹ PAM, P646, 1950, March minutes, New Canadians Committee.

⁶⁰ The piece was written by Alan Klein from the School of Social Work at the University of Toronto, presented at the National Seminar on Citizenship Factors in the Integration of Groups, and sent to the Citizenship Committee of Manitoba by the Canadian Citizenship Branch.

⁶¹ PAM, P699, 1953, correspondence file, Citizenship Committee of Manitoba.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

CHAPTER THREE

BECOMING THE CITIZENSHIP COUNCIL OF MANITOBA: PURSUING CITIZENSHIP IN ITS 'BROADEST SENSE', 1956 - 1964

Between 1956 and 1964 the Citizenship Council of Manitoba's paternalistic attitude toward immigrants and citizenship showed signs of erosion. Its mandate remained the same throughout this period; to coordinate, stimulate, and promote citizenship activities among new immigrants, member organizations, and the wider community.¹ The activities with which the Council chose to pursue this mandate, however, began to bring its members into closer contact with immigrants themselves, and reflected a changing interpretation of citizenship and immigrant settlement. The goal of assimilation had faded. It was replaced, at least on an official level, with a policy of integration which appeared to be less interested in transforming the cultural practices of immigrants. All of the Citizenship Council's activities during these years were founded, however, on the assumption that newcomers should adopt "Canadian values." These values were promoted by Council members who were middle-class and predominantly Christian, thereby implicitly indicating that to belong within the "normative" Canadian identity was to emulate this model.

Several events were instrumental, however, in helping the Council begin to understand the settlement process from the perspective of immigrants rather than solely through the eyes of the host society. The 1957 influx of Hungarian refugees and the large-scale efforts of the Citizenship Council to help meet the immediate needs of these newcomers gave many of its volunteers their most extensive personal contact with

immigrants. In the years that followed the Council planned several community citizenship conferences which also provided immigrants with an opportunity to voice their own concerns about the process of social integration. An increasingly active female volunteer contingent that was willing to devote time toward interacting directly with newcomers also played a role in lessening the social distance between immigrants and the Citizenship Council. In 1961 the Council began to provide receptions after citizenship court ceremonies, a program which increased the interaction between “old” and “new” Canadians, but which still depicted a relatively narrow interpretation of what it meant to be a “good” citizen.

Change came slowly, and persistent vestiges of paternalism remained. Leadership remained solely with established Canadians. In their view, settlement work was complete once the short-term material needs of immigrants had been met, and there was little attention paid to the long-term economic or social needs of newcomers. The Council continued to accept little contribution from recent immigrants and limited leadership from ethnic member groups. The environment within the Council itself did not make new immigrants feel sufficiently comfortable to participate or to offer leadership. Church groups also continued to provide the greatest number of volunteers, and their Christian identity contributed, both implicitly and explicitly, to the idea that social integration could be most easily achieved through church attendance.

Another indication that the meaning and role of citizenship in the lives of Council members was changing is the fact that the association’s activity and growth were decidedly sporadic between 1956 and 1964. These were years of occasional uncertainty and frequent ambiguity regarding the Council’s intended role in the community. In the

spring of 1957 the group seemed optimistic. Its success in helping Hungarian refugees and a recent period of self-study had convinced members of the need for “expanded, vigorous organization” in the area of citizenship activities.² It was at this juncture that the group officially became the Citizenship Council of Manitoba, embarking as an independent voluntary association without the administrative guidance of the Winnipeg Welfare Council. During the years that followed, the Citizenship Council’s community conferences and the citizenship court program were popular events, especially with female volunteers. In 1964, however, the Council considered disbanding because of a “lack of concrete things to do.”³

This apparent decline can be linked to a number of factors. During 1957 the number of postwar immigrants arriving in Canada reached a peak of 282,164, the highest level since 1913.⁴ After the 1957 wave of Hungarian refugees ended, the newly elected Progressive Conservative government drastically limited the number of arriving immigrants. With few newcomers coming to the city the task of integration seemed less pressing. The subject of citizenship was also not as pressing a social issue as it had been immediately following the war. The late 1950s and 1960s were turbulent social times in Canada as new issues such as the emergence of a radical youth culture held the nation’s attention. Politically, these were years of tumult as well, witnessing five federal elections and two changes of government, as politicians attempted to keep pace with a changing Canadian society.⁵ The Council’s lack of financial resources presented another significant barrier. With no government funding to encourage citizenship activities, and with membership fees barely able to cover the cost of stationary and basic office supplies, there were insufficient resources to fund many new initiatives.

The work that the Council did pursue during these years was done mostly by female volunteers. Despite what seems like waning overall interest in citizenship issues women claimed that their work was both meaningful and exciting, and they began to assume a greater share of leadership responsibility.⁶ Hungarian relief efforts and citizenship court ceremonies were almost entirely the responsibility of female volunteers, and both were areas which afforded women the chance of forming fledgling friendships with immigrants. Even as women volunteers placed great value on citizenship activities, however, the Citizenship Council's male leadership became less involved in ongoing activities and showed little interest in planning for the future of the association.

By the late 1950s the Canadian government's attitudes toward immigration and citizenship had changed from those expressed after 1947. The most obvious policy change came in 1958 when, in response to a downturn in the economy, the government dramatically reduced immigration levels. Over the next four years, the number of arriving immigrants plunged to less than half of the immediate postwar levels.⁷ In Manitoba, the total number of immigrants that arrived in 1965, for example, was just under four thousand, compared with over eleven thousand less than a decade earlier.⁸ Dropping numbers were accompanied by changing demographics. The number of southern and central European immigrants was steadily rising even as the overall level of newcomers decreased.⁹ Although new immigration policies restricted the volume of immigration, however, Kelley and Trebilcock argue that by the early 1960s the "values and the interests that were driving immigration policy had taken on - politically, economically, and legally - a much more liberal complexion."¹⁰

The liberalization of public opinion surrounding the issue of immigration seems to reflect a growing awareness of Canadian pluralism on the part of the government. This change can be observed in the pages of a small magazine called *Citizen*. Published five times a year by Ottawa's Citizenship Branch, *Citizen* was promoted as a program aid for voluntary organizations engaged in citizenship activities and it reveals the government's expectations of both host and newcomer.

In a 1963 article, the very type of assimilation that had been advocated by government bureaucrats immediately after the war was rejected: Canadians should not "seek out the [newcomer] and shower him with attention so that he will be induced fairly rapidly to exchange his distinctive characteristics for a new personality, that of the dominant group."¹¹ Canadians were also instructed not to presume that the cultural practices of the dominant group would be beneficial to everyone. That which was new and different about immigrants was to be embraced, and their contributions to "art, literature and way of life" should be included in the "not yet fully emerged" Canadian culture.¹²

Integration, not assimilation, was heralded as the Canadian government's expectation of immigrants and was defined as a strategy through which minority groups would be encouraged to retain their cultural traditions while demonstrating allegiance to the nation and obeying its laws.¹³ The cultural contributions of immigrants were to be accepted within limits, however, and were not to challenge the core of the Canadian identity. As one article in *Citizen* mentioned, "As long as we do not jeopardize the essential heritage of conventions and values which ensure the survival of the group, we have everything to gain by encouraging the desire to know and better appreciate the new

and different.”¹⁴ *Citizen* also assumed that the responsibility for immigrant integration rested primarily on the shoulders of the “most enlightened and active citizens,” those in positions of community leadership, who could set an example by accepting the “new fashions in life” offered by newcomers.¹⁵ Although the government was more tolerant of ethnic diversity and demonstrated a more pluralistic view of Canadian society the parameters of immigrant integration continued to be defined by the host society.

The Citizenship Council seemed to follow the example set by the government and there was no use of the term assimilation in the Council’s records during these years. Even in interviews conducted in 1989, none of the participants attributed a desire to assimilate immigrants as a motivating factor for the activities or programs in the late 1950s. It would be a mistake to assume, however, that a rejection of assimilation as philosophy of cultural adaptation indicated a completely pluralistic understanding of Canadian society. In reality the change was more incremental. The Council hoped to pursue citizenship in its “broadest sense,” but at the same time, those defining the ideals of good citizenship were a relatively homogeneous group.

In 1957 the Citizenship Committee of Manitoba made its second name change. It became the Citizenship Council of Manitoba at the same time as embarking as an independent voluntary association. This move was a signal that although the group was still trying to clarify its purpose in the community, its members were sufficiently confident of the importance of citizenship as a social value to look for ways to expand and improve programming. The decision to become an independent association arose from two concurrent events: a period of self-study and the arrival of Hungarian refugees to Winnipeg. Both episodes convinced the Council that its previous efforts at reaching

immigrants were not adequate and that more could be done to communicate the importance of good citizenship.

In February of 1956, three members of the Citizenship Committee of Manitoba attended the Prairie Region Citizenship Conference at the University of Saskatchewan. The conference delegates praised Winnipeg representatives for their successful citizenship day ceremonies.¹⁶ The Citizenship Committee members were surprised to learn, however, that they were the only group present without its own constitution and independent administrative structure. As an independent community association the Committee could collect membership fees and donations, which would provide much needed revenue if it hoped to expand. The delegates' report upon returning to Winnipeg bolstered the Citizenship Committee's confidence in their citizenship work. This optimism, coupled with Jean Lagasse's observation in 1955 that the Committee was ineffective in reaching Winnipeg immigrants, motivated the group to begin another process of self-study and assessment. A study group was elected to explore the possibility of operating without the administrative support of the Welfare Council of Greater Winnipeg, and to determine if structural changes could help the Committee achieve a greater presence among immigrants.¹⁷

During the eight months in 1956 that the Citizenship Committee's future was being debated, the arrival of Hungarian refugees provided the group with its first opportunity to provide direct settlement services. For some Committee members, their work with Hungarians was their very first involvement with immigrants. This was a pivotal event for volunteers and the Committee as a whole because, for some, it helped them begin to understand the settlement experience from the immigrants' perspective,

and it helped the Committee as a whole make more significant links to the new immigrant community. Still, this was the group's first work in this area of direct services and its efforts were mostly shaped by its own interpretation of what was necessary for settlement.

The whole process by which large numbers of Hungarian refugees arrived in Canada is itself revealing about Canada's evolving relationship with immigrants. This example reveals that, indeed, this was a period of ambiguity in Canada's attitudes as a host society. While admission policies were becoming more liberal the government continued to be self-serving. And while Canadian society was gradually abandoning its assumption that immigrants should assimilate, it still seemed to want to play a supervisory role in immigrant settlement.

In 1956, the Hungarian Revolution crumbled under the weight of Soviet suppression, and large numbers of Hungarians fled to neighbouring Austria seeking safety.¹⁸ Within the volatile political climate of the Cold War, Western nations came under increasing pressure to admit refugees for permanent settlement, and Canada complied. This was not solely a humanitarian gesture on the part of the Canadian government, however, since the admission of refugees complemented the economic growth of the mid-fifties. 1957 was also an election year, and both the government and opposition were looking for ways to appease national opinion.¹⁹ At first the government enacted a cautious admission program, but after several Canadian churches, the opposition parties, and the national media mounted a vigorous demand for action, a new and more generous policy was introduced. As a result, 38,000 Hungarian refugees arrived in Canada.

The attitudes of Winnipeggers to arriving Hungarian refugees reveals a persistent bias favouring immigrants of European descent. Winnipeg did not have a thriving Hungarian community in the 1950s. Yet as Judge Raymond Harris, a leader on the Citizenship Committee recalled, there was little public opposition to the refugees' arrival due to the fact that the community was already accustomed to a significant European cultural presence.²⁰ Anthony Yaremovich, another Committee member, agreed that since the Hungarians were European, they had to be helped in any way possible.²¹ Yaremovich admitted, however, that a decade earlier Hungarians might not have been welcomed or accepted in Winnipeg.

Despite a more tolerant attitude, the government and the Citizenship Committee insisted on closely monitoring the integration of refugees into the community, motivated by a fear of ethnic enclaves. Ted Swan, a Winnipeg immigration officer who worked closely with the Citizenship Committee remembered that "they [Hungarian refugees] settled very well because they were never all dropped in one centre. [They] couldn't move into an existing ghetto [so there were] never any great problems."²²

Winnipeggers were welcoming of arriving Hungarians, but the refugees were greeted by a community unprepared to accommodate the volume of newcomers within the existing social service structure. The government had limited numbers of local staff and no adequate system to supply clothing, food and housing in the volume that was required. Winnipeg churches had a long tradition of welcoming refugees and providing for their material needs, but the Hungarian crisis was too sudden and involved more people than church groups could handle. As Ted Swan remembered, the Hungarians were different from earlier movements because they had "never thought about

immigrating until [they were] put on a plane or train and arrived in Canada.”²³ The newcomers were, therefore, not only materially but emotionally unprepared for their new environment. Swan alerted the Citizenship Committee to the refugees’ dire circumstances, asking for help to mobilize volunteers.

In response, the Committee formed an Hungarian relief subcommittee to work closely with immigration officials at the government headquarters in Immigration Hall. The subcommittee was led entirely by women and most of the volunteer contingent were women as well. Their work was a first step in the feminization of the groups’ leadership, and also demonstrates that it was women who were most willing and able to work directly with immigrants. Gladys Winter chaired the subcommittee and devoted her full time to coordinating the relief effort. She was also appointed the Committee’s first female president, but her term lasted only for one year. In response to what was perceived as great need, Winter phoned churches and recruited volunteers to sort donated supplies, collect and distribute clothing and food, look for housing and furnishings and jobs, and help refugees gain access to medical services. Swan credited the “ladies with their contacts” for being able to recruit volunteers.²⁴ Winter would assign a particular Hungarian family to a single church group or an individual woman volunteer. That family was then provided with bedding, furniture and groceries, and in some instances with financial aid such as free rent for one year.²⁵

Although the women were eager to help, they were often unaware of potential problems faced by the newcomers. Merle Wilson volunteered as part of the United Church Woman’s Association, and her experience with an Hungarian family was her first contact with people who did not speak English. Wilson remembered feeling very

ignorant about how to begin helping.²⁶ Wilson's church found jobs for the parents; Paul took work in a factory and Elizabeth cleaned in the hospital. The church also supplied furniture, bedding and clothes, and it was Wilson's idea to fill their cupboards with canned goods. "That was a disaster," she recalled, because the family was unable to read the labels, but "How do you know?"²⁷ Communication problems did not deter Wilson from developing a friendship with the refugees, and they overcame the canned-goods incident and "laughed and talked about it later."²⁸ Wilson expressed great pride when remembering her experience with this couple. She assured her listeners that "they made very good, well they *are* very good Canadians."²⁹

The Citizenship Committee's experience with Hungarian relief work also demonstrates that the government acknowledged its reliance on the local community to accomplish the elusive goal of social integration. Swan admitted that the government could not accomplish this task on its own.³⁰ Swan felt the government was not interested in checking to make sure that its programs were working, and did not wish to appear to be "policing" immigrants. Government officials also had a sense that some immigrants, and especially refugees, were suspicious of federal intervention, afraid of being told to "go here. go there, do this, do that," but hoped that if contacted by a church group, the immigrant would feel more secure.³¹ Bureaucrats like Swan, therefore, counted on non-governmental organizations (NGO's) to integrate or absorb people and "help them into the community, [and] get them to church."³² Swan assumed that the majority of Winnipeg society was Christian, and his association between Christian values and good citizenship is clear from the following statement: "Within local church communities

immigrants can learn what it is like to feel they are new Canadians, and what it means to become a good citizen.”³³

By February of 1957, when the flow of refugees through Winnipeg’s Immigration Hall finally ended, volunteers had assisted 1,300 Hungarian newcomers, and the Committee congratulated itself on what it considered to be a highly successful relief effort.³⁴ The recollections of members like Merle Wilson and Mary Panaro indicate that for female volunteers the experience had been especially meaningful since it had provided for befriending individual immigrants and their families.³⁵ Their work made them feel they had a role in shaping their community and in helping immigrants become good citizens. The minutes of a Citizenship Committee meeting reveal, however, that the Committee’s male leadership expressed the greatest interest in having been able to provide valuable assistance to local government officials.³⁶ For the whole group, Hungarian settlement work was the closest they had come to meeting their goal of “reaching” new immigrants.

Hungarian relief work helped wear down the Citizenship Committee’s paternalistic assumptions because many volunteers, some for the first time, had caught a glimpse of how newcomers themselves must have felt arriving in Winnipeg. A comparison between the Committee’s interpretation of the Hungarian refugees’ experience and that of an Hungarian author’s a generation later, however, indicates the extent to which their response was shaped by their own perception of what was needed for settlement and integration. The Citizenship Committee felt confident that settlement was nearly complete and the process of integration begun once immigrants had received food, clothing, shelter, employment, and a warm welcome from local voluntary agencies.

As Merle Wilson implied, the Committee felt its response to the Hungarians' material needs would help the newcomers become "good Canadians." Nandor Dreisziger, in his analysis of the refugees' arrival concludes, however, that it was not well-meaning community associations but rather Hungarian Canadians who "made the Canadian welcome to the refugees meaningful. The fact that bewildered newcomers were greeted by friendly and helpful co-nationals must have had a reassuring effect on them... It was a service that Canadian governments and welfare agencies by themselves could not have performed with similar facility."³⁷

From Ted Swan's perspective, Hungarian integration had been problem free. Dreisziger, however, discussed many challenges faced by Hungarian refugees that were not considered by the government or the Citizenship Committee of Manitoba. Settlement and integration were not as easily accomplished as the Committee hoped. Canadian companies looked to refugees to fill their demand for unskilled labourers, and others hoped for a new supply of domestic servants. The arriving Hungarians, however, were mostly semi-skilled and skilled workers, professionals and students who were frustrated by the economic expectations placed upon them. And although the 1956 wave of Hungarian newcomers received a much warmer welcome than previous immigrants, Dreisziger feels the suddenness of departure from Hungary, and differences in expectations between host and newcomers, caused the emotional trauma of relocation to extend for months and even years.³⁸ Dreisziger's observations demonstrate that the Citizenship Committee focused on the immediate and external symptoms of integration without acknowledging the long-term needs of suitable employment or self sufficiency.

The immigrants themselves had made little contribution toward the Committee's assessment of what was required for settlement and "becoming Canadian."

The busy months of Hungarian settlement work coincided with the Citizenship Committee's self-study. Although by all appearances the Committee was becoming more successful at "reaching" new immigrants, one critique brought to the attention of the study group indicates how far the Committee really was from meeting this goal. The minutes from one committee meeting record the comments of an un-named speaker as follows, that "in his opinion, new Canadians did not attend meetings because they were not given opportunities for active participation in the work of the Committee."³⁹ There is no record of any response to this charge. The study group either saw no problem with the Canadian-born character of its membership and its hierarchical leadership model, or no one had the courage to add their disapproval.

Similar tension existed over the participation of ethnic groups on the Citizenship Committee. Anthony Yaremovich remembered that there were "certain sensitivities" between ethnic groups and Canadian agencies, and that it took some time before the group started "growing up," and intergroup relations became more congenial.⁴⁰ It was difficult, he felt, to foster a true sense of unity between "ethnics" and "Canadians." These comments indicate that the Committee's sense of citizenship was not inclusive enough to serve as a unifying ideal for the group as a whole. Although, presumably, the majority of the group were Canadian citizens, the distinction between "ethnics" and "Canadians" was sufficiently obvious to keep most ethnic members from attaining a sense of ownership over the association.

These tensions did not deter the study group from deciding that the Committee should continue to pursue citizenship in its “broadest sense”, and it recommended that the Committee declare its independence from the Welfare Council of Greater Winnipeg, and change its name to the Citizenship Council of Manitoba.⁴¹ Much of the group’s mandate remained the same: to coordinate, stimulate, and promote citizenship activities among new immigrants, member organizations, and the wider community.⁴² Independence, however, promised the possibility of greater financial resources. By March of 1957 the Citizenship Council wrote its own constitution.⁴³ Fifty-five member groups were listed on the charter, and four standing committees were appointed: finance, membership, immigration, and programming.

During 1956 and 1957 the Citizenship Committee had taken concrete steps to become more closely involved with immigrant integration. Certain boundaries clearly remained, but in contrast with its earlier activities the Committee had begun to bridge the gap between Canadians, immigrants and ethnic groups. The attitude of the newly formed Citizenship Council of Manitoba seemed buoyant. It seems ironic then that the Citizenship Council’s activities slowed down after 1957. This can be attributed in part to the fact that the Council was only involved in addressing the immediate and short-term needs of immigrants and no large-scale wave of newcomers arrived in Winnipeg for more than a decade after the arrival of the Hungarians.⁴⁴ The Council’s ability to develop new programs was also hampered by limited financial resources.⁴⁵ In 1958 the City of Winnipeg provided a small office at the Confederation Building, and the Council later moved to a spare office at a real estate firm. These offices consisted of a desk, chair and

a phone, and were not effective in serving as a meeting place or attracting new immigrants.⁴⁶

Both these sets of circumstances would have understandably limited the Citizenship Council's activities and its willingness to look for new ways to promote citizenship in the Winnipeg community. The issue of financial resources, however, was not new, and between 1948 and 1958 the association had remained very active in spite of a small budget. Likewise, the group had only ventured into the area of direct settlement services in 1957, and had pursued many different areas of work in the preceding years. It would seem, then, that the changing Canadian social environment also played a role in determining the level of the Council's activity. The urgent need to pursue immigrant assimilation had passed, but a new philosophy of citizenship that could more fully encompass the diversity that was part of a pluralistic society had not yet taken shape.

Between 1957 and 1962 the Citizenship Council was relatively inactive except for hosting three community conferences. These meetings were designed to try and understand further what was meant by immigrant "integration." In 1959 a one-day conference on the theme "Integration - The Goal: Paths and Barriers" attracted more than one hundred delegates from ethnic groups, various Manitoba community associations, and some recent immigrants.⁴⁷ This conference was the most overt effort the Citizenship Council had made to date at entering into formal dialogue with the ethnic communities and recent immigrants. Any previous ambiguity between the opposing goals of integration and assimilation had faded and, at least officially, the idea of assimilation was passé. During ten group sessions participants discussed the issue of integration from the perspective of schools, voluntary organizations, business and industry, press, radio and

television, the private citizen, citizenship status, national consciousness, local government, the arts, and inter-organizational problems. Those who discussed the role of the school were concerned that the Manitoba school system was still trying to assimilate immigrant children, but advocated instead a “live-and-let-live pattern of integration.”⁴⁸ It is obvious from the seminar topics, however, that the conference focused on how immigrants could most easily take their place within the “mainstream” of society, although it is significant that “ethnics” and immigrants were at least part of the discussion. Two other conferences were held over the next three years on the themes “The Canadian Identity” and “Human Rights in the Canadian Setting.” There is no record of their content or attendance statistics.⁴⁹

In 1962 the Council began its first long-term program: planning citizenship court ceremonies and hosting receptions following court sessions. At Citizenship Court the Council found a venue through which it could communicate its ideals of good citizenship, and the program facilitated interaction between Canadians and recent immigrants. The identity of volunteer groups and the types of symbols chosen for the ceremony portrayed a distinctly middle class and Christian example of what it meant to be a good Canadian citizen. It is beyond the scope of this project to know how these receptions were interpreted by the new citizens, but the reminiscences of Council volunteers reveal that court ceremonies were an important activity in their own lives, and that they valued the opportunity to participate in promoting citizenship in the community. This program was organized almost entirely by women and since this was the Council’s only on-going activity between 1962 and 1964 it was instrumental in shifting the momentum of Council leadership to its female members.

Between 1947 and 1961 the Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire (IODE) had provided refreshments following naturalization ceremonies. In 1961, however, the Diefenbaker government established special citizenship courts, and appointed Judge Chapman to the bench in Winnipeg.⁵⁰ Determined to involve community organizations in his courtroom, Judge Chapman sought the help of the Citizenship Council of Manitoba. He helped the Council recruit volunteers by making presentations to women's groups, impressing upon his listeners the importance of this public responsibility. His audiences agreed that the Citizenship Court should present itself as an institution that would engender greater esteem. As Genevieve Brownell, a representative of the Women's Canadian Club remembered, at that time it was a "very cold, cut and dry thing. People were lined up all around the wall. That was it."⁵¹

Together, the Citizenship Council and Judge Chapman introduced a sense of decorum and pageantry to the ceremony. The symbols the Council chose reveal some of the values it thought were an important part of good citizenship and of the Canadian identity. A member of the Mounted Police stood at the front next to the judge and clerk.⁵² After the new citizens took their oath, a speech was delivered by a prominent politician or official, and a children's choir from a local school was on hand to perform several numbers. One of the women volunteers would teach the newcomers to sing "Oh Canada," much to the delight of the Canadian onlookers.⁵³ Often, the new citizens were given an opportunity to say a few words, and Merle Wilson remembered being impressed by the individuals who appeared very dutiful, and that she "could tell the people who really wanted to become citizens as they went through all their paces."⁵⁴ The judge also delivered a lecture, telling the immigrant members of his audience "how he should

behave, what he should do” in order to fulfill the responsibilities of citizenship.⁵⁵ At the close of the ceremony, members of the Citizenship Council greeted the newcomers and invited them to enjoy a cup of tea and some refreshments. Usually the new Canadians were presented with a Bible.⁵⁶ “It was very nice,” remembered Edith Courtney, “then we shook hands and talked with some of them.”⁵⁷ One volunteer felt that these newcomers were doing more than merely becoming citizens at the court ceremonies, but that they were actually learning about Canada.⁵⁸ The inherent lesson to be learned from the model presented by the Citizenship Council was that the Canadian identity was predominantly mainstream, middle-class, and Christian.⁵⁹

Most of the volunteers at court ceremonies became involved through their connection with women’s church groups that were Council members. Myrtle Lawson, a member of the Women’s Association of The United Church, was responsible for inviting women from her own and other denominations to assist in providing receptions. She recruited Anglicans and Pentecostals, among others, trying to get as many women involved as possible. Lawson took much delight in her work and felt that people missed so much by not being involved with immigrants.⁶⁰ Never at a loss to find women to help, Lawson was confident the volunteers enjoyed themselves and learned a great deal since most were always willing to come back.

Citizenship Court made the issues of citizenship and immigrant integration a meaningful part of everyday life for the Council’s women volunteers. They cited various reasons for the decision to attend citizenship court. For some it was an educational experience: throughout her life Lawson had been “interested in things like that, and getting to know people who have lived differently, people with different experiences.”⁶¹

It was a chance to “meet all the strangers who came,” and learn more about them. Two other women said they had “always been interested in good citizenship,” and were “concerned about people.”⁶² Edith Courtney’s interest first began as a child on a Manitoba farm. She remembered feeling upset that some immigrants who came to her town to provide farm labour were called “bluenoses.”⁶³ All three women interviewed regarding their involvement with citizenship court highlighted the importance of the friendships they formed with other female volunteers. Citizenship court served as a public venue where women could socialize and pursue common interests. Myrtle Lawson looked back on these years as “one of the most productive parts of my life. I enjoyed it so much and got in touch with so many people.”⁶⁴ Participating in court ceremonies and receptions undoubtedly left volunteers with the feeling they were contributing to the lives of immigrants, but the program also indicates that citizenship was an important social value for the women themselves.

Aside from women’s personal motivation for volunteering at citizenship court, the organizations of which they were members espoused a particularly middle class and Christian interpretation of Canadian citizenship. Volunteers from Imperial Order Daughter of the Empire continued to volunteer at the court even after the Council adopted the organizing responsibility. The presence of IODE women at citizenship court would have contributed to the Citizenship Council’s middle class identity and would have been a reminder of Canada’s British heritage. Traditionally, IODE members were the wives, sisters, and daughters of prominent male community leaders. The IODE’s original mandate was the preservation of Canada’s links with the Empire and the support of British institutions, values and social system.⁶⁵ Its programs in the area of citizenship

were built on the belief that it was the womens' own good example of character and citizenship that should serve as a model for immigrants to follow.⁶⁶ Women from the United Church of Canada's women's auxiliaries were the most common volunteers at citizenship court. Their interest in the area of citizenship is not surprising. The Woman's Missionary Society of the United Church, of which many of these women were members, had a separate department called "Christian citizenship," which encouraged women to maintain the Christian character of the community and whose mandate was "to bring the whole sum of man's endeavor into full cooperation with God."⁶⁷ Some United Church women seemed to be explicitly motivated by a sense of mission to work with the Citizenship Council. Merle Wilson had been fascinated by missionaries as a child and had always hoped she could go to other countries when she became an adult.⁶⁸ Her association with the Citizenship Council, and her involvement at citizenship court enabled her to meet some of the "foreign people" she used to imagine without traveling overseas.

Women volunteered at citizenship court for a variety of personal and corporate reasons. Although well-intentioned, their attitudes toward immigrants were still somewhat paternalistic because it was assumed that newcomers should adopt the Citizenship Council's idea of good citizenship rather formulating their own interpretation of the Canadian identity. Court ceremonies had the potential to change these attitudes, however, and some women tried to understand what the ceremony would have meant to those receiving Canadian citizenship. Marguerite Hargrave observed that the event was important for some, and less so for others.⁶⁹ Lawson and Courtney observed that some immigrants were "a bit fearful, just as we would be if in the same position."⁷⁰ Courtney

acknowledged it must have been difficult for some to give up their old citizenship, remembering with sadness one particular “little old lady” who had tears running down her face but resolutely completed all the necessary steps. In response, the women did their best to “make them feel at home,” and give the new citizens a chance to talk and practice their English which “the people used to enjoy.”⁷¹ In contrast to the lasting friendships that evolved between Council volunteers, however, aside from sometimes doing small things with immigrants outside of court, “they (immigrants) went on to other things and [we] lost touch.”⁷²

Citizenship court ceremonies and receptions became a central component of the Council’s presence in the Winnipeg community and among new immigrants. During this period, it was still part of a mostly paternalistic relationship between the Council and new immigrants. The message seemed clear; that newcomers were welcome as Canadians considering they adopted the existing values of the community. In the case of the Citizenship Council these values continued to be predominantly middle-class and Christian. As much as the program reflected a paternalistic attitude, however, it also held the seed for transforming the Council’s approach to immigrant integration. Many of the women interviewed stated that attending court was an educational experience. Thus, the process of mutual learning was taking shape, and would be an essential ingredient in dismantling the one-sided perspective of the association.

Despite the popularity of court receptions among women volunteers, in the early 1960s the Citizenship Council’s very existence came into question. Genevieve Brownell, who became president of the Citizenship Council in 1962, recounted the story. She had been a representative of the Women’s Canadian Club on the Council for several years

when one day “out of the blue, one of the men phoned and asked if I would be president.”⁷³ Brownell was only the second female Council president; Gladys Winter had served for one year during the Hungarian “crisis.” Brownell remembered that, at that time, the male leaders were struggling just “to keep the Council alive.”⁷⁴

At the beginning of 1965 the Citizenship Council of Manitoba stood at a crossroads. Most of the Council’s membership seemed willing to disband after almost two decades of promoting citizenship activities among immigrants and the wider Winnipeg community. The problem had several layers. Limited financial resources and declining immigration levels were the most obvious. More significantly, however, with the exception of court volunteers, many Council members had developed a profound apathy toward the subject of citizenship. Brownell remembered that the group was plagued by a “tiredness and negative thinking” that was difficult to overcome.⁷⁵ Just as important was the fact that two nagging issues had still not been resolved. Although work with Hungarian refugees and newly naturalized citizens contributed toward solving the problem, the Council had not achieved significant success in “reaching” immigrants, the very group it hoped to educate about the virtues of Canadian citizenship. The Council had not secured an active presence in Winnipeg’s immigrant community. Equally serious was the issue of limited participation and leadership provided by recent immigrants and ethnic groups. Given all these circumstances it is not surprising that president Genevieve Brownell concluded that, in 1965, the Citizenship Council had a “lack of concrete things to do,” and was not of great value to the community.⁷⁶

The post-war vision of Canadian citizenship that had supported the Citizenship Council for almost twenty years could not carry the group through the turbulent 1960s. The Council, understandably, was at a loss to understand what role it should play in the local community. It was no longer charged with the task of assimilating immigrants, but its approach to integration continued to be overshadowed by attitudes of paternalism. The Citizenship Council's survival depended on the introduction of a new vision for how immigrants and ethnic groups could find a sense of belonging within Canadian society.

NOTES

¹ Sonja Roeder Papers, (hereafter SRP) 1962 program, Citizenship seminar, hosted by Citizenship Council of Manitoba. This mandate, to coordinate, stimulate, and promote citizenship activities among new immigrants, member organizations, and the wider community, remained the same until after 1975.

² PAM, P726, 1956, October minutes, Citizenship Committee of Manitoba.

³ PAM. Genevieve Brownell, C2061.

⁴ Valerie Knowles, *Strangers at Our Gates: Canadian Immigration and Immigration Policy, 1540 - 1990*, (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1992), 134.

⁵ J.L. Granatstein et. al *Nation: Canada Since Confederation* 3rd ed. (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson Limited, 1990), 456.

⁶ PAM, Myrtle Lawson, C2049. This decline is also difficult to explain because of the lack of written sources that exist for these years. Interviews conducted during the late 1980s provide the only insight into the Council's activities.

⁷ 282,164 immigrants arrived in Canada in 1957 compared to 106,928 immigrants in 1960. Knowles, 134.

⁸ Department of Citizenship and Immigration, *Immigration Statistics*, (Ottawa: Immigration Branch, 1965), 8.

⁹ Ninette Kelley and Michael Trebilcock, *The Making of the Mosaic: A History of Canadian Immigration Policy*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998), 331.

¹⁰ Kelley and Trebilcock, 345. In Manitoba there were marked increases of immigrants from certain non- European areas, specifically Japan and Asia. Department of Citizenship and Immigration Statistics, *Immigration Statistics*, (Ottawa: Immigration Branch, 1957 and 1965).

¹¹ *Citizen*, February 1963, vol. 9, no. 1, p. 7.

¹² *Citizen*, June 1959, vol. 5, no. 3, p. 18.

¹³ *Citizen*, June 1959, vol. 5, no. 3, p. 21.

¹⁴ *Citizen*, June 1959, vol. 5, no. 3, p. 13.

¹⁵ *Citizen*, June 1959, vol. 5, no. 3, p. 14.

¹⁶ Morrish. 86.

¹⁷ PAM. P726, 1956, October minutes, Citizenship Committee of Manitoba.

¹⁸ N.F. Dreisziger et al, *Struggle and Hope: The Hungarian Canadian Experience*, (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd, 1982), 203.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ PAM. Judge Raymond Harris, C2072.

²¹ PAM. Anthony Yaremovitch, C2065.

²² PAM, Ted Swan, C2051.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ PAM, Mary Panaro, C2048.

²⁶ PAM, Merle Wilson, C2055.

²⁷ PAM, Merle Wilson, C2055.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ PAM, Ted Swan, C2051.

³¹ PAM, Ted Swan, C2051.

³² Ibid.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ PAM, P729, 1957, February minutes, Citizenship Committee of Manitoba.

³⁵ PAM, Merle Wilson, C2055, and Mary Panaro, C2048.

³⁶ PAM, P729, 1957, February minutes, Citizenship Committee of Manitoba.

³⁷ Dreisziger, 207. Dreisziger mentions one exception to this generalization, which was the International Institute in Toronto, which he felt provided effective help to a great many refugees. The International Institute of Toronto was much more experienced during the 1950s than the Citizenship Committee of Manitoba in providing direct settlement services.

³⁸ Dreisziger, 209.

³⁹ PAM, P646, 1956, April minutes, Citizenship Committee of Manitoba.

⁴⁰ PAM, Anthony Yaremovich, C2065.

⁴¹ PAM, P646, 1956, April minutes, Citizenship Committee of Manitoba.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ PAM, P729, 1957, February minutes, Citizenship Committee of Manitoba.

⁴⁴ A wave of Ugandans arrived in 1972 and Chilean refugees arrived in 1973.

⁴⁵ PAM, Gordon MacDonell, C2068.

⁴⁶ PAM, Mary Panaro, C2048.

⁴⁷ *Citizen*, June 1959, vol. 5, no. 3, p. 31.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Some sources after 1964 indicate that the Council continued to plan citizenship day ceremonies throughout these years, but there are no records between 1956 and 1964 to confirm this.

⁵⁰ PAM, Genevieve Brownell, C2061.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² PAM, Edith Courtney, C2050.

⁵³ PAM, Merle Wilson, C2055.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ PAM, Serge Radchuk, C2075.

⁵⁶ Personal Conversation with Dr. Peter Bailey, The University of Winnipeg, October 1998. Dr. Bailey's said that his wife had been involved with citizenship ceremonies for many years, and that the Citizenship Council's practice of handing out bibles lasted for many years.

⁵⁷ PAM, Edith Courtney, C2050.

⁵⁸ PAM, Lynne Pinterics, C2060.

⁵⁹ In a 1994 article, author Didi Khayatt recounts an experience very similar to those that took place in Winnipeg's citizenship courts. Khayatt was sworn in as a citizen in the early 1970s in northern Ontario. After the ceremony she and the other new citizens were invited to attend a tea given by the I.O.D.E, at which they were presented with a Bible and a Canadian flag. She remembers being surrounded by older women "bent on making me feel 'welcome to Canada.'" These women asked her many questions about Egypt, where Khayatt was born, and she thought they were joking because of the extreme stereotypes to which they referred. Eventually Khayatt re-interpreted this exchange: "It was not until many years later, when I understood the language of racism, that this incident fell into place, that I recognized their benevolent attention not as welcoming me, but as relegating me to my "proper" place as grateful immigrant." Khayatt's account offers a glimpse of what the Winnipeg ceremonies may have felt like for some new citizens. Didi Khayatt "The Boundaries at the Intersection of Race, Class and Gender," *Canadian Women's Studies* 14 no. 2 (Spring 1994), 11.

⁶⁰ PAM, Myrtle Lawson, C2049.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² This sentiment was expressed by Genevieve Brownell, C2061, and Edith Courtney, C2050.

⁶³ PAM, Edith Courtney, C2050.

⁶⁴ PAM, Myrtle Lawson, C2049.

⁶⁵ Nancy M. Sheehan, "Philosophy, Pedagogy, and Practice: The IODE and the Schools in Canada, 1900 - 1945," *Historical Studies in Education* 1990 2(2), 314.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ United Church Archives, (UCA) Manitoba Conference Branch, Woman's Missionary Society, annual report, 1954.

⁶⁸ PAM, Merle Wilson, C2055.

⁶⁹ PAM, Marguerite Hargrave, C2064.

⁷⁰ PAM, Myrtle Lawson, C2049.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ PAM, Genevieve Brownell, C2061.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ PAM, Genevieve Brownell, C2061.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE CITIZENSHIP COUNCIL ADAPTS TO A CHANGING SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT: 1965 - 1970

In 1965, at the critical point when the Citizenship Council was considering disbanding, several women assumed the primary leadership of the association and were personally responsible for ensuring not only the Council's survival but its growth and prosperity as well. The Council survived only because its new leadership introduced an "alternative vision" for how the group could relate to new immigrants. Significantly, two of these women were immigrants themselves and were also active in Winnipeg ethnic associations. The most prominent, Sonja Roeder, had arrived in Canada from Germany as an adult after the Second World War. Roeder and her female colleagues were passionate about forming personal and lasting connections with new immigrants and also looked for ways to help a wider range of ethnic associations participate more fully in the Citizenship Council's work. They both had an avid interest in promoting intercultural harmony and communication, and by adding these goals to the group's mandate of citizenship education found ways to turn the Council into a vital and popular community institution.

These changes indicate that by the 1960s the Council's future success lay in developing a more pluralistic understanding of Canadian society, and in fostering an understanding of citizenship that could accommodate that pluralism. Between 1965 and 1970 the Citizenship Council's programs began to include celebrations of cultural diversity. The Council's mandate remained the same, but it had now moved beyond a mere tolerance of cultural diversity toward encouraging immigrants to retain parts of their

cultural heritage within the Canadian context. Immigrants were given the message that it was possible to belong within Canadian society without subverting their ethnicity. The fact that the Citizenship Council's most active leaders were "ethnic" and were immigrants themselves was a significant sign that the group was acknowledging the extent of pluralism in Canada. By the mid-1960s, Sonja Roeder, a post-war immigrant, had become sufficiently integrated into the Winnipeg community to become part of the host society, and to serve as the local spokesperson on citizenship issues.

When they were interviewed in 1989 some Council members used the term "multiculturalism" to describe the group's activities between 1965 and 1970, and claimed that the atmosphere taking shape at the International Centre, which was founded in 1969, was multicultural. While multiculturalism aptly describes the direction in which the Council was evolving, the word was not used at the time. It was not until the 1970s that multiculturalism gained greater usage as part of the Canadian lexicon. During the five years before Prime Minister Trudeau's declaration of a multiculturalism policy, however, the Citizenship Council was using the language of "intercultural harmony" and planning the same kinds of events that became popular after 1971. The Council began to come to terms with and even celebrate cultural pluralism before being "instructed" to do so by the federal government.

The shift toward female leadership, and not just participation, further highlighted the Citizenship Council's changing public identity. Women had been active members of the Council since 1948, leading subcommittees, organizing special events and serving as volunteers, but not until the mid-1960s did they become the group's most prominent leaders. Several positions on the executive committee continued to be held by men, but

Sonja Roeder, Mary Panaro and Genevieve Brownell became the Council's most visible representatives in the Winnipeg community. These women were charismatic leaders whose own dedication to citizenship and immigrant settlement inspired other Council members to become more active in these areas. They shaped the Council's direction in several ways. Roeder, Panaro and Brownell were responsible for establishing the International Centre in 1969, a meeting place and office space intended specifically to foster inter-group communication and facilitate the teaching of good citizenship. This move was an important step in solidifying the Council's presence in the community. Secondly, it was women who took the initiative in forging closer relationships between the Citizenship Council and recent immigrants. Repeatedly women stood out as being the ones willing to spend the time and energy to develop a more reciprocal relationship with immigrants and to learn about the needs of newcomers from their own perspective.

The Citizenship Council's public identity became less overtly Christian after 1965 as well. Churches continued to supply many of the Council's volunteers, but their involvement focused more exclusively on programs which directly involved new immigrants rather than on multicultural celebrations. The leadership of church representatives was less discernible. This change affected the Council's idea of what it meant to be a good citizen. Instead of defining good citizenship as the practice of Christian values the Council's rhetoric began to assume a more secular focus. Citizenship was discussed more often in the language of civic than religious responsibility. The Council's increasing political connections helped facilitate this shift. By accepting a federal grant to provide immigrant orientation services in 1967 the

Council aligned itself more closely with government officials. The Council's growing political affiliations soon overshadowed its religious roots.

Between 1965 and 1971 the Citizenship Council took some decisive steps toward acknowledging and even honouring cultural pluralism in Canada. True, evidence of paternalism remained. Council leadership was more diverse, but was tightly held by a small group of women who, although they looked for ways for ethnic groups to participate more fully in the Council's work, effectively kept these same associations from assuming any direct control. Immigrants too were invited to partake of Council services but not offered any authority in the association's planning or decision making. Finally, the one area of the Citizenship Council's public identity that reflected the least diversity was class. The group's leadership and volunteers came, almost entirely, from a middle-class economic situation and there was little acknowledgment of the economic struggles often faced by newcomers.

Still, dramatic societal changes that took place in Canada as a whole during this decade propelled the Citizenship Council's evolution toward a more pluralistic identity. The Canadian people were in the midst of an "identity crisis" and were finally beginning to understand, or at least acknowledge, the extent to which cultural pluralism was a part of the national character.

The mid 1960s have been described as a "'Great Divide' in Canadian cultural perspectives."¹ As issues of ethnicity, nationalism, gender and religion were being reassessed, Canadians experienced a collision of old and new values.² As Canadians continued to cast aside old colonial connections a crumbling veneer of Anglo-Canadian

conformity was found to be barely covering rising political pressure coming from ethnic groups and Quebec.³ Ethnicity had again become a volatile subject nation-wide since most immigrants from the immediate postwar wave had become securely settled, had acquired Canadian citizenship, and settled into sizeable ethnic constituencies.⁴ Ethnic associations were gaining influence as part of the Canadian mainstream; consequently, politicians and other community organizations had to pay closer attention to the “ethnic agenda.”⁵ The fourth volume of Canada’s Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism published in 1969 was titled *The Cultural Contribution of the Other Ethnic Groups*, and reinforced the need for politicians to take seriously the “third force” by stating that Canada had ceased to be a bicultural community and had become a pluralist society. According to historian Robert Harney, “the 1960s saw the transformation of polyethnicity from a social consequence of recent immigration to its assertion as a permanent feature of the Canadian political landscape.”⁶ The question of what role “ethnics” would play in public institutions was not a quandary faced by the Citizenship Council alone but had become a question of national significance.⁷

The rise of Quebec nationalism in the 1960s was a turning point in the area of Canadian politics and brought the question of nationalism in general to the forefront of public consciousness. Canadians were faced with the blatant reality that they could not assume the existence of a static or homogeneous “Canadian” identity. Charles de Gaulle’s infamous 1967 proclamation of “*Vive le Quebec libre*” as well as the FLQ kidnapping in 1970 made nationalism a potentially explosive subject across the country. The emergence of Quebecois nationalism was paralleled by a rising sense of Canadian nationalism. It was, in some ways, a reactionary development as the rest of Canada

scrambled to build a stronger sense of common identity that could unite the country's divided population.⁸

Not all Canadians were convinced, however, that the promotion of nationalism was a good thing. Within other groups, nationalistic fervor was viewed with growing suspicion.⁹ Robert Bothwell and others have observed that during this period "traditional standards and ideas stood condemned because they were traditional," and for some people nationalism and citizenship seemed to be antiquated social values.¹⁰ Rising nationalism in the 1960s was founded on different principles than it had been in the immediate postwar era. It now had a distinctly economic component. Through strategies that included subsidies, protectionism, and regulated competition the Canadian government sought to foster a distinctive Canadian identity in opposition to the ubiquitous political and economic power of the Americans.¹¹ The Citizenship Council of Manitoba was caught, therefore, in a social environment in which the issues of nationalism and citizenship had different meanings than immediately following the Second World War.

Like other groups who were finding a new voice in the 1960s, Canadian women began to demand a more prominent place in the public arena. In 1966 the Committee on Equality for Women was formed and was instrumental in convincing the federal government to undertake a royal commission on the status of women.¹² Women were leading the reevaluation of their current roles in Canadian society and demanding greater opportunities. Women's organizations were influential in organizing this crusade. Women's work through church associations and other social groups in the postwar period had established a strong model for this kind of public activity and, as Alison Prentice et al notes, "formed the bridge to the resurgent feminism of the late 1960s."¹³ Thus, women's

associations and women's leadership were becoming more common and acceptable vehicles of social change themselves. There was no resistance on the Citizenship Council to the obvious turn toward female leadership after 1965. The fact that a woman would become the Council's spokesperson at local and national events was part of an evolving social context in which women were finding a stronger public voice.

Churches too experienced significant change and were subject to the questioning that confronted most forms of traditional authority during this tumultuous period. The multitude of social and cultural changes throughout Canadian society were, according to historians Terrence Murphy and Robert Perin, "outstripping the churches' capacity to adjust."¹⁴ Many Christian institutions became aware of the need to make fundamental changes and began to reassess programs of religious education, modes of worship and patterns of church governance. Murphy and Perin have observed that a "general shift occurred away from authoritarian or paternalistic leadership towards more consultative procedures for decision-making in which the laity, including young people, were encouraged to participate."¹⁵ Despite these efforts at reform the societal changes of the 1960s implemented a process through which Christianity would become a "fragment" in Canadian society, a commodity or service to be consumed and less of a life-defining commitment.¹⁶ As pluralism became the defining reality of Canadian society Christian churches were faced by a new social framework that subverted the kind of cultural authority they once enjoyed.¹⁷ The decline of Christian hegemony in Canada influenced the Citizenship Council. It was no longer acceptable to define good citizenship as the practice of Christian virtues or to assume that church involvement was a direct path into the mainstream of Canadian life.

All of these societal changes are linked in that each prompted Canadians to acknowledge the extent of pluralism and diversity in their midst. As political scientist Alan C. Cairns has observed, these events also mitigated a reevaluation of Canadian citizenship: "The emergence from the audience or the background of the previously silenced or acquiescent female majority and of historical minorities, supplemented and invigorated by the ethnic diversity fostered by contemporary immigration patterns, alters the relationship between those who are represented and their representatives."¹⁸ The social meaning of citizenship, and the question of belonging in Canadian society needed to evolve in order to keep pace with a changing social, political, and cultural landscape.

In 1968 Canadians witnessed a decisive indication that the meaning of citizenship was also to be held up for debate. It was during that year that the Canadian Citizenship Council collapsed, or as Walter Hlady of the Department of the Secretary of State noted, when it was "murdered."¹⁹ The Citizenship Council of Manitoba had been a member of the national coalition since becoming an independent association in 1956. After becoming Council president in 1967 Sonja Roeder strengthened the ties between the two groups. Roeder was in attendance at the Canadian Citizenship Council annual conference in 1968 when delegates resolved by majority vote to disband the Council, and she was among the participants who rallied in opposition to the decision.²⁰

Those in favour of dismantling the national Council presented both pragmatic and philosophical arguments. They cited a nation-wide lack of public interest in activities focusing on the value of citizenship. The personal involvement of membership and local councils had fallen off significantly, and financial support was dwindling.²¹ Other arguments followed a particular strain of social thought. One member suggested that

citizenship was an obsolete social value within the world political arena and had no place in a country that believed in the equality of all humanity. Given the irrelevance of citizenship, therefore, it was no longer necessary to maintain a national organization. Some members tried to persuade delegates that anything connected with nationalism should be avoided. Their argument was in obvious reference to rising nationalism in Quebec: "Nationalism tends to degenerate into "petty nationalism" which has no place in the organizational efforts of modern society."²² They recommended that Canadians concentrate on promoting new social ideas and institutions rather than conserve those that were obsolete.

Sonja Roeder was part of a small delegation at the conference who argued against the motion to disband. These persistent individuals insisted that good citizenship was still a relevant and valuable social ideal, and insisted that dwindling participation and financial resources did not warrant abandoning local councils by leaving them without a national conference structure. The protesters, however, had little chance of saving the existing institution against the zealotry of those who wanted to abandon the national council for philosophical reasons. As Roeder reported, "Instead of simply withdrawing and abandoning a case for which they lost interest, spokesmen of this group displayed missionary determination to dissolve the Canadian Citizenship Council."²³

When the issue was finally brought to a vote, the motion for dissolution carried by a substantial majority. Those who had lobbied to save the Council were deeply disappointed, and held an emergency meeting to discuss what, if anything, remained to be salvaged of a national association. The dissenters unanimously agreed to establish a new nation-wide organization devoted to the continued promotion of good Canadian

citizenship that would work in close cooperation with local councils. Roeder was appointed to the Executive of the new Canadian Citizenship Federation and helped prepare a new constitution. Its objectives included the following: "To stimulate in the minds of all Canadians a greater appreciation of the meaning and implications of democracy as a way of life. To promote mutual esteem and exchanges amongst citizens and groups of various backgrounds. To assist with the development of bilingualism."²⁴ These objectives reflect the importance of the language issue and of ethnicity within national discourse and debates. The future of a national Citizenship association depended on its ability to accommodate and accept the reality of cultural pluralism in Canadian society.

Two years later, in 1970, the Canadian Citizenship Federation was still trying to understand what role citizenship should play in a changing social order. The Citizenship Council of Manitoba hosted the national seminar on Canadian citizenship that year in Winnipeg. Repeatedly, speakers underlined the need for change, yet even within a group that agreed on the importance of citizenship as a fundamental social value, there was little consensus on anything other than the fact that change was necessary. Robert Stanbury, Member of Parliament and Minister responsible for citizenship was a keynote speaker. Stanbury described the political circumstances that required a new approach to citizenship:

Foremost is the problem of national apathy. In this time of constant crisis, and the concurrent bombardment of demands to rectify them, even a sensitive populace can become numb with hopelessness. When sharp practical issues like...the constant threat of "the Final War" confront us, they overshadow issues such as the quality of citizenship or the level of direct citizen involvement in Canada...the new Canadian Citizenship Federation, in its relative infancy, must find better ways to deal with

current needs, demands and conditions. As our young people say, we must "Get with it."²⁵

In his speech, Peter McKlintock, Executive Director of *The Winnipeg Free Press*, agreed with Stanbury but tied the issue more closely to the subject of immigration:

The whole subject and matter of citizenship and of being Canadian is changing, just as the times are changing. So our ideas must change too with the times....People coming to Canada today come to a very different country from those who came just after the war. And the changes continue very rapidly so it is necessary that the emphasis on citizenship should change also, to prepare the country and all of us who live here for what may lie ahead.²⁶

The dissolution of the Canadian Citizenship Council, the efforts by a small group of members to salvage its remains and their continuing struggle to understand how to make good citizenship a relevant ideal for the Canadian people illustrates how the very meaning and merit of Canadian social values were being reassessed during the 1960s. Within that environment the Citizenship Council of Manitoba was searching for ways to ensure its own survival. Although citizenship remained as a cornerstone of the Council's mandate, the key to its growth and longevity lay in its move toward multiculturalism and settlement services.

One of the most obvious signs that the Citizenship Council's public identity was beginning to reflect greater diversity was the emergence in 1965 of female leaders who were themselves immigrants. This change was not an intentional decision on the part of Council administration to offer more active positions to immigrants. New leadership emerged, rather, when existing leaders could no longer envision a meaningful future for the group based on its existing citizenship activities and appeared unwilling to invest the time and energy to lead the Council in a new direction. Sonja Roeder attended the

meetings at which the Council was considering disbanding. Roeder was remembered as being “quiet and unobtrusive” at meetings prior to 1965, but soon attracted attention by insisting that the group stay together.²⁷ Because Roeder was leading the rally to keep the Council alive she was given a tentative commitment that the membership would meet for one additional year. Together with past-president Genevieve Brownell, Roeder began a personal campaign to garner a wider base of community support. The women made presentations at churches, synagogues and social agencies, publicizing the Citizenship Council’s mandate purpose and programs, and were able to attract sufficient new and interested members for the Council to agree to continue operations after the trial period.

Sonja Roeder and Mary Panaro were influential and popular among Council member groups and new immigrants. As leaders, their own experiences and personalities helped shape the direction of new programs and of the Council’s evolving understanding of citizenship. Sonja Roeder arrived in Canada as a European refugee in 1954 along with her husband, Hans Herman, and their daughter.²⁸ According to Hans, Sonja’s Canadian citizenship became an important part of her personal identity, and her experience as a refugee had instilled in her a passion for helping immigrants in particular and people in general. She had been forced to escape from her own homeland and could “feel with immigrants from different lands who had no connections whatsoever.”²⁹ Upon arriving in Winnipeg the Roeder family immersed itself in local German organizations. Hans became an active member of the TransCanadian Alliance of German Canadians and Sonja taught German Saturday school, served as president of the women’s auxiliary of the German Society of Winnipeg, played leading roles in a number of German plays, and worked as a free-lance journalist for the *German Canadian Business Review*. She was

“always interested in culture,” and was quite persuasive in recruiting others to participate in her projects.³⁰ Roeder had used ethnic organizations as an avenue through which to join mainstream Winnipeg life and this familiarity was instrumental in involving ethnic associations more closely with the work of the Citizenship Council.

Roeder’s own interests and connections also introduced a greater level of political influence to the Council. Roeder was an active member of the Women’s Progressive Conservative Association of Winnipeg, participated on several occasions in the Ladies Model Parliament, and had published several free-lance articles on the subject of NATO and its development.³¹ After joining the Citizenship Council of Manitoba, Roeder was elected to the executive of the Canadian Citizenship Federation, served as its president for several years, and published the national newsletter, *Cross Country Citizenship*.³² Her political interests steered the Council toward a more secular definition of citizenship.

Interestingly, although Sonja Roeder became one of the Citizenship Council’s most prominent leaders, her husband Hans had been the original Council member. Hans had joined as a representative from the TransCanadian Alliance of German Canadians. He was a professional engineer, however, and found that the Council’s lunch meetings conflicted with his work schedule. Sonja, whose daytime schedule was more flexible, began to attend as his substitute.³³ Her journey from a quiet member and occasional volunteer to orchestrating the Citizenship Council’s survival reflects the overall evolution of women on the Council.

Mary Panaro, a Polish immigrant, had been involved with the Citizenship Council since its founding, but assumed greater responsibility after 1965. Like Roeder, her interest in immigrant settlement and citizenship arose from her own experience, although

her arrival in Canada was not as recent. Mary Panaro came to Winnipeg in 1911 as a nine-year-old child. Her father chose to move the family because of his dissatisfaction with the social conditions in his homeland and the threat of war.³⁴ Panaro's family faced many difficult years in Canada: her father developed tuberculosis, spending much of a three year period in hospital and undergoing eleven operations. During that time, Panaro's mother became pregnant, but decided the family could not financially support another child, and died following an unsuccessful self-induced abortion. Panaro found some measure of relief through social workers in Winnipeg and the department of Social Welfare. One particular couple had been especially kind to her and Panaro's work with the Citizenship Council was motivated in part by a desire to offer other immigrants the kindness she had received.³⁵ As an adult Panaro joined several local Polish associations, so she was also interested in integrating ethnic groups as active members of the Council.

According to Genevieve Brownell, it was the personal charisma of Roeder and Panaro that carried the Council through the years until the International Centre became a reality in 1969.³⁶ The number of official Council member groups was high due the womens' recruitment efforts, but attendance at executive meetings was often "embarrassingly poor."³⁷ Roeder and Panaro helped rejuvenated the Citizenship Council by using it as a vehicle to pursue their own interests in ethnic heritage and culture. By looking at the celebration of cultural diversity as a natural part of good Canadian citizenship these women helped make citizenship a more relevant social value in the tumultuous climate of the late 1960s.

Between 1965 and 1969 Roeder and Panaro, together with Genevieve Brownell and other women volunteers, planned a series of special events. These activities were a

departure from the kind of events planned in the past. They specifically were designed to showcase and celebrate cultural diversity. The Council focused mostly on the visible symbols of ethnic heritage, portraying culture as a collection of artifacts and costumes, yet the intention was clearly to foster a sense of pride in the ethnic heritage of immigrants.

In 1967 the Council celebrated the Canadian centennial by organizing an exhibit entitled "Treasures from Many Lands" which was shown at the downtown Eaton's department store.³⁸ Roeder advertised for several months asking Winnipeggers to lend their paintings, ceramics, furniture, sculptures, books, scrolls, clothing, lace, porcelain, clocks, old photographs, lamps, and jewelry for display. The exhibit included a written card with each artifact that described the place of origin and date when the object was brought to Canada. Roeder envisioned the event as an opportunity for individuals to highlight how they had maintained a distinct ethnic identity.³⁹ She also hoped it would contribute to a better cultural understanding between various groups in Winnipeg. Observers of the event could see that people were willing to share their most beloved possessions with the Winnipeg community. Brownell found herself on sensitive terrain when she contacted the St. Boniface museum asking for a contribution. She was curtly informed that the French speaking people in Manitoba were "not an ethnic group," but they did agree to provide a prayer stool for display.⁴⁰ This encounter reminded Brownell that both ethnicity and the French language issue were volatile subjects.⁴¹

Later in 1967, the Council joined with the Women's Progressive Conservative Association of Winnipeg to plan a celebration of the Canadian centennial. The groups created a collection of dolls dressed in a wide variety of ethnic costumes, and donated them to Manitoba's legislative assembly. The "honoured guests" at the presentation

ceremony were female representatives from forty-one countries or ethnic groups. Mary Roblin, wife of premier Duff Roblin, unveiled the collection, and the Hon. Thelma Forbes, Minister of Urban Development and Municipal Affairs, gave an address. The following year the Council pursued a Christmas project called "Christmas Trees Around the World," where seventeen ethnic groups decorated a tree for display at Eaton's, and took turns hosting the display while dressed in their national costume. Later that year the special projects committee also jointly sponsored an "Internationally Yours Fashion Show," with the Royal Winnipeg Ballet, which involved thirty two young women in native costumes who also served as receptionists and hostesses.

These special events are notable because they highlighted aspects of cultural identity that immigrants retained upon their arrival in Canada, rather than those that were discarded in favour of Canadian rituals. The Council provided immigrants with a personal affirmation that it was possible to be a "good" Canadian citizenship and still treasure those things brought from the "homeland." Special events gave immigrants an opportunity to share that pride with the wider Winnipeg community. The previous sense of concern regarding ethnic segregation had disappeared and new activities were specifically intended to help new immigrants make contacts with others in Winnipeg of similar background.⁴²

These kinds of programs, sponsored by an association whose primary mandate was citizenship, were a significant concession that cultural retention, and not only cultural accommodation were necessary steps for immigrant integration. By 1967 the Council's mandate included the following statement: that Canadian citizenship should allow for "the right of citizens to develop their personalities," within a community of diverse

traditions, racial origins and religious beliefs.⁴³ The work of the special events committee reflected this philosophy. The Council did not intend, however, for cultural diversity to lead to divisiveness. The same 1967 document also stated that the Citizenship Council wanted to “strengthen Canadian unity and to help mold a higher order of democratic citizenship. To foster an attitude of mind which might become common across Canada.”⁴⁴ This issue, of how to encourage cultural pluralism while still trying to shape a unified Canadian identity, was of central importance to the Council in the years that followed.

The Citizenship Council’s new commitment to understanding citizenship and integration from the perspective of ethnic groups and immigrants contributed to the development of several programs before 1969 that all involved a willingness to confront the more serious issues of immigrant settlement. All three areas of activity reflect the Council’s desire to understand settlement more from the perspective of immigrants themselves and shape services more in line with that reality.

One way the Citizenship Council began to take a deeper look at settlement issues was through involvement in the area of human rights. Sonja Roeder had a personal interest in human rights issues, and led the Council in that direction. In 1966 the Council was part of the steering committee to develop a human rights committee for Manitoba. Roeder felt that any group interested in good citizenship was also required to pursue human rights since, as she wrote in an annual report, “there is no room in the free and orderly society of man’s dreams for discrimination against any member of it on any grounds, including social, economic and political.”⁴⁵ Economic discrimination was again brought to the Council’s attention after Roeder returned from a citizenship conference in

Toronto in 1968. The focus had been ethnic stratification founded on differences in culture and class, and Roeder reminded the Council of the need to pay closer attention to the local distribution of economic resources.⁴⁶ At this time the concern over economic inequality was not specifically addressed through the Council's programming but it does reveal a greater awareness of the class as a divisive factor in Canadian society.

Another new program began in 1967 when the Council's made its most significant foray into the area of direct settlement services. Sidney Spivak was provincial minister of industry and commerce in the late 1960s, and he offered the Citizenship Council a government contract to provide orientation to Winnipeg immigrants.⁴⁷ Spivak was responsible for working with immigration officials to fill labour shortages in the fashion industry. He found that while some immigrants came with the necessary skills, they were not highly educated, and the government felt these people would need special orientation. The first grant amounted to \$5000.00, providing the Council with resources to orient immigrants to services like transportation, healthcare and shopping. The government also asked that these newcomers receive "some supervision in the community itself."⁴⁸

Orientation services focused on providing for the short-term needs of immigrants. The Council helped garment workers join English language classes, but services were not designed to provide further educational opportunities, especially since many immigrants had been recruited to fill a particular labour shortage. When the Council encountered immigrants not recruited for specific employment, the immigration committee tried to find them jobs and volunteers would drive them to and from interviews.⁴⁹ The Council also provided aid such as food and clothing, free legal advice and occasional babysitting services. The importance of this settlement program, as opposed to the work the Council

had done with Hungarian refugees, was that it helped orient newcomers to life in Winnipeg and it tried to address the issues that would have been most perplexing from an immigrant's perspective. It no longer merely provided gifts of food and clothing with the expectation that newcomers would fit immediately into the rhythm of Winnipeg life.

A third new program that offered Citizenship Council volunteers the opportunity to form relationships with immigrants came in 1968 when the Council became involved in teaching classes in English as a Second Language (ESL) in conjunction with the Winnipeg School Board. Teachers demonstrated the desire to shape the program in accordance with the needs of their students. Laura Wiebe was an ESL teacher who, before teaching for the Citizenship Council, taught English for the Winnipeg School Division. She felt many of the existing English programs at that time were not in the best interests of the immigrant. One curriculum was built around a Canadian reader of Greek myths which Wiebe felt was useless in helping the newcomer survive in an English language environment.⁵⁰ When she started teaching classes for the Citizenship Council, she and the other teachers adapted the curriculum to focus on the basic language skills necessary for everyday tasks such as work and shopping. Teachers also adapted the program to accommodate the schedule of immigrant mothers, and began to offer afternoon classes along with free babysitting services.⁵¹

All three of these new areas of work helped erode the Citizenship Council's paternalistic approach to immigrants. Each encouraged a more interactive and reciprocal relationship between newcomers and service providers. Gradually, the perspectives of immigrants themselves were being taken into consideration in the planning and shaping

of services. There was little attention paid, however, to helping newcomers become self-sufficient or to their long-term needs for suitable employment.

Even though the Council continued to assume that the host society carried most of the responsibility for successful settlement, overt expressions of paternalism now were sporadic. Still, the Citizenship Council's 1968 annual report, for example, cited an address given by Robert Stanbury, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Secretary of State, and delivered at an immigration conference in Toronto, that captures a distinctly paternalistic sentiment:

Immigrants are individuals and our neighbours in the community. It is therefore the responsibility of the receiving society not only to employ them gainfully but to release their individual potentialities, to permit the full blossoming of their talents. Adjustment of the immigrants as an individual involves... the provision of relationship through new individual contacts and entry into community groups and institutions in his new country. We must make every effort to ensure that his participation is not merely ersatz and that he is not effectively frozen out of the mainstream of his community's life.... Successful integration of immigrants can only be achieved within a community by its members, certainly not by civil servants implementing laws enacted by legislators.... Voluntary organizations are the doorway to fuller participation in the community by immigrants.⁵²

But the speech did not reflect the Council's overall strategy. Indeed the same annual report that carried Stanbury's speech also included an excerpt from a speech warning Canadians against thinking they were able to provide immigrants with a sense of belonging all on their own. The report quoted Saul Hayes, the Executive Vice President of the Canadian Jewish Congress, in which he warned that voluntary agencies must guard against becoming groups of "mere do-gooders." Hayes adamantly insisted that "if the people for whom we work do not have a say, much of the effort is useless."⁵³ He told the allegory of a fish struggling amongst the rocks and trying to swim upstream. When a

monkey saw him and tried to be of help by bringing the fish to land, the fish could not survive and died.

Another event in 1968 underscores this new approach. In January of that year, Genevieve Brownell invited members of the immigration committee and “immigrants with a grievance” to her home for a discussion that was “lively and at time controversial.”⁵⁴ This involvement stopped short, however, of placing newcomers in positions of authority or of giving them a chance to shape the group’s programs directly. Still, the sum of the Citizenship Council’s activities suggest that even before 1970, new immigrants were encouraged to “have a say.”

The establishment of the International Centre in 1969 was a decisive step in the Council’s evolution toward an understanding of citizenship that was founded on cultural pluralism. The International Centre signified an effort to come to terms with cultural diversity: the Centre was to serve as a meeting place where members of diverse ethnic groups could foster intercultural harmony, where they could learn from each other and where “ethnics” and “Canadians” could interact.

The idea of establishing a centralized meeting place had been discussed for many years. Several times during the late 1950s Council members had dreamed of the variety of services that could be offered at a physical site. The office the Council occupied was inadequate for meeting with immigrants and was too small for a gathering of people. Women volunteers sometimes met with immigrants in their own homes, but Brownell felt they “needed something extra to maintain the contacts: A home away from home. Where we could sit around and meet other people from the same or a different country.”⁵⁵ Brownell recalled that during the time before Sonja Roeder became president, “all dreams

of an International Centre had petered out.”⁵⁶ But as Roeder’s colleagues remembered, Roeder exhibited a determination other leaders lacked, and she had a talent for recruiting volunteers to help her.⁵⁷

Most importantly, it was Roeder who headed a Citizenship Council delegation to Winnipeg’s city hall, and approached Mayor Stephen Juba for assistance in providing space for a full-time Centre. She argued that the Council required a place where information could be collected and made available to immigrants.⁵⁸ The Centre would provide an identifiable place for newcomers to go for advice, and where they could find a welcoming environment during their first years in Winnipeg. Mayor Juba was swayed by Roeder’s personal enthusiasm for the project. As he recalled later, Roeder was “the spark plug of the whole thing. She was a displaced person, and went through hell, so to come here and be so happy, she donated her whole life to doing more for other people.”⁵⁹ Juba agreed to let the Citizenship Council have an unoccupied government building for a lease of \$1.00 per year in exchange for their promise to refurbish the “grubby and grimy” premises. Roeder then convinced the city’s finance chairman to waive the \$4000 annual taxes.

Members of the Council spent many weekends repairing the neglected building. The Manitoba Department of Industry and Commerce reported on the renovations in their newsletter stating that volunteer work parties included some immigrants, as well as members of the community: “doctors, lawyers, university professors and their wives who worked to transform the Centre.”⁶⁰ The reporter seems to have misinterpreted who was actually organizing the work effort since, as Genevieve Brownell recalled, when the Council moved into their new building “the men were skeptical.”⁶¹ The Citizenship

Council executive was approached by members of the Kayumanggi Filipino Cultural Association who offered to take responsibility for renovating one of the meeting rooms providing that they could decorate it with their own style and cultural artifacts. When the Council agreed, Italian and Hungarian members quickly stepped forward, asking for the opportunity to decorate the two remaining meeting rooms. According to one volunteer the contributions of these ethnic groups “made the building look very multicultural.”⁶² Tensions arose, however, when other groups protested, wondering why they also could not have their “own” room, and why they had to meet in a room that “looked like someone else’s culture.”⁶³

Although group relations were not always smooth, the International Centre was intended as a place that would promote intercultural harmony. Roeder hoped that the Centre would enable the Citizenship Council to make contact with all the various ethnic groups in Winnipeg. In her 1969 president’s report, she wrote: “This Centre will become a shining example of the type of cooperation and harmony that can exist between peoples of various backgrounds, races, and cultures in a time which is often marred by unfortunate and very often sad relations between two different groups of people.”⁶⁴ Roeder and Panaro often described the Centre as a “meeting place with a difference,” and Sam Loschiavo, a Council representative from the Italian community concurred that the International Centre was founded upon the “warmth and friendliness between peoples.”⁶⁵

For Council leaders, citizenship remained an important value undergirding the establishment of the International Centre. Genevieve Brownell felt that although the Centre was designed, in part, to facilitate direct services to immigrants, the Council’s main focus was still to “develop good citizens.”⁶⁶ Some of the rhetoric they used

reflected past attitudes of “Canadianization” despite the Council’s new goal of promoting the importance of cultural diversity. In a 1969 interview about the opening of the International Centre Sonja Roeder told reporters that “today’s immigrant wants to assimilate with the community quickly.”⁶⁷ The International Centre, then, would promote this process by providing a place where immigrants could become involved with the people from the community. This comment again underlines the tension that existed over the question of how immigrants could belong as citizens. Even Roeder, who ardently encouraged immigrants to preserve their ethnic heritage, also suggested that immigrants assimilate into mainstream society.

The Council’s interpretation of “good” citizenship at the time of the International Centre’s opening was more secular and less religious than it had been during previous years. One symbol of this was the fact that the International Centre was to serve as an avenue through which new immigrants could find a sense of belonging in the Winnipeg community. In previous years immigrants had been encouraged to join church communities for the same purpose. Another sign was Sonja Roeder’s choice of sources when reflecting on the virtues of good citizenship. She most often quoted politicians in her writing and speeches. When reflecting on the opening of the International Centre Roeder used the words of the Honourable Ellen Fairclough to describe the “thinking and acting of the members of the Citizenship Council of Manitoba”:

Citizenship is a great deal more than a political or legal concept. It is an ideal of justice which finds its application in a variety of ways: in the respect and good will which inspire our day to day relations, in the sincere acceptance of our cultural or religious differences, in the warmth of our welcome to those who have come to Canada to seek freedom, security and opportunity. Good citizenship extends to our whole life, in a deep sense of personal responsibility towards our fellow men, in a solemn obligation to

do all we can to promote harmony and happiness in the community in which we live.⁶⁸

Roeder used the language of civic and democratic responsibility rather than of religious obligation to describe the values that good citizens should espouse.

Although citizenship retained its place at the heart of the Council's mandate, by 1969 the association's emphasis on intercultural harmony served to tether citizenship to an emerging idea called multiculturalism. The Council still assumed that a singular, unified Canadian identity existed, but it now accepted that ethnic groups could contribute to that identity. In this view the Canadian identity had a common core of shared values, yet was broad enough to accommodate cultural diversity. As the Council's 1969 annual report stated "We are not a country of one race of men. We are a country of minorities. We should be proud of our different origins, proud of the richness of our different cultures and proud that these things can weld us together to make us better Canadians and better men."⁶⁹

Winnipeg mayor Stephen Juba concurred that citizenship and multiculturalism were closely related. Juba supported the International Centre project not only because of his admiration for Roeder as a leader, but as Winnipeg's first "ethnic mayor," he was a supporter of the multiculturalism concept. He envisioned the International Centre as a place where "people could get together, understand our way of life and become better Canadians."⁷⁰ In his view the Citizenship Council's multicultural programs would help foster a "unity of purpose" among ethnic groups: "After all this blending of the nations, and intermingling, eventually there has to be a new breed. Eventually there's going to be very little difference if one comes from Africa, the United States or Canada, [we] are

going to be interbred and everything else. Times do change.”⁷¹ Juba hoped the Citizenship Council would play a decisive role in shaping the character of this “new breed” by educating immigrants and “making them better Canadians” by demonstrating “our way of life.”⁷²

The Citizenship Council’s leadership felt no tension between its dual goals of helping immigrants become good Canadians and of encouraging them to maintain and cultivate their ethnic heritage. The International Centre provided the Council with the space it needed to pursue both mandates. Programs were designed mostly to facilitate social interaction with newcomers. The choice of social activities was a deliberate ingredient in the group’s approach to immigrant settlement. The activities were based on the idea that a friendly smile and a listening ear were among the greatest needs in an immigrant’s life.⁷³ Coffee parties began shortly after the Centre opened and were planned as a way to greet the many young Filipino women arriving in Winnipeg to supply the labour demand in the needle trade. The Federal Immigration Department sent the Council a list including names and addresses of all recent arrivals who were then contacted and invited to visit the International Centre. Just as they continued to do for citizenship court receptions local groups or individuals were asked to serve as hosts. Saturday mornings were chosen for the meetings so that as many people as possible could attend, including the young Filipino women who worked during the day.

This program served several purposes, all of which fit into the Council’s strategies of citizenship education that now included forming personal relationships with immigrants and trying to understand their needs better. The Council’s primary function was simply to serve as an occasion for social interaction. Alvina Giesbrecht, the daughter

of Mennonite immigrants, often volunteered as a host, and remembered Saturday mornings as a highlight of her week.⁷⁴ The meetings began at 11:00 a.m., and often people were still sitting and talking until late in the afternoon. Coffee parties helped to establish a relationship of trust between the Council and the immigrant community, and created a comfortable “drop-in” environment. This was a strategy intended to help immigrants feel they belonged: “Around the tables sit newcomers and interested citizens... conversation leads to friendship which is the first step in the initial adjustment.”⁷⁵ Coffee parties also became an opportunity for the Council to identify the needs of immigrants. Giesbrecht invited newcomers to the parties because “it would make life a little easier and help a new immigrant to get information about the city in which he was living.”⁷⁶ After initiating a conversation, volunteers could learn of needs for medical attention, a place to live, or for English instruction. Giesbrecht felt the informal, comfortable atmosphere at the parties was one of their most valuable characteristics.⁷⁷ Finally, Saturday gatherings gave Council members and volunteers an opportunity to put their own ideals of good citizenship into action by demonstrating the “warmth of our welcome” to newcomers. For the Citizenship Council, however, the program was an integral step in the evolution of more elaborate settlement services.

Shortly after the parties began, Mary Panaro developed a weekly ritual she hoped would be meaningful for both immigrants and volunteers.⁷⁸ Panaro created a candle lighting ceremony to symbolize the welcoming environment at the International Centre. Several candles were present in the room: two candles were arranged on a table at the front, and at each table of people was a candle centerpiece. The most recent immigrant in attendance was invited to light the candle of hope, at the front of the room. It was lit to

“show them the hope for a good life in this new country.”⁷⁹ A representative of the Citizenship Council, either the host for that week or a member of the executive, lit the candle of friendship, as a symbol that “the people of Canada were stretching their hands out in friendship.”⁸⁰ After the initial two candles were lit, guests lit each of the table centerpieces with the flames from the front. One host initially thought the ceremony was “a bit folksy or naïve,” but soon viewed it as a wonderful symbol, and felt the ritual was also important to the immigrants.⁸¹ The volunteer was sure that people were drawn to the International Centre specifically because of the ceremony.

Many of the coffee party hosts were the same people who hosted citizenship court ceremonies but, for the most part, coffee parties demonstrated sentiments that were different from the old paternalism apparent at citizenship court. True, there occasionally were vestiges of that at the International Centre. Sam Loschiavo, who went to the International Centre on Saturday mornings as a Council member and occasional host remembered that the work was done mostly by volunteers who seemed very interested in “helping the newcomer.”⁸² Loschiavo was once approached by an eager, if somewhat naïve host who said “My you speak English so well, how long have you been in Canada?”⁸³ The volunteer was very embarrassed to learn that Loschiavo had been born in Canada, having falsely assumed that most “ethnics” were also recent immigrants.

Unlike at court ceremonies, however, coffee party hosts were encouraged and seemed willing to pursue extended relationships with the immigrants they met. One Saturday morning Marguerite Hargrave acquainted herself with the Lee family who had been living in Canada for six months.⁸⁴ After that initial introduction Hargrave invited the immigrant family to her house for another coffee date. It was the first time the Lees

were entertained in a Canadian home. The relationship between the Hargraves and the Lees lasted for many years, and almost two decades later Hargrave attended the Toronto wedding of the Lees' son.⁸⁵

Although coffee parties were a social gathering, they were instrumental in helping the Council promote intercultural harmony and reciprocal, longer-term relationship between Canadians and immigrants. Both developments were integral parts of an understanding of citizenship that now included the participation of newcomers. Rather than overseeing or supervising the process of immigrant settlement from a distance, the Council was now involved in building relationships with immigrants and then helping to equip them for that journey.

By 1970, the public identity of the Citizenship Council of Manitoba more adequately reflected the cultural diversity of its membership and of the Winnipeg community. The Council's interpretation of citizenship, embodied through a variety of new events and programs, reflected a growing reciprocity between "old" and "new" Canadians and a willingness to highlight a wide variety of cultural traditions all under the umbrella of "the Canadian identity." Although leadership was controlled by individuals who considered themselves to be part of the host society, leaders' decisions increasingly were influenced by their own experiences with immigrants and ethnic communities, and were shaped to meet the needs of these groups.

The cultural identity of the Council's leadership had undergone some of the same changes that were taking place through Canadian society as a whole. The profiles of women and ethnic groups were being raised at the same time that leadership was

becoming more secular. This transformation influenced the group's evolving sense of citizenship, making it more encouraging of a variety of cultural expressions. The characteristics of good citizenship now included a broader range of values and experiences.

The 1960s was a decade in which Canadian society began to reassess, undermine, and reconstruct conventional ways of understanding societal relationships. The Canadian people underwent a profound change in self-understanding. They came to think of themselves as a pluralistic society. By 1970 the Citizenship Council had begun this process of reassessing its relationship with immigrants and ethnic groups. In the five years that followed, it would more fully reconstruct these relationships under the "official" banner of multiculturalism.

NOTES

¹ Gerald Friesen and Royden Loewen, "Romantics, Pluralists, Postmodernists: Writing Ethnic History in Prairie Canada," in Gerald Friesen, *River Road: Essays on Manitoba and Prairie History*, (Winnipeg: The University of Manitoba Press, 1996), 184.

² Donald Avery and Roger Hall eds, *Coming of Age: Readings in Canadian History Since World War II*, (Toronto: Harcourt Brace & Company, 1996), 205.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ninette Kelley and Michael J. Trebilcock, *The Making of the Mosaic: A History of Canadian Immigration Policy*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998), 350.

⁵ Toward the end of the decade immigration policies were becoming increasingly liberal, and finally, in 1967, the last vestiges of racial discrimination were removed from Canada's immigration laws through the implementation of the points system. The points system rejected race of nationality as admissible selection criterion for immigrants. Kelley and Trebilcock, 351.

⁶ Robert Harney, "So Great a Heritage as Ours': Immigration and the Survival of the Canadian Polity," in *Constructing Modern Canada: Readings in Post-Confederation History*. ed. Chad Gaffield, (Ontario: Copp Clark Longman Ltd, 1994), 541.

⁷ Immigration levels rose again during this period as well. An economic recovery began in 1962 and lasted into the early 1970s. Kelley and Trebilcock, 346. As a result, immigration levels in 1971 were double what they had been in 1961, and had risen to triple the 1961 levels in 1967. Immigration Canada, *Immigration to Manitoba: A statistical review*, (Ottawa: Employment and Immigration Canada, 1989), 5. In Manitoba also, the number of arriving immigrants rose during this period. In 1965 3,948 newcomers arrived in this province compared to 5,301 newcomers in 1971. Department of Citizenship and Immigration, *Immigration Statistics*, (Ottawa: Canada Immigration Division, 1965), 8. And Department of Citizenship and Immigration, *Immigration Statistics*, (Ottawa: Canada Immigration Division, 1971), 5.

⁸ Alan C. Cairns, "The Fragmentation of Canadian Citizenship," in *Belonging: The Meaning and Future of Canadian Citizenship*, ed. William Kaplan, (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1993), 186.

⁹ At the Canadian Citizenship Conference in 1968 a sizable contingent of delegates argued that nationalism was a dangerous social value and had no place within a modern, democratic society. Sonja Roeder Papers, Citizenship Council of Manitoba, annual report, 1968.

¹⁰ Robert Bothwell, Ian Drummond, John English, *Canada since 1945: Power, Politics, and Provincialism*, rev. ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1989), 307.

¹¹ J.M. Bumsted, *A History of the Canadian Peoples*, (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1998), 359.

¹² Bumsted, 341.

¹³ Alison Prentice et. al, *Canadian Women: A History*, (Toronto: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1988), 337.

¹⁴ Terrence Murphy and Roberto Perin, *A Concise History of Christianity in Canada*, (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1996), 361.

¹⁵ Murphy and Perin, 363.

¹⁶ Reginald Bibby, *Fragmented Gods: The Poverty and Potential of Religion in Canada*, (Toronto: Irwin, 1987), 91.

¹⁷ Murphy and Perin, 369.

¹⁸ Cairns, 210.

¹⁹ Sonja Roeder Papers, minutes of seminar on multiculturalism, Canadian Citizenship Federation, 3 March, 1973.

²⁰ Sonja Roeder Papers, Citizenship Council of Manitoba, annual report, 1968.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Speech by the Honourable Robert Stanbury, Member of Parliament, York-Scarborough, Minister without portfolio responsible for citizenship, to the Canadian Citizenship Federation, 5 April, 1970, cited in the Citizenship Council of Manitoba, annual report, 1970.

²⁶ Peter McKlintock, cited in the Citizenship Council of Manitoba, annual report, 1970.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ PAM. Hans Herman Roeder, C2078.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Ibid.

³³ PAM. Hans Herman Roeder, C2078.

³⁴ PAM. Mary Panaro, C2048.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ PAM. Genevieve Brownell, C2061.

³⁷ Sonja Roeder Papers, letter to executive members of the Citizenship Council of Manitoba, 1969. The 1968 annual report listed 7 sustaining members, 67 paid members and organizations, and 29 new members.

³⁸ Sonja Roeder Papers, press release, Citizenship Council of Manitoba Centennial Project, 1967.

³⁹ PAM, Genevieve Brownell, C2061.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Sonja Roeder Papers, Citizenship Council of Manitoba, annual report, 1968.

⁴³ Sonja Roeder Papers, Citizenship Council of Manitoba, pamphlet, September 1967.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Sonja Roeder Papers, Citizenship Council of Manitoba, annual report, 1969.

⁴⁶ Sonja Roeder Papers, Citizenship Council of Manitoba, annual report, 1968.

⁴⁷ PAM, Sidney Spivak, C2069.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Sonja Roeder Papers, Citizenship Council of Manitoba, annual report, 1969.

⁵⁰ PAM, Laura Wiebe, C2057.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Speech by Robert Stanbury, Parliamentary Secretary to the Secretary of State, at the "Cross Canada Conference: The Community and Immigration," sponsored by the International Institute of Metropolitan Toronto, October 31 to November 2, 1968, cited in Citizenship Council of Manitoba, annual report, 1968.

⁵³ Speech by Mr. Saul Hayes, Executive Vice president of Canadian Jewish Congress, at the "Cross Canada Conference: The Community and Immigration," sponsored by the International Institute of Metropolitan Toronto, 31 October to 2 November, 1968, cited in the Citizenship Council of Manitoba, annual report, 1968.

⁵⁴ Sonja Roeder Papers, Citizenship Council of Manitoba, annual report, 1968.

⁵⁵ PAM, Genevieve Brownell, C2061.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ PAM, Sandra Venuto Damiani, C2070.

⁵⁸ PAM, Stephen Juba, C2062.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Sonja Roeder Papers, *Manitoba: Growing to Beat '70*, The Manitoba Department of Industry and Commerce, July 1969, vol. 21, no. 7.

⁶¹ PAM, Genevieve Brownell, C2061.

⁶² PAM, Lynne Pinterics, C2060.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Sonja Roeder Papers, Citizenship Council of Manitoba, annual report, 1969.

⁶⁵ PAM, Sam Loschiavo, C2066.

⁶⁶ PAM, Genevieve Brownell, C2061.

⁶⁷ Sonja Roeder Papers, *Manitoba: Growing to Beat '70*, The Manitoba Department of Industry and Commerce, July 1969, vol. 21, no. 7.

⁶⁸ Sonja Roeder Papers, Citizenship Council of Manitoba, annual report, 1969.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ PAM, Stephen Juba, C2062.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ PAM, Mary Panaro, C2048.

⁷⁴ PAM, Alvina Giesbrecht, C2067.

⁷⁵ Sonja Roeder Papers, Citizenship Council of Manitoba, annual report, 1971.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ PAM. Mary Panaro, C2048.

⁷⁹ PAM. Alvina Giesbrecht, C2067.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ PAM. Lynne Pinterics, C2060.

⁸² PAM. Sam Loschiavo, C2066.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ PAM. Marguerite Hargrave, C2064.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

CHAPTER FIVE

CITIZENSHIP REINTERPRETED: THE INTRODUCTION OF MULTICULTURALISM, 1971 - 1975

On 8 October 1971, Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau tabled a document in the House of Commons entitled "Federal Government's Response to Book IV of the Report of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism." Trudeau read sections of the report aloud, and outlined a new government policy of "official" multiculturalism. He insisted that multiculturalism was about helping people find a way to belong as Canadians:

One of man's basic needs is a sense of belonging, and a good deal of contemporary social unrest - in all age groups - exists because this need has not been met. Ethnic groups are certainly not the only way in which this need for belonging can be met, but they have been an important one in Canadian society. Ethnic pluralism can help us overcome or prevent the homogenization and depersonalization of mass society.¹

The introduction of official multiculturalism made no legal changes to Canada's citizenship act but clearly the 1947 document had been unsuccessful in satisfying the government's desire to foster national unity and a common sense of identity. The introduction of official multiculturalism, therefore, represented a new way of understanding societal relationships and of how people of diverse backgrounds could all belong within Canadian society. The report outlined this vision as follows:

The sense of identity developed by each citizen as a unique individual is distinct from his national allegiance. There is no reason to believe that a citizen who identifies himself with pride as a Chinese-Canadian, who is deeply involved in the cultural activities of the Chinese community in Canada, will be less loyal or concerned with Canadian matters than a citizen of Scottish origin who takes part in a bagpipe band or a highland dancing group. Ethnic groups often provide people with a sense of belonging which can make them better able to cope with the rest of society

than they would as isolated individuals. Ethnic loyalties need not, and usually do not, detract from wider loyalties to community and country. Canadian identity will not be undermined by multiculturalism.²

Will Kymlicka, in his study of multiculturalism and citizenship, contends that the 1971 policy was the government's first official declaration that it would encourage polyethnicity rather than assimilation for immigrants.³ Ottawa's Citizenship Branch had already begun several years earlier to denounce an assimilationist model of settlement, however, and in Winnipeg, the Citizenship Council of Manitoba had also begun to reconcile the reality of cultural diversity within its understanding of Canadian citizenship. The Citizenship Council seemed to be on the leading edge of this approach since Prime Minister Trudeau acknowledged the group in his speech. "Existing multicultural centres, like that in Winnipeg," stated Trudeau, "have proven their value in providing services to help new immigrants to adjust to Canadian life, and in promoting inter-ethnic activity on a continuous basis."⁴ The Citizenship Council was flattered by this special attention, and enthusiastically responded to the government's call for action. Just as it had done over twenty years earlier after the introduction of the 1947 citizenship act, the Citizenship Council undertook the task of making multiculturalism a meaningful local reality.

Between 1971 and 1975 the leaders, members, and volunteers of the Citizenship Council of Manitoba planned activities and programs designed to translate multiculturalism from a political and theoretical ideal into a real part of everyday life. The influence of multiculturalism was not confined, however, to the specific set of programs and activities that fell under that title. A policy of multiculturalism was predicated upon a pluralistic understanding of Canadian society. Since multiculturalism

fit under the umbrella of the Council's citizenship mandate, a greater awareness of pluralism was reflected in the whole range of Citizenship Council programs.

Two events were significant for the ways they reflected the transformation in the Citizenship Council's public identity. In 1970 the International Centre hired Linda Elefante to coordinate volunteer services and English programs.⁵ Elefante was a Filipino immigrant who had arrived in Canada only a few years earlier. A year later, in 1971, the Council founded an International Centre Committee that was composed of representatives from local ethnic groups and whose task was to join in the administration of the Council and the Centre. Finally, recent immigrants and ethnic groups were moving beyond participation into positions of greater authority where they would have more direct control over services intended to help them integrate into and feel a part of Canadian society.

A dedication to multiculturalism was most obviously manifested through events that demonstrated an "arts and crafts" approach to culture. In addition to cultural showcasing, however, after 1971 the International Centre became a place that facilitated the preservation of cultural values and not just of artifacts. Newly established ethnic groups used the Centre as a meeting place where they could strengthen themselves as a group before moving on to greater independence. In sharp contrast to the earlier, predominantly Christian character of the Citizenship Council, the International Centre became a place of worship for other, non-Christian religious gatherings. The Council's adoption of a multicultural view of the world was also influential in the area of settlement services. Leaders' and volunteers' dedication to learning from and listening to immigrants made them confront serious issues like domestic abuse, and led them to

develop further language services that more directly met the everyday needs of newcomers.

By celebrating diversity, however, the Citizenship Council did not forget about its dedication to fostering a sense of Canadian identity. Although citizenship was somewhat overshadowed by multiculturalism after 1971, the Council's commitment to helping newcomers become good Canadian citizens remained strong. The primary difference from its earlier attitudes was that now immigrants and ethnic groups were involved in the process of defining what it meant to be a good citizen and were presented with a pluralistic model of the Canadian identity. The Citizenship Council's own identity had changed. The involvement of immigrants and a greater variety of ethnic groups contributed a more diverse class, cultural, and religious perspective. By looking at the Citizenship Council - its leaders, membership, volunteers, continuing programs and special events - an arriving immigrant was greeted by a composite picture of the Canadian identity that was broad enough to encompass a wide range of cultural expression.

The introduction of official multiculturalism in 1971 was another step in the government's efforts to mold the character of the country: a process it had been pursuing since the Second World War and which included the introduction of the citizenship act.⁶ Leslie Pal argues that multiculturalism did not start in 1971 but was a continuation of the government's attempts since 1941 to find a way to integrate immigrants, "ethnics" and Canadian-born citizens into a unified "Canadian way of life."⁷ According to Neil Bissoondath, the multiculturalism policy was a statement of activism. The Canadian

government was determined to shape Canadian society as well as the behavior of individuals within that society.⁸

Multiculturalism has been the subject of much debate. Those opposing the policy, or at least questioning its sincerity, maintain that multiculturalism was a politically expedient invention of the Liberal government. When it was first introduced, suspicion arose from all sides. Francophones took an especially hostile view of the policy since they felt it challenged their identity as a distinct people with “charter” privileges.⁹ Rene Levesque was strongly opposed: “Multiculturalism really is folklore. It is a red herring. The notion was devised to obscure the Quebec business. to give an impression that we are all ethnics and do not have to worry about special status for Quebec.”¹⁰ Canada’s Aboriginal peoples also suspected that multiculturalism would blur their distinct status within the political sphere.¹¹ Many Anglophone Canadians, primarily those with British roots, interpreted the policy as little more than an attempt to secure ethnic votes for the Liberal Party. And some ethnic groups, the sector for whom multiculturalism seemed the most promising, were offended by its suggestion that they were outside the mainstream of Canadian life.¹²

In the decades since the policy was implemented, scholars have charged that multiculturalism creates an elaborate mythology, but does not realistically describe the way that immigrants function within their new country. According to Bissoondath, the multiculturalism policy makes the unfounded assumption that “personalities and ways of doing things, ways of looking at the world, can be frozen in time...It treats newcomers as exotics and pretends that this is both proper and sufficient.”¹³ Political scientist Marek Debicki describes multiculturalism as mythology because, in her view, it obstructs the

true historical picture of immigration policies. "The history of racism, discrimination, and contempt for immigrants from other than British cultures..." Debicki states, "has been transformed into a multicultural mythology of the contribution of the waves of immigrants to the development of Canadian values, institutions and policies."¹⁴

Multiculturalism has also received positive reviews. Will Kymlicka has completed an extensive study of how different countries have dealt with issues of minority rights, and praises Canada and its policy of multiculturalism within a bilingual framework, and its recognition of Aboriginal rights to self-government, for being one of the few countries which has "officially recognized and endorsed both polyethnicity and multinationality."¹⁵ John Berry, a psychologist, also views multiculturalism with optimism. He has argued that multiculturalism is the only viable and realistic alternative to a policy of assimilation. Its benefits, therefore, include the support of individual and group choice, and emphasis on human rights, social participation and equity, and relative success in the area of inter-group tolerance.¹⁶

The differences of opinion within the academic literature are a natural reflection of the debate that surrounded the policy when it was first introduced. In Winnipeg the issue of multiculturalism received mixed reviews. The Winnipeg media responded quite negatively which is somewhat surprising since the policy was directed specifically at regions with large ethnic populations like Winnipeg. Unlike the citizenship series *The Winnipeg Tribune* carried in 1948, none of the articles on multiculturalism were written by ethnic leaders.

Charles Lynch, a *Tribune* editorialist, wrote several scathing assessments of multiculturalism. He viewed the introduction of the new policy in 1971 as little more

than a thinly veiled attempt to court the ethnic vote. According to Lynch, multiculturalism would only encourage divisiveness, and would never contribute to the hoped-for national unity:

While the Scots are piping and dancing, what will the other ethnic groups be doing to contribute to the new policy of rampant multiculturalism? The Greek, presumably, will be having at the Turk, Jew and Arab will express their well-known admiration for one another, Canadians from India and Pakistan will do their thing. Out of all this we are told will come cultural enrichment and a heightened sense of national unity in Canada. There are a lot of ifs ands or buts in there and very little moola which is what counts in any language or culture.¹⁷

A year and a half later, in 1973, Lynch had grown even more impatient with the issue of multiculturalism due to its continual promotion by government, yet he observed that ethnic groups seemed satisfied with the policy. "It seems we are going to hear as much idiocy from the government on the subject of multiculturalism as we used to hear from it on biculturalism," Lynch wrote, but "I suppose if the members of the assorted ethnic groups in the country are comforted by this guff, there will be little harm done."¹⁸

In 1972 writer Doug Fisher not only proclaimed the policy a fraud, but demonstrated that not all Canadians agreed with a pluralistic vision for Canada. Fisher maintained that "despite the rhetoric, our society does 'melt'."¹⁹ He used evidence of language to support his point, claiming that although ten million immigrants had arrived in Canada since confederation, only 2.8 million listed a language other than English or French as their mother tongue. Without language, Fisher proposed, "multiculturalism reduces itself to such nice traditions and paraphernalia as the highland fling and the kilt, cabbage rolls and pizza, gefilte fish and Polish dills."²⁰ He conceded that there was likely a small section of people within each ethnic group who found it worthwhile to preserve

the traditions and language, but it was done for commercial or religious reasons, and “these people tend to foster the impression of vitality and uniqueness for their particular interests.” Most Canadians, Fisher concluded, did not believe in, or have time for multiculturalism or “hyphenated Canadianism.”²¹

The Winnipeg media seemed unconvinced that a policy of multiculturalism was sincere or would be an effective means of solving the country’s unity crisis. The Citizenship Council of Manitoba, however, overwhelmingly approved of the concept of multiculturalism, and undertook the task of making this policy a reality within the local community. The dramatically different receptions of the multiculturalism policy within Winnipeg reveal the extent to which Canadian society was divided along issues of nationalism and ethnicity. The Citizenship Council paid little attention to negative reviews of the policy such as were found in *The Winnipeg Tribune*, but chose rather to accept the Canadian government’s propaganda. The Council was influenced by the rhetoric of government representatives who came to Winnipeg to promote multiculturalism.

The day after introducing the multiculturalism policy in the House of Commons, Prime Minister Trudeau visited Winnipeg to address the Ukrainian Canadian Congress. He introduced some of the metaphors that became multicultural clichés. Canada’s “mosaic pattern,” Trudeau said, “and the moderation which it includes and encourages, makes Canada a very special place. Each of the many fibres contributes its own qualities and Canada gains strength from the combination.”²² The Prime Minister admitted in his comments that the policy was in part a response to Canada’s nagging problem of internal dissension, but denied that multiculturalism would weaken or further divide the country.

Rather, he offered it as the only solution for a country characterized by cultural pluralism.

According to Trudeau:

Uniformity is neither desirable nor possible in a country the size of Canada. We should not even be able to agree upon the kind of Canadian to choose as a model, let alone persuade most people to emulate it. There are surely few policies potentially more disastrous for Canada than to tell all Canadians that they must be alike. There is no such thing as a model or ideal Canadian.²³

This assertion, that there was no “model” Canadian, represents a significant departure from earlier interpretations of citizenship in which the values and characteristics of “good citizens” were clearly understood to be those of mainstream, middle-class, Christian Canadians. This is yet another example of how a policy of multiculturalism actually served as a new articulation of social citizenship.

Another government representative, Stanley Haidz, the federal minister of multiculturalism, also visited Winnipeg promoting the policy, and addressed the Citizenship Council of Manitoba on several occasions. Haidz tried to convince his audiences that multiculturalism was not in the self-interest of the government, but was designed to foster unity within a diverse population. He claimed that multiculturalism was not an invented concept, but that it had always existed in Canada, beginning with the diversity among Aboriginal peoples.²⁴ With the official recognition of pluralism, the government was “determined to provide all ethnocultural groups with a sense of belonging without having to sacrifice their cultural heritage.”²⁵ Although Haidz maintained that belonging was rooted in an individual sense of personal identity, he felt the government was responsible for giving ethnic groups the confidence they needed to

achieve that identity. A “vigorous” policy of multiculturalism would hopefully achieve that purpose.

The picture of multiculturalism presented by Trudeau and Haidz was readily adopted by the Citizenship Council. This was partly because an official policy of multiculturalism resonated with the focus on cultural diversity the Council began to pursue even before 1971. Its continual quest for financial resources also served as a motivating force for the Council to accept the government policy at face value, and to foster its relationship with government representatives who came to Winnipeg to promote the policy. The policy contained many promises of economic support, and the Citizenship Council hoped to receive some of that funding.²⁶ Beyond these pragmatic considerations, many Citizenship Council members sincerely believed in a multicultural vision for Canada.

For Mary Panaro and Sonja Roeder, multiculturalism carried significant personal meaning. Each woman reflected on multiculturalism in a taped interview, and their statements reveal that despite doubtful journalists and self-interested politicians, multiculturalism had become, for them, an important social value.

For Panaro, multiculturalism was an “enriching” experience. It meant that she did not have to reject her Polish heritage. “I am a good Canadian,” Panaro stated, “my home is here if I had to choose between Poland and Canada, but I would hate to think that I could not speak my language, and I have always identified with the Poles.”²⁷ Panaro was also attracted to the exotic side of multiculturalism. She remembered being very excited the first time she saw someone wearing a turbin: “It was something new. We’ve

enriched our lives so much by opening our doors to people around the world....You're taking the short end of life if you don't learn about others."²⁸

Sonja Roeder also interpreted multiculturalism within the context of personal relationships. When discussing how the International Centre contributed to multiculturalism, Roeder said: "This is part of our centre, to have the time for everyone. We don't have to be thinking of each other all the time, but we need to know that we are brothers and sisters."²⁹ The International Centre was intended to be a "meeting place with a difference" where people from different countries could talk to each other and become friends.³⁰ For Roeder, multiculturalism involved becoming educated about people in her community and their cultural traditions. In this way, Roeder felt multiculturalism would lead to greater national unity: "The gulf that divides is not knowing enough about each other....We alienate each other by guessing about each other. I have to come up to introduce myself and say 'I'm Mrs. Roeder, how do you do?'"³¹ For Roeder and Panaro, the goal of multiculturalism went beyond that expressed by Trudeau and Haidasz, which was to foster confidence and a sense of Canadian identity within individual ethnic groups. For these women multiculturalism had little value if it did not contribute to better relationships between individual members of different groups, and amongst ethnic groups as a whole.

This dedication to multiculturalism as a way of life and not just a political ideology found expression within the Council's activities in several ways. Some of these developments were orchestrated by leaders like Roeder and Panaro and others were the result of suggestions by volunteers and International Centre staff. All of these changes

reflected growing pluralism within the Council itself and a commitment to fostering pluralism in the local community.

One of the primary questions the Citizenship Council had faced throughout its history concerned the role and responsibility that immigrants and ethnic groups would take within the association. A significant symbol in the evolution of client participation came several months before the October 1971 policy announcement, when the International Centre hired Linda Elefante as a full-time staff person. Elefante had arrived in Canada from the Philippines just two years earlier and had worked in the garment trade. She discovered the International Centre when she and several friends attended a Saturday morning coffee party.³² Her connection with the centre continued when she returned in a volunteer capacity to spend time socially with other new immigrants. Elefante had a social work background although she had been unable to find employment in her field upon arriving in Canada. She was hired by the Citizenship Council to work with the volunteer program and with ESL classes.

The 1971 annual report proudly announced Elefante's appointment, adding that her experience as an immigrant and as a "worker in the community" was of great value to the Council.³³ Mary Panaro agreed, writing that "they [immigrants] have first hand knowledge of the problems and are of great help. We hope that some of these people will play a vital role in the future."³⁴ Elefante did prove to be a valuable asset. In her first year on staff she wrote a handbook for newcomers called "Survival English." The book was in strong demand across Canada for many years. As Mary Johnson, another ESL volunteer remembered, one of Elefante's most valuable qualities was that "in those days she was so close to the grass roots of the problem."³⁵ Elefante's presence as a staff

person at the International Centre changed the Citizenship Council's public image. Elefante stood out as a member of a visible minority, and her experience in the garment trade provided a working-class perspective.

While the addition of a recent immigrant to the International Centre staff was an important step, for some it did not go far enough. In the fall of 1971 pressure arose from within the Citizenship Council for a significant upheaval in leadership style. When Lynne McDonnell resigned from her position as program coordinator at the centre, she wrote a letter of concern to Council leadership. Her letter clearly voiced her dissatisfaction with the organization and administration at the International Centre, stating that she wished to make "some recriminations about things not done, or things which one should have done differently."³⁶ MacDonnell's critique forced the Citizenship Council to take notice again of an issue that had arisen several times over the past two decades concerning the precise role immigrants and ethnic groups should play in Council leadership and in deciding the Council's agenda.

The letter reveals that the issue of leadership had been contentious, if somewhat hidden, since the International Centre's founding. MacDonnell wrote:

Periodically during these two years... I have said that the Centre and the Council must seriously think about the future direction of the Centre - its priorities, functions and development. The thing that concerns me the most is the matter of the organization and administration of the Centre....Like a community developer who organizes citizens around an issue - the time to withdraw from active organization and participation must be recognized. I believe that that time has come.³⁷

MacDonnell felt that the Citizenship Council's goals of developing cooperation and understanding among people and providing a meeting place which would foster cultural communication were not possible as long as the people whom the Council served were

excluded from the decision making process. "Is it not enough to say - "We want your opinion" - the people concerned must determine the issue - whether it is valid or not, what they want to do about it."³⁸ She was not recommending, however, that Council leaders relinquish all control, although her proposal was quite radical. MacDonnell thought the Council should remain the parent body, and look after all financial matters, the hiring of staff, and most importantly should take care of all matters directly related to citizenship. She felt the users of the Centre were capable of determining the daily activities, priorities, and programs for the facility, and that the Citizenship Council could retain an advisory capacity.

Despite these qualifications, MacDonnell was relentless in her insistence that the centre's administration required change:

The time is now to say to the users of the centre - members groups, volunteers, youth, newcomers - we want you to provide the impetus for the further development of the Centre - we want you to take the leading role. My conviction that this must come about soon arises from two concerns:

1. The Centre is now too big to be run entirely by the Citizenship Council
2. I believe that it is the only way that full and active participation can be developed. The plan for making this possible would have to be developed by the people.³⁹

Lynne MacDonnell's letter carried sufficient weight to motivate Council leadership to assign to an ad hoc committee the responsibility of investigating the establishment of an International Centre Committee. The study group itself was made up of ethnic representatives from the Pakistan Association, Bavarian Schuplattler, Philippine Association, Ukrainian Canadian Committee and Union Nationale Francaise, along with Sonja Roeder in an "advisory capacity."⁴⁰ The group decided an International Centre Committee should be formed for the following reasons; a) it was accepted that the people

who are using the Centre should accept an increasing role in the planning and implementing of its programs; b) the Executive Board of the Citizenship Council of Manitoba agreed that it would like the participants at the Centre to assume a larger role in its programming; c) it was felt that there was a need to develop multi-cultural and inter-group programs and this should be the first concern of the International Centre Committee; d) it was felt that there was ample talent and enthusiasm in the groups at the Centre to create an effective committee which could eventually develop into a governing body of the Centre.⁴¹ The study group's recommendations were slightly less aggressive than MacDonnell's in their hope that the International Centre could "eventually" assume leadership, but they still approved of the concept.

The Citizenship Council assigned the International Centre Committee the mandate of multiculturalism, and its membership was to be elected from representatives chosen by ethnic associations.⁴² The structure of the International Centre Committee, and its specific multicultural assignment, did not meet Lynne MacDonnell's original vision for a group that would hold equal administrative authority along with existing Council leaders. The committee's composition also allowed no room for new immigrants. Despite this compromise, the creation of the Committee was a benchmark decision for the Council. In order for the Citizenship Council to maintain its integrity in promoting multiculturalism, its own administrative structure had to become even more diverse.

The introduction of greater diversity among Citizenship Council staff and leadership was just one way the association responded to multiculturalism. The Council also tried to make multiculturalism into a visible reality at the International Centre and within the Winnipeg community through special events. The International Centre

Committee was primarily responsible for creating inter-group and inter-cultural programs, together with Council volunteers. Many of these activities focused on arts and crafts, ethnic food, and a sort of “song and dance” version of multiculturalism.⁴³ Multicultural events were mostly social in nature, keeping in line with Roeder and Panaro’s philosophy that the value of multiculturalism lay in its potential for creating inter-cultural harmony and friendship.

Bissoondath challenges the significance of an “arts and crafts” approach to multiculturalism. He critiques cultural “folklorama” festivals for presenting people with theatre rather than culture, and fantasy rather than history.⁴⁴ Bissoondath contends that a celebration of food, dancing and crafts reduces culture to “easily digested stereotypes....Culture becomes an object for display rather than the heart and soul of the individuals formed by it.”⁴⁵ This type of multicultural event, he maintains, fails to portray people’s everyday lives, their language, struggles and heritage.

For Sonja Roeder, however, focusing on cultural artifacts was a valuable way to get to know people more personally. Multicultural events served as an introduction to people from other countries, from which she hoped lasting relationships would form. She was interested in crafts from different countries because, as her husband remembered her saying, “it was through arts and crafts that one began to appreciate culture.”⁴⁶ Roeder had a grand vision for promoting these aspects of multiculturalism:

Canada needs to be strong...[but] we do not need heavy industry, our industry could lie in the cultural field. Manitoba could become the cultural manufacturing centre of Canada....Music festivals could become just as famous as the hockey games are to many citizens in Canada. There is no limit to the cultural area, multicultural arts and crafts would bring many visitors from around the world. We have not even begun to count all of our possibilities.⁴⁷

Roeder was not interested in visible cultural symbols to the exclusion of other aspects of culture. She was also a strong supporter of ethnic theatre and literature, as well as education in history and customs.⁴⁸

It is also important to note that the social and visual nature of the Citizenship Council's cultural events, a pattern that began to develop in the mid-1960s when ethnic groups had a smaller leadership role, continued after the International Centre Committee was formed. The purpose of the committee's creation was to empower ethnic groups to shape activities in accordance with their own needs and experiences. The International Centre Committee's decision to maintain and expand this style of multiculturalism indicates that its members valued the opportunity to share their culture through food, crafts, costumes and dance.

Beginning in 1971, the Citizenship Council held an annual "mini-expo" at the International Centre. The event was designed to demonstrate the "cultural mosaic" of Canadian society.⁴⁹ The Centre was crowded with as many as thirty booths where ethnic groups would display handicrafts and food. The 1974 program included folk singers, a welcoming coffee party, Scottish dancers, a painting contest, and songs and dances from around the world. Winnipeggers enthusiastically supported their efforts, and each year over one thousand visitors attended.⁵⁰ Other cultural celebrations included a yearly event called "The All-Nations Festival" that was similar to the mini-expo but planned by the Cosmopolitan Club, a group made up of immigrant young people, and but directed specifically at children and young people.⁵¹ The Citizenship Council also participated in the city's Manisphere parade by creating floats. The 1974 float was entitled "Winnipeg -

Music Box of the World.” Organizers felt that music represented the cultural contributions that ethnic groups had donated to Canada.⁵²

Other special multiculturalism events included wine and cheese parties, fashion shows of international costumes, hay rides, picnics, and weekend camping trips. The Council participated in the Canadian Citizenship Federation’s multilingual festival of plays, and an art exhibit by young Ukrainian painters.⁵³ The International Centre Committee also responded to requests asking for cultural presentations for local schools and community clubs, and organized performances at these venues.⁵⁴

The Citizenship Council of Manitoba dedicated significant energy to multicultural programming. Their work was rewarded by high levels of attendance at special functions, leading to a remarkable increase in activity at the International Centre. During one month in 1972 the Centre welcomed 5000 visitors, which according to Sonja Roeder was a reflection of its value as a multicultural centre and of its acceptance within the community.⁵⁵ This slate of new programs represents the most obvious way in which the introduction of an official policy of multiculturalism influenced the Council’s growth and public identity.

The Citizenship Council’s acceptance of a multicultural, pluralist understanding of Canadian society also translated into other areas of the Council’s work. As immigrants began to have a greater public voice within the organization, the Council’s activities began to evolve more in accordance with what its clients deemed necessary for integration.

In addition to its own programs the Citizenship Council provided space for ethnic groups to use as a meeting place. A pluralistic understanding of Canadian citizenship

motivated the Council to encourage and equip immigrants to foster their own group identities. For small or newer ethnic groups especially, the International Centre provided a necessary place to get together. Many communities did not have “halls” of their own, and those that did would often use the International Centre to host large gatherings.⁵⁶ Atish Maniar, an East Indian immigrant, complemented the Council for providing support to ethnic groups during their “teething period.”⁵⁷ The Centre provided space for events including heritage and language classes, dance recitals, weddings, and New Year’s Eve parties.

One of the most revealing signs that the Citizenship Council’s overtly Christian identity had eroded was that ethnic groups began to use the International Centre for religious services. Atish Maniar remembered that the Hindu Society had originally held prayers in local homes, but soon the International Centre became its official location for services.⁵⁸ Maniar described the Centre as “God’s given gift.” Eventually the Hindu Society built its own temple, but the Citizenship Council had played an essential role in helping the group become established. The Council provided space for groups who, as Maniar described, were “always at war back in the home country.”⁵⁹ In addition to Hindu religious services, Seik groups also worshipped at the International Centre, and the third floor was used as a mosque. Maniar interpreted this cooperation as an important example of multiculturalism. The Citizenship Council’s diverse religious identity communicated the message that it was possible to be a “good” Canadian citizen while practicing any religion, or while not claiming religious affiliation at all.

The area of immigrant settlement services was also influenced by the Citizenship Council’s adoption of multiculturalism, and by the emphasis on relationships and

immigrant participation that policy espoused. Merle Wilson felt that a commitment to multiculturalism included providing immigrants with “somebody who would listen to them at any time.”⁶⁰ A natural consequence of attending to the social needs of immigrants, however, was that the Council soon began to learn of other, more serious challenges that immigrants faced, and after 1971 the group began to address some of these issues.

The Council’s female leaders and volunteers took a particular interest in the needs of immigrant women. Sandra Damiani worked at the International Centre in the early 1970s, and remembered that Sonja Roeder was especially interested in helping women who were members of male-dominated ethnocultural groups.⁶¹ Genevieve Brownell worried that women suffered especially because of their limited opportunities to learn English and interact socially with other Canadians. Whereas men went to work, and children attended school, the mother was left at home. Brownell recounted one story involving a woman who had written a telephone message for her son in English, but when he read it, he accused her of being stupid because her English grammar was so poor.⁶² Brownell felt there was a general need to remedy the feelings of inferiority that were common among immigrant women.

The Citizenship Council also began to notify the general public about the needs of immigrant women.⁶³ In 1971 the Citizenship Council sponsored the first conference in a series of meetings focused specifically on the experiences of women. Newcomers and “mainstream Canadian women” gathered to identify settlement concerns.⁶⁴ The barrier that was common among every ethnic group represented was lack of language training. The Council responded by examining the structure of its ESL program. A conference

such as this represents an effort to increase communication and alliances between women from many different backgrounds. In this example, it was gender, rather than class, religion, or ethnicity, that drew women together to discuss their place within Canadian society.

The Citizenship Council also began to address more serious settlement issues through its English language programs. ESL classes flourished after the move to the International Centre, and served as one of the Citizenship Council's primary means of making connections with new immigrants. The evolution of the ESL program after 1971 reveals a commitment to client centred service, and the desire to equip immigrants to function independently in the community. As English teachers, women continued to be among the Council's most active participants in immigrants' lives, and that position brought them face to face with some of the serious challenges faced by their students.

Some of the ESL teachers who worked with the Citizenship Council had previous educational training, but all volunteered their time, and many had no previous experience doing this type of work. These women were motivated by the enjoyment and satisfaction they found through interacting with their fellow volunteers and their immigrant students. Merle Wilson and Edith Courtney, who had been among the volunteers for early citizenship court reception, also helped with ESL classes and remembered the many friends they made at the International Centre: "No one was being paid, [we were] just very happy."⁶⁵ Laura Wiebe, another teacher, recalled that the women volunteers were sometimes referred to as "a bunch of housewives who were pampering and coddling their students."⁶⁶ Wiebe dismissed this criticism, however, and defended the gentle way that teachers dealt with their students: "It was just because the teachers were sensitive to the

needs of the students and the fact that many were in culture shock and we were able to assess the particular needs. We were doing a lot more than just teaching the English language. [We were] giving orientation and being a friend to the people."⁶⁷

The willingness of teachers to pay attention to the whole range of their students' needs influenced the nature of the courses offered. Laura Wiebe was not satisfied with the class structure recommended by the Winnipeg School Board. Teachers were provided with only one general curriculum intended to serve every student they encountered, regardless of educational level. Wiebe remembers trying to teach individuals who were illiterate in their own language in the same class as professionals who wanted to improve their English and "get on with their lives."⁶⁸ Another teacher, Mary Johnson, was committed to taking the time to teach literacy to those who needed it. Johnson remembered that the official curriculum placed a low priority on reading and spelling because the government's "manpower" department was mostly just interested in training immigrants to answer simple job interview questions.⁶⁹ She acknowledged that it was more work to teach literacy, and that results came more slowly, but Johnson feared that "without the literacy their lives are blighted."⁷⁰ By 1974, and during the following years, Johnson and the other teachers tried to give students complete language training that would equip them for life in Canada rather than just for job interviews.

When International Centre classes began to attract large numbers of immigrants, teachers separated students according to level and addressed their language needs more specifically. Garment workers were taught a vocabulary relevant to their workplace. Class scheduling was designed to satisfy students rather than teachers: classes were held during the day for women, and between 5:30 and 7:30 p.m. to decrease the amount of

travel time for students who worked in the downtown area. Often classes were extended into the summer months, when teachers felt the need was great. Laura Wiebe often continued to volunteer through the summer because she felt her students “weren’t ready to be cast adrift.”⁷¹

Female volunteers felt a particular connection with their female students. Teachers would sometimes invite women they met at the Centre to their homes for coffee, or offer to go grocery shopping with them to help them learn their way around an English language supermarket.⁷² Beth Harris had been prodded by Mary Panaro to provide child care during a daytime class specifically for women, and had agreed, but reluctantly since she was not very fond of babysitting. After attending several times, however, Harris’ decided her contribution was the least she could do, after observing the tireless dedication with which the mothers worked at their lessons.

Immigrant women’s needs in the area of language training were easy to identify. ESL volunteers, however, were sometimes able to identify social issues among immigrant women, however, that their students were more reluctant to mention. Laura Wiebe was conscious of the responsibility her position entailed. She knew that in many cases she was the first Canadian with which her students had intimate contact, and was trusted with information that could not be learned by someone else. Wiebe noticed that sometimes female students came to class with visible signs of physical abuse. She attributed some of this abuse to the fact that some women “came from countries where the males were dominant in the home and the wives were really kept down. When they arrived in this country they saw that things were different. Some began to get independent, and this sparked abuse in the homes.”⁷³ Teachers tried to direct battered women toward

counseling for domestic violence, and told their students that in Canada it was illegal for a husband to beat his wife.

Sometimes volunteers personally intervened in situations of abuse. Genevieve Brownell had formed a close relationship with one immigrant woman, who, along with her children, had moved out of her abusive husband's apartment. After several weeks her husband found her, however, and beat her again, after which she called Brownell. Brownell notified the police, took the woman to the hospital, and brought the children to her own home for several days until the mother recovered. Brownell helped in this way because she felt it was the International Centre's responsibility to provide a place of refuge for newcomers. She had learned through her interaction with immigrants that many were often frightened, and felt they had no authority in their new community.

The events that officially fell under the title of "multiculturalism" were almost entirely social in nature, and intentionally so. The Council's commitment to client-centre services that was part of its multicultural philosophy, however, helped the group to realize that immigrants faced significant barriers in a new society outside of the need for a friendly smile. By the early 1970s Council volunteers were dedicated to addressing the more serious and long-term problems that settlement and integration posed, and were willing to work with immigrants to remedy those situations.

In 1974 the Citizenship Council added yet another new program to its language services. The Altrusa Club of University Women had the vision and available funding to initiate a voluntary, public language translation service, that would specifically include non-European languages. The Club asked the Citizenship Council to administer the project and use the International Centre as headquarters. The service was named the

“Language Bank,” and quickly became popular among many sectors of the Winnipeg community.⁷⁴ Translators were called to interpret at hospitals so that patients and hospital staff could communicate more effectively. The Winnipeg Police Department and the court system also accessed the service.⁷⁵

The formation of the Language Bank is another characteristic of the Council’s pluralistic outlook. The program was part of the International Centre’s goal of spreading ethnic tolerance and understanding by fostering communication and inter-group relationships.⁷⁶ Translators were usually recent immigrants and clients of the Centre who were called upon to volunteer. Although the Language Bank offered twenty four hour service, and some volunteers were called in the middle of the night, most did not mind the inconvenience because it provided them with an opportunity to contribute to the welfare of their own ethnic community, and to the city at large.⁷⁷ Translation services also demonstrate the Citizenship Council’s willingness to aid immigrants according to their own needs. Although the language program’s priority was to help immigrants learn English, with the introduction of the Language Bank the Council was facilitating the use and preservation of non-English languages.

These areas of programming that were not promoted as official multicultural activities - providing space for ethnic groups, conferences and language programs - all in some way enabled immigrants and “ethnics” to communicate with the host society and to make their own choices about how to integrate, or belong within the Winnipeg community. The popularity of both explicit and implicit multicultural activities indicates that the official 1971 policy, and the Citizenship Council’s methods of turning that philosophy into a local reality, were welcomed by many Winnipeggers. Most of these

public programs presented an harmonious picture of multiculturalism and of inter-group cooperation.

The annual reports between 1971 and 1975 paint a glowing picture of the friendships and cooperation that existed at the International Centre. These images echo Bissoondath's assertion that Canada's multicultural policy suggests that immigrants and ethnic groups are "each and everyone open, sincere, and fun-loving."⁷⁸ There is evidence, however, that the intercultural harmony which Sonja Roeder was sure would proceed from such activities was not easily attained.

Naomi Permut joined the staff of the International Centre in 1975 and found an environment in which relationships at the Centre were not always as pleasant as they appeared at public functions. Tensions existed within the International Centre Committee: there was fierce competition to be elected to the committee, and then the challenge of learning to work as a unified team. "People are people," Permut recalled, "and many times people get elected, sometimes elected from areas of the world where people were fighting. Now they had to sit around the table with people who at home would be their enemy. Animosity could be very deep rooted. [It] went back hundreds of years where borders had changed and [people] never forgave the conqueror."⁷⁹ Permut did not intend to be a referee, however, and tried to remind the committee that it was "there to produce and show the community what we as ethnics were all about."⁸⁰ Atish Maniar agreed that sometimes members of the Council had "back home feelings," but despite being encouraged to retain their cultural traditions, "what they're told at the Centre is that their feelings from back home they should bury, because here we're all Canadians."⁸¹

It was this desire to foster a Canadian identity encompassing ethnic differences that accompanied the Council's support of multiculturalism. Despite witnessing internal dissension, Naomi Permut agreed with Sonja Roeder and Mary Panaro's belief that the group's commitment to the values of multiculturalism could make the International Centre a "meeting place with a difference" where such disagreements could be overcome. The International Centre was to be "neutral ground - we're all here to share." Permut agreed with Maniar that "at the Centre we're all Canadians."⁸²

The early 1970s was a period of great optimism. The Citizenship Council had found a purpose and acceptance in the community it had never before enjoyed. All of the members and volunteers who looked back on their experience at the International Centre during these years remembered it with pride and satisfaction at having been involved in promoting citizenship and multiculturalism. In 1975, however, an event took place that, in some ways, drew this period to a close. On February 17 of that year Sonja Roeder died in a Winnipeg hospital. Roeder had suffered from heart trouble for several years. Mary Panaro felt that the long hours Roeder spent at the International Centre and her tireless work on the behalf of the Council contributed to her early death at the age of forty-nine.⁸³

Roeder's death marked the end of an era since her personal dedication to the values of citizenship and multiculturalism were among the strongest forces that shaped the Council's growth and philosophy after 1964. With Roeder's passing, the Council lost its most prominent leader, but she was also remembered as having offered herself in friendship to the people with whom she worked. Her prominence as a public figure in Winnipeg was heralded by radio host Peter Warren on Winnipeg's CJOB "ActionLine":

Sonja Roeder died on Monday, and although her name wasn't bandied around the headlines, she leaves literally thousands of people in Winnipeg to mourn her....In twenty-one years she has made a contribution to this country that few native-born Canadians have been able to equal in a lifetime of work. She was only forty-nine when she died after a stroke, and tears were shed and prayers said in many homes in Winnipeg...prayers in German, Italian, Ukrainian etc. Sonja Roeder was the immigrant's biggest and best-loved friend. She knew what it was like, coming to a new country, seeing all this snow, hearing strange languages and discovering new habits....She will be remembered for the tears she dried, the shoulder she provided to cry on, for a cup of coffee late at night, interest in everyone's customs and cultures, no matter where they came from. In this remarkable woman was bound up all that is good about our country: the coming together of people with different coloured skins, different shaped eyes from sixty different countries, in peace and harmony.⁸⁴

The fact that Warren singled out a postwar immigrant of German descent as a representative of "all that is good about our country" clearly demonstrates the extent to which Canadian society was acknowledging its own pluralism.

Sonja Roeder and the other dedicated women with whom she worked, had been instrumental in making abstract concepts as multiculturalism and citizenship into a meaningful part of everyday life. Michael Saunders, the Citizenship Council president in 1972, had acknowledged the invaluable role these women played in the survival and growth of the Council and the International Centre:

In this age of technology, of impersonal decision, the existence of an institution that is built not on exact organization but on personal care for the individual is to fill a great need in our society....Citizenship is not only a legal term, it includes the well being and interaction of individuals. This can only be done with people. I attribute this success to Sonja Roeder, Merle Wilson, Linda Elefante, and Mary Panaro. We hope our child (the International Centre) will continue to grow, and will not be stunted by bureaucracy and will always remember that giving of oneself is citizenship.⁸⁵

Saunders' statement was intended as a complement to the women who administered the International Centre. His comments reveal, however, that despite the

women's hard work and success, their work was considered by some to be informal and not highly organized. Sam Loschiavo served on the Citizenship Council Board for several years and he chaired the staffing committee charged with hiring a new Executive Director after Sonja Roeder's death. His comments also demonstrate that female leadership was considered unprofessional in nature:

As programs expanded, [we] needed stronger administration. We were becoming large enough and complicated enough to need an Executive Director. The first was Dennis Ringland. Prior, [leadership] was volunteer, haphazard, [provided by] Roeder, Panaro, Linda Thomson. We were complex enough that we felt we needed a proper and experienced man. Dennis Ringland had been a military man and was well versed in administration.⁸⁶

The Citizenship Council's female leaders had saved the association from disbanding and were responsible for introducing programs that helped the Council thrive in a pluralistic Canadian society. Clearly, remnants of paternalism remained. But even if there was, after 1975, a reaction against the kind of leadership women had provided, they had been instrumental in changing the Council's attitudes toward immigrants and ethnic groups and had helped introduce a more inclusive understanding of what it meant to belong as a Canadian citizen.

Between 1971 and 1975 "official" multiculturalism took root and flourished as part of the Citizenship Council of Manitoba's mandate. The adoption of a multicultural philosophy had widespread implications. Aside from encouraging intercultural activities and celebrations of ethnic heritage it introduced a new component to the Council's interpretation of citizenship. Both "new" and "old" Canadians were now given the message that good citizenship did not require social, cultural, or religious conformity.

The Council's public identity had come to reflect diversity in all these areas and, therefore, the model of citizenship it represented was more pluralist in nature.

NOTES

¹ Federal Government's Response to Book IV of the Report of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, cited in the Citizenship Council of Manitoba, annual report, 1972.

² Ibid.

³ Will Kymlicka. *Multicultural Citizenship: A Liberal Theory of Minority Rights* (New York: Clarendon Press, 1995), 17.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ The presence of Linda Elefante, a Filipino immigrant, on staff at the International Centre is itself an indication of the changing nature of immigration in Canada as a whole by this time. Between 1971 and 1975 Canadians witnessed another "spike" in immigration levels. In 1973 around 225,000 immigrants arrived in Canada, a number only overshadowed by 1957 and 1967 levels. (Employment and Immigration Canada. *Immigration Canada: Immigration to Manitoba: A Statistical Overview*, 1989, 5.) Of this group, a significantly higher number were from Asian countries. Out of 187,881 total newcomers to Canada in 1975, the largest representation was from Asian countries, with a total of 47,382. In Manitoba, immigration levels paralleled the rest of Canada, from 5,301 immigrants in 1971 to 7,134 in 1975. The Filipino community is a good example of rising number of Asians, since in 1965 no Filipino's arrived in Manitoba, but in 1971, 539 Filipino immigrants came, and in 1975, 941 Filipino's came to Manitoba. Manpower and Immigration, *Immigration Statistics*, (Ottawa: Canadian Immigration Division, 1971 and 1975).

⁶ Leslie A. Pal. "Identity, Citizenship and Mobilization: The Nationalities Branch and World War Two" in *Canadian Public Administration* [Canada] 1989 32 (3): 426.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Neil Bissoondath, "A Question of Belonging" in *Belonging: The Future and Meaning of Canadian Citizenship*, ed. William Kaplan, (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1993), 372.

⁹ Stella Hryniuk, ed., *Twenty Years of Multiculturalism: Successes and Failures* (Winnipeg: St. John's College Press, 1992), 3.

¹⁰ Rene Levesque, quoted in John Robert Colombo, ed., *The Dictionary of Canadian Quotations* (Toronto: Stoddart, 1991) cited in Bissoondath, in *Belonging*, ed. Kaplan, 371.

¹¹ Hryniuk, 3.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Bissoondath, in *Belonging*, ed. Kaplan, 372.

¹⁴ Marek Debicki, "The Double Mythology of Multiculturalism in Canada," in *Twenty years of Multiculturalism: Successes and Failures*, ed. Stella Hryniuk, (Winnipeg: St. John's College Press, 1992), 31.

¹⁵ Kymlicka, 22.

¹⁶ John Berry, "Costs and Benefits of Multiculturalism: A Social-Psychological Analysis," in *Twenty Years of Multiculturalism: Successes and Failures*, ed. Stella Hryniuk, (Winnipeg: St. John's Press, 1992), 191.

¹⁷ *The Winnipeg Tribune*, 9 October, 1971.

¹⁸ *The Winnipeg Tribune*, 18 May, 1973.

¹⁹ *The Winnipeg Tribune*, 27 May, 1972.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Sonja Roeder Papers, press release from the office of the Prime Minister, 9 October, 1971, notes for remarks by the Prime Minister to the Ukrainian Canadian Congress, Winnipeg Manitoba.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ *The Winnipeg Tribune*, 14 December, 1972.

²⁵ *The Winnipeg Tribune*, 7 April, 1973.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ PAM, Mary Panaro, C2048.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ PAM, Sonja Roeder, C2079.

³⁰ PAM, Hans Herman Roeder, C2078.

³¹ PAM, Sonja Roeder, C2079.

³² PAM, Linda Thomson (was Linda Elefante), C2058.

³³ Sonja Roeder Papers, Citizenship Council of Manitoba, annual report, 1971.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ PAM, Mary Johnson, C2056.

³⁶ Sonja Roeder Papers, undated letter, written by Lynne MacDonnell.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Sonja Roeder Papers, report of ad hoc committee that was appointed at a Citizenship Council of Manitoba meeting held at the International Centre on 27 Sept, 1971, as approved at the General Meeting of the Council, 25 October, 1971.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Glen Smith conducted the interviews in the Citizenship Council Oral History Collection, and he used the phrase “song and dance multiculturalism” to describe the International Centre’s programming between 1971 and 1975.

⁴⁴ Bisoodath, in *Belonging*, ed. Kaplan, 374.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ PAM, Hans Herman Roeder, C2078.

⁴⁷ Ibid. In his interview, H.H. Roeder read from some of Sonja Roeder's writings.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Sonja Roeder Papers, "Cross Country Citizenship" A bulletin of the Canadian Citizenship Federation, Fall, 1971, no. 4. Sonja Roeder was the national editor of the magazine.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Sonja Roeder Papers, Citizenship Council of Manitoba, annual report, 1974.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Sonja Roeder Papers, Citizenship Council of Manitoba, annual reports, 1971 and 1974.

⁵⁴ Sonja Roeder Papers, Citizenship Council of Manitoba, annual report, 1974.

⁵⁵ Sonja Roeder Papers, Citizenship Council of Manitoba, annual report, 1972.

⁵⁶ PAM, Naomi Permut, C2053.

⁵⁷ PAM, Atish Maniar, C2063.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ PAM, Merle Wilson, C2055.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² PAM, Genevieve Brownell, C2061.

⁶³ PAM, Sandra Damiani, C2070.

⁶⁴ PAM, Linda Thomson, C2058.

⁶⁵ PAM, Edith Courtney, C2050.

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- ⁶⁶ PAM, Laura Wiebe, C2057.
- ⁶⁷ Ibid.
- ⁶⁸ Ibid.
- ⁶⁹ PAM, Mary Johnson, C2056.
- ⁷⁰ Ibid.
- ⁷¹ PAM, Laura Wiebe, C2057.
- ⁷² PAM, Beth Harris, C2071.
- ⁷³ PAM, Laura Wiebe, C2057.
- ⁷⁴ PAM, Bertrand Desrochers, C2077.
- ⁷⁵ PAM, Naomi Permut, C2053.
- ⁷⁶ PAM, Bertrand Desrochers, C2077.
- ⁷⁷ Ibid.
- ⁷⁸ Bissoondath. in *Belonging*. ed. Kaplan. 374.
- ⁷⁹ PAM, Naomi Permut, C2053.
- ⁸⁰ Ibid.
- ⁸¹ PAM, Atish Maniar, C2063.
- ⁸² Ibid.
- ⁸³ PAM, Mary Panaro, C2048.
- ⁸⁴ Sonja Roeder Papers, Action Line Comment by Peter Warren, 19 February, 1975.
- ⁸⁵ Sonja Roeder Papers, Citizenship Council of Manitoba, annual report, 1972.
- ⁸⁶ PAM, Sam Loschiavo, C2066.

CONCLUSION

This thesis has traced the evolution of a small community association in Winnipeg over the course of three decades. It has examined the Citizenship Council of Manitoba's public identity and looked at how it related to the local community, to new immigrants and to ethnic groups. The common thread throughout the Council's first thirty years was its commitment to citizenship as an important social value and its goal of inspiring "good citizenship" among both "new" and "old" Canadians. Citizenship in this case did not function in a strictly legal or political sense. Rather, it served as a cultural variable through which the host society prescribed how individuals could "belong" within Canadian society, and it encompassed the actions and attitudes that would make them "good" Canadian citizens. In the 1950s the Citizenship Council's predecessor, the New Canadians Committee, both explicitly and implicitly defined the parameters of the Canadian identity on behalf of those they hoped to educate, resulting in a relationship that was paternalistic. By 1975, however, the Council's understanding of the Canadian identity was significantly more diverse, and it reflected a wider range of cultural experiences in categories such as gender, religion, ethnicity, and class, than it had a generation earlier. The Council had come to understand and even endorse the idea of cultural pluralism.

In journeying toward a pluralistic interpretation of citizenship, the Council's experience paralleled that of the wider Canadian society. Between 1945 and the 1970s the Canadian people survived a profound transformation - socially, culturally, politically, demographically - that fundamentally altered the way they understood themselves, their

country, and the role of citizens in that country. The two pieces of government legislation with which this thesis is concerned - the Canadian citizenship act of 1947 and the multiculturalism policy of 1971 - are symbols of this change. The citizenship act was an effort to construct a unified Canadian identity to which citizens could offer allegiance and which would foster a more profound sense of Canadian nationalism after the Second World War. It was meant to help immigrants and ethnic groups achieve a greater sense of belonging as Canadians. The very fact, however, that the act retained British-subject status as a feature of Canadian citizenship demonstrates a persistent sense of cultural hierarchy. In contrast, the multiculturalism policy introduced some twenty-five years later, admitted that a common feeling of belonging had not been found by all citizens. The government hoped to remedy this by acknowledging the place of ethnic groups in Canada and encouraging citizens to celebrate their ethnic heritage as part of their Canadian identity. These two events are founded on significantly different understandings of the place of immigrants and "ethnics" within Canadian society.

An increased awareness of ethnic pluralism was accompanied by greater diversity in many areas of Canadian culture. Women returned to more domestic gender roles immediately following the war but soon broke into new areas of work and public influence. In the late 1960s the feminist movement began to call for change in the ways women were treated in Canadian society. Religiously the country became significantly more diverse by 1975. The relative religious hegemony that Christian churches had enjoyed since the nineteenth century did not survive after the 1950s. Canadians also became more aware of class differences. The postwar period was prosperous economically but increased urbanization served to highlight class divisions. The

Canadian sense of nationalism also evolved during this period, and by 1975, at least a portion of the Canadian population supported a national identity that was designed to accommodate cultural diversity rather than subvert it. This nation-wide societal transformation shaped the Citizenship Council's local environment and played an inevitable part in directing the group's own evolution. Specific local circumstances and prominent personalities were also of primary importance as factors of change.

The Citizenship Council's changing public identity can be clearly observed by examining its leaders. In 1948, when the New Canadians Committee first began to meet, its prominent leaders were mostly white, middle-class men with strong ties to Christian associations. They had distinct goals for the committee: to guide the assimilation of postwar immigrants, to prevent the formation of ethnic segregation, and to educate newcomers in the ways of becoming good Canadian citizens. Women were active participants in pursuing these goals from the very beginning, but served mostly as special events volunteers, subcommittee members, and occasionally as subcommittee chairpersons. There was little communication and almost no direct contact between members of the committee and new immigrants themselves. The committee's assumptions about how newcomers should negotiate the path toward community membership were shaped by their own perceptions, and therefore their own Christian values and middle-class mores served as the model which immigrants were expected to emulate.

Less than a decade later, by 1957, the New Canadians Committee had formally changed its name to the Citizenship Council of Manitoba, and the leadership momentum was shifting toward the group's female volunteers. These women, who had the "free

time” to work for the Council during the day, and the desire to become more closely involved with the immigrants they hoped to serve, effectively helped undermine the association’s paternalistic outlook by learning more about how immigrants understood the changes they, themselves, were experiencing. Most of these women, however, served on the Council as representatives of Christian or distinctly middle-class women’s associations. Even as Council leadership began to reflect the growing public involvement of women, its public identity only slowly showed evidence of diversity in terms of religion or class.

The year 1965 was a watershed. Although female volunteers remained committed to providing receptions at citizenship court, the rest of the membership and existing leaders concluded that the Council no longer had a pressing public agenda and that it was of little value to the community. At this crossroads the most abrupt change in leadership took place. Sonja Roeder, a postwar immigrant herself, took over the reigns as the Citizenship Council’s most prominent public figure. Roeder had a passion for encouraging Canadians to celebrate their ethnic heritage. She was instrumental in involving immigrants and ethnic groups in the association’s activities. Most importantly, she helped cultivate within the Council a vision of Canadian society in which individuals could be good Canadians while retaining and even celebrating traditions and values from their “homeland.” The Council’s leadership structure remained distinctly hierarchical, but the group’s overall identity showed greater ethnic variety.

During and after 1971 and the declaration of official Canadian multiculturalism, the Citizenship Council’s leadership began to mirror more accurately the heterogeneity of Canadian culture. For the first time a very recent immigrant was hired as a staff person at

the International Centre and placed in a position where she could shape the kinds of services offered to newcomers. After some limited controversy an International Centre Committee was elected to serve as the Centre's governing body, and it would determine the kinds of issues in which the Council should take an interest. The new committee was composed of representatives from local ethnic groups which gave the Council a public face that was ethnically, religiously, racially and economically diverse.

The evolution of Citizenship Council leadership saw groups that had previously been under or mis-represented assume more authority and influence. Through their involvement the Council came to understand immigration and indeed Canadian society as a whole, outside of the context of nation building. It began to take seriously the individual and group experiences of immigrants and the separate identities they had constructed. The Council began to focus less on what J.M. Careless described as the "social qualities that differentiate people," and look more closely at "the human qualities that make them the same."¹ It was by focusing on these "human qualities" that the Citizenship Council still tried to construct a unified sense of Canadian citizenship. The Council had not abandoned its dedication to citizenship as an important societal value, but by adopting a more pluralistic understanding of Canadian society in terms of gender, ethnicity, religion and class, it no longer defined good citizenship in terms of social conformity.

The development of the Citizenship Council's programming and special events also provides a way to chart its members' evolving sense of citizenship and the ways they chose to interact with immigrants. The Council's "work" reveals the importance of citizenship in the lives of its member because it demonstrates how they sought to fulfill

their own responsibilities as citizens and to make citizenship a real part of their everyday lives.

Immediately after the war the New Canadians Committee was interested in identifying and addressing gaps in the existing Winnipeg service structure. Its goal was to supervise the process of integration for arriving postwar immigrants and make sure that they successfully integrated into the existing community and did not form separate ethnic enclaves. They pursued this task by distributing “fact-finding” questionnaires among Canadian service workers and discussing these issues within a number of subcommittees. The Committee’s work provided ways for its members to feel they were playing a part in shaping their local community but in effect had little significant influence. In 1952 the New Canadian’s Committee started staging elaborate Canada Day celebrations as a way to educate newcomers and Winnipeggers about the virtues of good citizenship. These events gave Committee members a more tangible presence in the community but portrayed a clear picture of the Canadian identity that was predominantly Christian, and in which European Canadians had a paternalistic relationship with ethnic groups.

In 1956, with the arrival in Winnipeg of large numbers of Hungarian refugees the Committee began to provide direct settlement services. The intensive work during that year gave many volunteers their first introduction to new immigrants, and therefore their first look at how newcomers themselves felt when arriving in a new country. In 1957 the Committee was renamed the Citizenship Council of Manitoba and it became involved at Citizenship Court, helping plan the ceremonies and providing refreshments for the new citizens. Again, this program brought volunteers into more direct contact with immigrants and also gave them a sense that they were contributing to the development of

good citizenship in their community. Both Hungarian relief work and citizenship court activities were intended to help newcomers become good citizens. This was done with no contribution by those they were hoping to educate, however, and the implicit message, therefore, was that to belong as Canadian citizens newcomers should emulate the lifestyle of their “hosts.”

Between 1965 and 1975 the Council’s programs and events assumed a dramatically different nature. Before and especially after the declaration of official multiculturalism in 1971 the Council began to host special events that exhibited ethnic cultural heritage and were designed specifically to foster closer relationships between its members, new immigrants, ethnic groups, and the wider Winnipeg public. The Council’s activities promoted rather than overlooked the diversity of cultural expression that existed in Winnipeg. The founding of the International Centre in 1969 significantly changed the way the association communicated with the community. It now had premises to which it could welcome newcomers, a recognizable place to which immigrants could return and build relationships with Canadians and find resources to equip them more fully for settling into Winnipeg life. Language programs became a central feature of the Council’s programming and ESL classes and the Language Bank were constructed in accordance with the needs of their users. Settlement services came to include instruction in how to function within Canadian society and access service structures rather than simply giving immigrants some of the material resources they needed to survive during the first few months. By the 1970s all these programs operated under the dual mandate of citizenship and multiculturalism. Although treated as separate pursuits, together they represented an

understanding of Canadian society in which immigrants were free to construct their own version of the Canadian identity.

This thesis does not suggest that acceptance of Canadian pluralism was complete within country as a whole or on the Citizenship Council by 1975. Several factors confirm the continuing existence of paternalistic attitudes among Council members and leadership. The fact that the Council board felt the need to revert to male leadership after Sonja Roeder's death in 1975 in order to foster a more professional atmosphere at the International Centre indicates that women's public work was still valued at a different level than men's. Women's leadership was considered volunteer, informal, and social, and therefore a man would be more suited to deal with the administration of a group that had grown in size and complexity. The Council seemed to overlook issues of racism in the years before 1975, even though changes in immigration policy had led to the arrival in Winnipeg of increasing numbers of visible minorities. There was also very little attention paid to the economic needs of newcomers. The Council was beginning to acknowledge that class differences often existed between immigrants and established Canadians, and Council leadership no longer consisted solely of middle class professionals, but there was no sustained effort to address this issue. The Citizenship Council's efforts to accommodate cultural pluralism and to learn how best to meet the settlement needs of newcomers was an ongoing process even after 1975.

The Citizenship Council of Manitoba is only one community association situated in a Canadian city. This study does not pretend to be representative of how all Canadians thought about citizenship in the thirty years after the Second World War. The Citizenship Council's history, and the steps it took toward developing a philosophy of citizenship that

could accommodate cultural pluralism took place within a local context. This is especially true since distinct personalities, like Sonja Roeder, were so influential in affecting change within the group.

Although this study has looked at how immigrants were received in Canada and the changing cultural expectations placed upon them, it also does not pretend to represent the immigrant perspective. The records of the Citizenship Council of Manitoba provide a glimpse of the role played by the host society in immigrant settlement and integration. It is in this way that this case study seeks to contribute to an understanding of this period of Canadian history.

The history of the Citizenship Council provides an opportunity to examine how the government's efforts to mold the Canadian identity through legislation were interpreted and put into practice at the grassroots level. The members of the Citizenship Council took relatively abstract concepts such as citizenship and multiculturalism and made them meaningful parts of everyday life. By applying these ideas to their work with immigrants, the Council's members found tangible ways to make citizenship a part of their personal and group identity. A desire to demonstrate their own good citizenship, and to encourage this in others, led people to volunteer their time and to try and shape the character of the community. Citizenship helped inspire a atmosphere that welcomed immigrants. However self-serving that atmosphere was at times, a commitment to citizenship inspired Winnipeggers to engage newcomers and facilitate their integration into Canadian society.

Multiculturalism also became a meaningful part of the Citizenship Council's own identity. The fact the Council had begun to embrace concepts of intercultural

communication and celebrations of ethnic heritage, all under the guise of citizenship, demonstrates that, despite the vested interests of politicians, multiculturalism was not only an invention of policy makers. The idea of multiculturalism had legitimate roots within Canadian society even before it was made an official government policy in 1971. Despite the fact that inter-group relations were not as trouble-free as they appeared on the surface, the Citizenship Council's adoption of multiculturalism as an operating philosophy had real and lasting effects on the way the group interacted with immigrants and "ethnics." It encouraged reciprocal relationships between newcomers and established Canadians, and fostered communication between diverse groups who otherwise would not have had much occasion for interaction. The Council's leaders genuinely believed in the value of an "arts and crafts" and social approach to multiculturalism and felt it was a first step toward developing meaningful understanding between people from different backgrounds. This understanding of culture did ignore some of the more serious and deeply rooted problems that are part of a pluralistic society, but the mutual communication which multiculturalism encouraged was beginning to remedy this situation.

Another theme the Citizenship Council's history addresses is the cultural expectations placed on immigrants in the postwar period. The efforts of the New Canadians Committee immediately after the war to "make these newcomers into good Canadians in every sense" indicates that the idea of "Canadianization" was not yet obsolete.² Cultural assimilation was not a ubiquitous assumption after World War Two as it had been earlier in the century but it certainly had not dissolved as completely as Canadian mythology maintains. Even as vestiges of assimilationist attitudes were fading,

the Council continued to assume that immigrant integration required supervision and that the path which immigrants should follow was to be determined largely by the host society. Multicultural mythology has also subverted a history of racism and contempt for non-British immigrants with the idea that waves of newcomers have always contributed to the development of Canadian values, institutions and policies.³ The Citizenship Council's efforts to shape the character of arriving immigrants, its sustained reluctance to include immigrants and even a wide variety of ethnic groups in the governance of the association, and its willingness to accept a diverse cultural customs but not diverse social values, presents a serious challenge to this myth. The Canadian identity, its values and institutions have very often evolved within a controlled environment and have been constructed to comply with prevailing notions of social, cultural, and political acceptability.

This study has clearly shown that citizenship as a social and emotional identity is an evolving concept. For the members of the Citizenship Council of Manitoba, it significantly shaped their experience as Canadians, ordered their sense of belonging within Canadian society, and defined the message they gave to newcomers about how they too could belong. Citizenship served as a tool of cultural exclusion and of cultural accommodation, and as such its history helps us understand the nature of the Canadian identity during this period.

NOTES

¹ J.M.S. Careless. "'Limited Identities' in Canada," *Canadian Historical Review* 50 (1969), 4.

² PAM, P649, file 1, 1948, Winnipeg Central Council of Social Agencies, annual report.

³ Marek Debicki, "The Double Mythology of Multiculturalism in Canada," in *Twenty Years of Multiculturalism: Successes and Failures*, ed. Stella Hryniuk, (Winnipeg: St. John's College Press, 1992), 31.

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