

With Hardened Hands

**A pictorial history of Portuguese immigration
to Canada in the 1950s**

**Domingos Marques
Manuela Marujo**

*to all children of immigrants who have shared
the psychological burden of immigrant survival*

Preface

Since the 15th century European voyages of discovery, the Portuguese people have had contact with Canada. When Canada Post celebrated 300 years of postal communications in Canada in February of 1993, few people were aware that the first mail service in Canada was delivered in 1693 by a Portuguese man living in Quebec, Pedro da Silva, who paddled his canoe and crossed mountains and swamps to deliver a packet of letters between Montreal and Quebec City. Historical events such as this, with which our Canadian historians are well acquainted, confirm that even before Cabot and Cartier, several Portuguese explorers and fishermen ventured to our coastal shores – and a few subsequently settled here through the centuries.

One wonders, “If the Portuguese knew of this vast land and some had settled here even before the Loyalists, why was it that the first boatload of immigrants arrived in Canada as late in her immigrant history as 1953?” After all, with a population of only six million, Portugal had lost more than one million people to emigration between 1850 and 1900 alone, while Canada had welcomed almost two million immigrants in this same period. Thus, the lateness of the Portuguese arrival in the Canadian mosaic requires explanation.

With Hardened Hands takes us back to the ‘50s, revealing events that led Canada to open her doors to the Portuguese. It pays tribute to those first “pioneers” who, through remarkable courage and hard work, opened the door to hundreds of thousands more each of whom would leave an unpromising future in Portugal for the prospect of a better life in Canada.

We have all heard countless stories of immigrant hardships such as those endured by pioneers who settled the prairies, the suffering of the Chinese, and the internment of the Italians. Among Canada’s significant ethnic groups, the Portuguese were the last to be selected specifically for a particular labour demand: the heavy jobs of the railroads and the low-pay, peasant work of the farms.

Canadian officials hand picked them as they “appeared of good type so far as character and willingness to work...disciplined, good tempered, quite alert of mind and able-bodied,...not tall but physically resistant...”¹

This physical appearance, in particular their hands, was an important factor in determining who would be part of the chosen few to cross the Atlantic, and later be picked – like cattle by a farmer – from a Montreal line-up. These men were on trial, having been reminded before departing how the future of many of their friends who stayed behind was dependent on their honesty, hard work and success. And succeed they did, as the contribution of this ethnic group attests some forty years later.

In the words of John Berger, photographs are a form of transport and an expression of absence. This collection offers the opportunity to embark on a journey not possible before

the invention of photography, and it opens a window to those of us intrigued by the history of Canada. We can venture to the crowded piers of Lisbon and Ponta Delgada, where hundreds of men are being seen off by relatives and friends eagerly embracing them in farewell. We may be engulfed with the same emotion that these immigrants experienced when they landed in Halifax, and travelled to unknown destinies by train and by bus or in farmers' pick-up trucks. These photographs document the excitement and fear and the drama and tension of venturing to a foreign land, communicating in a new language, enduring a harsh climate and undertaking unbearable working conditions.

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Chapter One

Three decades of failed attempts to encourage emigration from Portugal to Canada

The Fabre Line and Other Inquiries

For a long time, Canada hesitated to admit Portuguese immigrants. Until the Second World War, they were part of the non-preferred people: "The type we are not looking for in Canada...his way of life, even his civilization seem so different that I doubt if he could ever become an asset to our country."²

The first document concerning mass immigration of Portuguese to Canada is a July 19, 1923 internal memorandum addressed to the Department of Immigration and Colonization requesting that the Commissioner arrange to have one of their officers at Antwerp," go down to Lisbon for the purpose of...assisting in this movement". (See Appendix A)

This first official attempt to bring Portuguese immigrants into Canada failed. It appears to have been the initiative of a steamship agent, Fabre Line, eager to enlarge its scope of operation in the business of transporting human cargo across the Atlantic. In the end, after a flurry of letters and telegrams, permission was never granted to admit Portuguese to Canada. While denying the request, the Department of Immigration and Colonization official speaks of the difficult "labour situation in Western Canada and the undesirability of Portuguese as immigrants..."³

Although unsuccessful, this first attempt did bring the Portuguese case both to the attention of Canadian officials and the desks of bureaucrats.

On December 18, 1923, a Frenchman from Bordeaux, J.C. Chevalier, writes to the Board of Trade in Montreal: "Having read in the French papers that...your country finds itself in an unparalleled state of prosperity and that...the farmers and manufacturers are asking for new immigrants, I take the liberty of asking you if Portuguese immigration would be well received in Canada... The Portuguese labouring man is considered one of the best on account of his application to work, his sobriety and willingness..."⁴

If Mr. Chevalier ever received a reply, it was probably short and abrupt such as the one sent nine months later to an American banker of Portuguese descent from Massachusetts, making

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a similar inquiry: "...there is no possibility of bringing Portuguese labourers into Canada." A later inquiry by the Portuguese Consul in Toronto causes a response which is as much different as it is perplexing. J.B. Maclean, the Portuguese Consul in Toronto, had been asked about Canadian immigration laws by his colleague in New York. Mr. Maclean writes the Deputy Minister of Immigration in Ottawa, quoting his colleague, "I have lately had some inquiries regarding Portuguese immigration into Canada. It seems that a few Portuguese farmers and labourers have in the past few years gone to Canada. I would like to know...if they are doing well over there." The consul then asks the minister, "...whether there are any handicaps to the Portuguese immigration..." What could the minister say? His government had not yet experimented with the Portuguese, yet his reply leads us to believe otherwise. He went on to say "...that there are no special regulations applicable in the cases of nationals from Portugal, every consideration being shown if the immigrant is in a position to comply with the provisions of the Immigration Act...Canada is chiefly an agricultural country and it has been the experience of this Department that Portuguese in general are not particularly adaptable to farming conditions in Canada."⁵

War and Recession

In addition to the "undesirability" of the Portuguese, one has to remember that this is a difficult period, in general, in the history of Canadian immigration. War, recession, unequal prosperity, ruthless depression and then another world war all contribute to anti-immigration sentiments among Canadians from 1914 to 1945. In 1924 sweeping changes had also occurred in American immigration legislation sharply reducing the number of European immigrants permitted into the United States.

In 1924, Canada and Portugal still appeared relatively ignorant of one other. It was not until 1928 that a direct, official inquiry from Lisbon regarding Canadian immigration rules reached Ottawa. A Portuguese official asked a Canadian Legation in Paris whether the Canadian government would accept Portuguese citizens eager to enter Canada as farmers or agricultural labourers.

In response, the Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs reminded the Legation that the Immigration Act provided for the admission to Canada of "bona fide Agriculturalists" entering Canada to farm and who had sufficient means to begin farming in Canada, and "bona fide farm labourers" entering Canada to follow that occupation and who had reasonable assurance of employment.

If they could surmount these obstacles, the Portuguese must then present a passport to a Canadian officer, stationed in Europe, in order to obtain a visa. The closest officer resided in Paris, a ludicrous distance for the Portuguese, especially those from the Azores. The Department would not make any exceptions, neither was it prepared to make any special arrangements for the Portuguese, since there was "no demand in Canada at this time for farm labourers of Portuguese nationality."⁶ This response occurred in the time period

encompassing the Great Depression in which a quarter of the labour force in Canada was unemployed; the backlash was severe opposition to immigration which plummeted from more than a million in the decade 1921-31 to a mere 140,000 in the following ten years.

As a result of both the Depression and the Second World War, Ottawa's ongoing immigration policy grew restrictive, closing the door to immigrants and refugees and even encouraging deportation of unemployed immigrants.

If the Great Depression and the Second World War succeeded in choking immigration, the post-war period had quite the opposite effect. In building an industrial complex it fostered high demand for skilled and unskilled workers. This economic bonanza led to liberalization of immigration policy which began with Prime Minister MacKenzie King's announcement in 1947 that "the policy of the government was to foster the growth of the population of Canada by the encouragement to immigration."⁷ Immigrants from the Commonwealth countries and the United States continued to receive preferential treatment but regulations were waived to admit thousands of "war displaced persons" from Europe, commencing a decade of a rush of immigrants known as the post-war boom. New orders-in-council and amendments in Ottawa seemed to lower immigration barriers several notches every year leading to the 1952 Act which would simplify the administration of immigration and would vest the minister and his officials with a great deal of discretionary powers.

The Portuguese Factor

News of MacKenzie King's relaxation of immigration regulations reached Portugal like other European countries; a stream of inquiries and applications flooded Canadian officials in Lisbon and Ottawa resulting for the next six years in an avalanche, which would prove to be ceaseless, in spite of numerous obstacles and barriers later erected by both Canadian and Portuguese authorities.

This avalanche began on February 21, 1947 with a first warning by the Acting Canadian Consul General in Lisbon, Lester Glass, to his boss in Ottawa: "...the relaxation in Immigration Regulations...news of which was published in many Portuguese daily newspapers has resulted in a flow of inquiries from various parts of continental Portugal and the Azores. These inquiries, on average of 20 a day, vary from local and long distance telephone calls."⁸

A month later, another dispatch from the Canadian Consul confirms that the numbers had increased substantially and requests direction from the Immigration Branch before he would accept any application. Eight hundred letters had been received in four weeks with telephone and personal calls reaching similar levels. The Consul explains this surge of inquiries by the articles published in the Portuguese press which carried inviting captions for the Portuguese public, captions such as "Canada wishes to receive Portuguese emigrants, Canada will open to immigration from Portugal, Canada desires Portuguese emigrants." Mr. Glass goes on to

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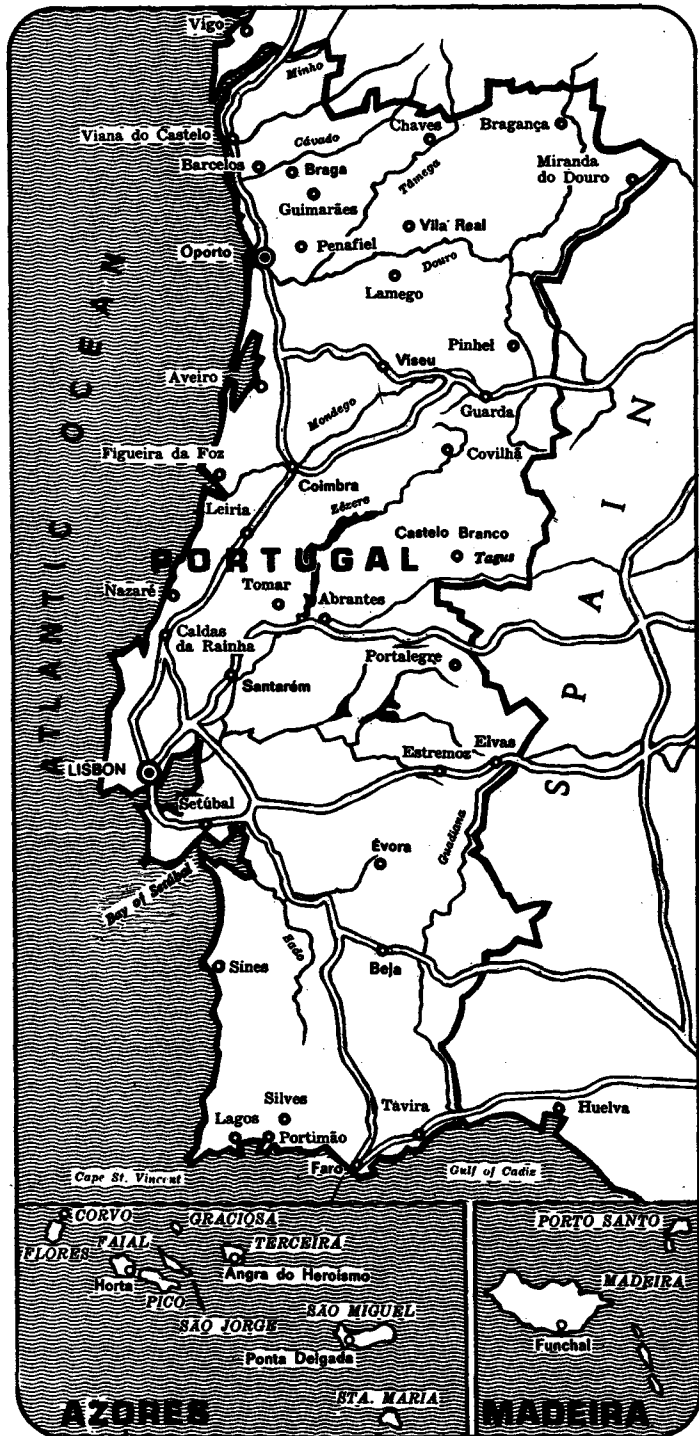
note that 99.5 percent of the applicants would probably have to be turned down as not falling within the present classification. And even if visas were granted, 95 percent did not possess the funds necessary for travel to Canada.

The difficulties imposed by the Canadian officials were small in comparison with the barriers imposed by the Portuguese government on their own citizens. And it is the latter that requires some historical explanation.

Portugal, located along the European Atlantic coast, is a diverse country composed of the southwestern sixth of the Iberian peninsula, the Azorean archipelago, and the Madeiran archipelago located 1,086 km to the south of Lisbon off the Moroccan coast.

The Azores form an archipelago of nine islands situated in the North Atlantic Ocean, 700 miles west of Lisbon and 2,110 miles east of New York. The islands of volcanic origin whose names are Santa Maria, São Miguel, Terceira, Graciosa, São Jorge, Pico, Faial, Flores and Corvo have a total area of 890 square miles strung out over a distance of about 400 miles. The Azores are divided administratively into three districts, the capitals of which are the small towns of Ponta Delgada, Angra do Heroísmo and Horta, their population totalling 300,000 people.

For more than a century, emigration has had a profound effect on Portuguese society. From 1855, when records were first kept, until the bloodless coup of 1974, close to four million



Portuguese had left their homeland because of low industrial development and subsistence agriculture. During this period, most emigrated to Brazil. Portuguese in general had a lower standard of living than their European neighbours and emigration was typically envisaged as the road to a better life, especially in parts of the countryside where the lower strata of society – those with no more than the obligatory four years of primary education and with no chance to the openings available only to a small and tightly linked elite – resided.

Three main preoccupations guided Portugal's emigration policy through to 1930: maintaining the flow of remittances from Brazil, sending enough people to Africa in order to control the administration of its territories, satisfying agrarian and industrial manpower needs. The remittances of emigrants to their families left behind became recognized as "one of the foundations of the Portuguese economy."

After 1931, Brazil restricted its immigration rules, including the remittance of money. What follows is a dark period in the history of the Portuguese peasant and blue collar workers. Governed by a repressive regime and lacking the option to emigrate, the Portuguese people suffered a violent degradation of their lifestyle for the next decade demonstrating how emigration had for sixty years concealed a growing gap between Portugal and industrialized Europe. The sudden reduction of emigration and remittances from abroad uncovered a country run by a few people who concentrated their development efforts around the interests of a small elite of industrialists and landowners.⁹

The wide economic gulf between rich and poor greatly contributed to the desire of many to emigrate, especially for those from the rural areas and the islands neglected by the government for decades.

Notice of Mackenzie King's relaxation of immigration regulations reached Portugal during this period and the Government's response to the avalanche of requests by its citizens desperate to emigrate was to suspend emigration altogether. On March 29, 1947 a Decree-Law #36:199 went into force: "Considering the necessity of regulating Portuguese emigration, having in mind the protection of emigrants, the economical interests of the country, and the importance of increasing the white population in overseas territories; considering that, besides the population which will be absorbed by domestic colonization in Africa it is necessary to secure workmen to carry out Government projects...; considering, on the other hand, that it is the duty of the Government to secure equitable conditions for the emigrants as far as wages and assistance are concerned in the country of destination...Portuguese emigration is to be suspended, except when carried out under agreement or by contract governing conditions of entry and settling in the country of destination..."¹⁰

This stipulation for all emigrants to possess a firm employment contract before being given a Portuguese passport and exit permit became the single major obstacle for thousands of citizens whose applications were rejected by Portuguese and Canadian officials in the ensuing five years. Yet being desperate to improve their situation and, like "água mole em pedra dura" as the saying goes – contrasting the power of water over rock –

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they eventually succeeded in breaking loose, inundating the bureaucrats' desks and forcing the emigration doors to open.

Knocking at the Wrong Door?

Portugal's decision to suspend emigration did not stop people from trying by every possible means to find a way out. Ottawa continued to receive inquiries and applications for admittance of Portuguese citizens into Canada.

In 1948, Vasco Garin, the Consul General of Portugal in Montreal, approached Ottawa's Director of Immigration with the same million dollar question his colleague in Toronto had asked fifteen years earlier: are Portuguese labourers and agricultural workers eligible for settlement in Canada? The answer not surprisingly was receipt of another copy of "Canadian Immigration Regulations".

Private corporations interested in increasing their business market share also continued to press the Canadian Government for information and advice on the potential clientele from Portugal and the Azores. When Trans Canada Air Lines wrote to the Commissioner of Immigration suggesting that Canada establish an immigration office in Portugal and advising that it was planning to set up a direct flight route from Santa Maria to Montreal, the Commissioner assured TCA that not many Portuguese would meet the criteria set out by Canadian regulations. (*See Appendix B*).

The Catholic Immigrant Aid Society, through its director Reverend Francis Marroco wrote to Ottawa advising of Azorean farmers eager to immigrate to Canada and attempted to persuade the Department to facilitate their entry into Canada. Walter Lips, a cattle breeder from Inglewood, Ontario, actually attempted to sponsor Fernando Torres Benevides from "Ponta del Gada" [sic], Azores to work on his farm. And, a Montreal law firm (Monette, Filion, Meighen & Gourd) contacted Ottawa regarding a group of Azorean residents who wished to come to Canada as farmers and miners. But, they all received the same standard letter which, again, included Canada's immigration regulations.

By 1951, attempts were still ongoing by Portuguese citizens to emigrate to Canada who spared no friend in their attempt to reach the right person in Ottawa. In May, Mr. Aulalio Lobo of Porto wrote to a Canadian friend, Edmond Cloutier, in hopes that Mr. Cloutier could influence the decision makers in Ottawa. Mr. Cloutier ventured directly to Deputy Minister, Laval Fortier, asking that he give special attention to his friend's request. Mr. Lobo's application was reinforced soon after by Father António dos Santos Júnior, a priest from Vila do Conde who became known in subsequent correspondence as Padre António Alvaro dos because he signed the letter in two lines and the family name became mixed up with the address.

Father dos makes it clear that if Canada were to allow the Portuguese to settle in Canada, he and Lobo would be prepared to start a recruiting operation in Portugal which would, he

claims, be done in a professional manner: "These workers will be 'carefully chosen...recruited among competent, honest and hard-working labourers. There is a serious slump in employment in Portugal just now and it is very hard to live here, so we would choose workers answering Canada's needs.'"¹¹

The Deputy Minister replies to Cloutier, discouraging Lobo and Father dos from getting involved, suggesting they instead secure application forms to be completed by the interested immigrants and return them to the Canadian Consulate General in Lisbon who would forward them to Ottawa. It seems the minister was not fully aware of the difficulties encountered by his officials in dealing with prospective immigrants. The Canadian Immigration Branch turned down their requests as with many hundreds of others' before, with a standard form letter which read:

"From our previous experience in dealing with applications such as yours, it would appear that you are unable to comply with Portuguese Emigration requirements. The Department regrets, therefore, being unable to deal with your application for admission to Canada at the present time."

Canadian officials in Lisbon had long been instructed to offer no encouragement to applications from Portuguese prospective immigrants. They were to extend regrets to each applicant with the above response. This barricading decision came about after many frustrated attempts by officials of the Canadian legation in Lisbon to persuade Portuguese authorities to relax their emigration policy in relation to those trying to come to Canada.

Lester S. Glass and Ottawa's Initiatives

A dispatch from the Acting Consulate General for Canada in Lisbon asking direction from the Secretary of State for External Affairs and Ottawa's subsequent reply to the official in Lisbon, illustrate in revealing fashion the dilemma of Canadian authorities.

Following publicity in the press regarding the decision taken by the Government to relax restrictions, the Consulate was besieged by applications for immigration visas, most of which were dismissed until 1951 as not falling within the categories admissible to Canada. As the press further informed that Canada was actively encouraging European immigrants of many categories the Consulate began to take applications seriously.

Knowing there were certain restrictions in force in Portugal against exit permits, the Canadian official discussed the question with the immigration authorities in early January with no real gain and received vague promises that they would be glad to cooperate by not impeding immigrants.

"On January 16 and on January 22, I therefore forwarded to the Director of the Immigration Branch several applications...and received two sympathetic letters authorizing the issuance of immigration visas to the six applicants..."

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Before taking any definite steps on these cases, I again sought an interview with the President of the Commission for Emigration (Junta da Emigração)...and had a thorough discussion with him lasting the better part of an hour and a half and left with his verbal assurance that in the case of immigrants destined for Canada and accepted by...(us)...as having every possibility of immediate employment, the Portuguese Authorities would waive the immigration regulations which require that the prospective immigrant be in possession of a valid labour contract visaed by the Portuguese Consular Authorities in Canada.

The President said that they would only require the prospective immigrant to be provided with a letter, signed by this Consulate, to the effect that he had been accepted for immigration to Canada...

Immediately after this discussion, I followed up with these six accepted applicants, instructing them as to the further steps in their process and within twenty-four hours a reply came from one to the effect that the Authorities in his district refused to even consider his case unless he produced his labour contract. I replied...I had been informed that...the Authorities would consider waiving the necessity of the labour contract.

...this morning I received what can only be described as a frantic and apologetic telephone call from (President of Junta), admitting that he had made a grave error in his conversation with me and that the truth was the labour contract continues to be an indispensable document before an exit permit can be given to an immigrant, except in the cases of those who are going forward to relatives in Canada.

At the present time there are in the process of being forwarded to the Immigration Branch, approximately 125 applications from people who fall within the preferred classes, who have sufficient money to pay their passage, and to maintain themselves for a short period in Canada, and who would appear to be of a type easily assimilated and of value to our economy...

A further 125 are in the process of being called before sending out the formal questionnaire and, before proceeding with this work and before bothering the Immigration Branch, I would urgently ask for a directive.

...what I should like clarified is this: Is it within the policy of the Government or, would it be possible through the Settlement Service of the Immigration Branch to provide the necessary contract for labour, otherwise I presume that it will be useless considering any applications from Portugal."¹²

By the summer of '51, Ottawa responds with a clear statement that it would be impossible to furnish the certified labour contract. It would also be an inconvenient and lengthy process to obtain individual labour contracts in Canada for prospective Portuguese immigrants who had been found to be admissible. The Secretary of State then carries on to suggest to Mr. Glass that he inform the Portuguese authorities of the precautions which are taken by the Canadian Government to ensure that all persons entering Canada as immigrants will have the maximum opportunity of finding suitable employment and that both the National Employment Service and the Immigration Branch provide extensive services for the satisfactory establishment of immigrants in Canada.

"If, despite this explanation, the Portuguese authorities continue to refuse exit permits to prospective immigrants unless they have certified labour contracts, I am afraid that you will have no alternative but to discontinue accepting further applications..."¹³

Portuguese authorities did not change their rigid position on this matter of certified labour contract and Canadian officials found it impossible to supply them. Thus, when applicants such as Felisberto Sousa Zacarias managed to successfully pass the examination at the Canadian Consulate in Lisbon, they were denied visas. Canadian officials were quite concerned about taking any action that could be seen as interference in Portuguese affairs. "It would be inadvisable to grant...visas to persons in the same circumstances as Mr. Zacarias as this might be construed as an action to assist immigrants to circumvent the Portuguese regulations."¹⁴

The Final Push

As the rush of applications continued in Lisbon, Canadian officials took the following actions in the summer of '51.

1. Officials refused to accept further applications from prospective Portuguese immigrants, informing them that facilities for their examination were not available – they could submit application at other visa offices such as Paris.
2. Officials instructed Lester Glass, the Canadian Consul in Lisbon to begin more intense negotiations with Portuguese officials, promoting Canada's generous immigration facilities and resources available to all prospective immigrants.

This approach seems to have contributed positively since by year's end Lester S. Glass convinced Portuguese emigration authorities to relax their restricting demands on a few carefully selected cases. With an applicant's acceptance for immigration by Canada, Portuguese authorities accepted this as proof that the applicant had every prospect of being a successful immigrant; and passports were granted. (*See Appendix C*)

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Exceptional Cases

The Acting Canadian Consul General, Lester S. Glass, appears to have played a very significant role in bringing the two sides together as well as in assisting a few dozen men in coming to Canada in '51 and '52. Mr. Glass seems at times, in the eyes of his superiors, to have been excessively generous in handling emigrant requests which prompted his boss in Ottawa to instruct him in a lengthy letter to "not accept applications...unless the circumstances are particularly exceptional." Mr. Glass immediately agreed to "take the advice to heart" and admitted being "blinded by the fact the applicants are known" to him. (See Appendix D)

With both governments tightly monitoring the emigration/immigration process, only 35 men managed to legally immigrate to Canada in '51 and '52. These exceptional cases appeared to have adjusted better than those recruited in '53 and '54, perhaps because they were trade skilled and possessed some English language capabilities.

Abel Cruz and Fernando dos Santos, two of these lucky ones, wrote to the Consul General for Canada soon after establishing themselves thanking him and asking for help in bringing over more friends and relatives. (See Appendix E and F)

The Movement of 1953

There are no records of an actual signed agreement officially opening the doors to Portuguese mass immigration to Canada. It appears, however, that the accord took six months to complete. The events of this period follow.

On July 23, 1952, the Chargé d'Affaires for Portugal, Dr. Caldeira Coelho met with the Deputy Minister of Immigration, Laval Fortier, explaining how Portugal had in the past encouraged the emigration of about 25,000 people annually for Central and South America but that those countries were no longer feasible destinations and his government was now interested in arranging to move some Portuguese to Canada. He then reassured the Canadian authorities that "good agriculturists could be selected with a limited number of trade and skilled workers to satisfy Canada's needs. Mr. Coelho went on to advise the Minister that "the Portuguese Government would pay the cost of transportation or make an advance to its emigrants".

Laval Fortier explained the difficulty in forecasting Canada's needs for 1953 and asked him to return in November with definitions of emigrant categories Portugal would permit. (See Appendix G)

They would meet again in December: Portugal wishes to export about 2,000 farmers from Madeira and Azores; Canada agrees to only an experimental movement of no more than 300 from mainland Portugal and the island of Madeira. All these details were negotiated among Dr. Caldeira Coelho, and C.E.S. Smith, the Director of Citizenship and Immigration, and G.R. Benoit, chief of Operations Division.

On February 22, 1953, a Portuguese Emigration Board inspector flew to Ottawa to reassure Canadian officials of Portugal's co-operation in the selection and screening of immigrants.

Particulars of this meeting and final agreement are included in a memorandum by the Immigration Chief of Operations:

"The experimental movement from Portugal this year, following discussions with the Portuguese authorities...has been recast as follows: 100 farm workers, 75 vineyard workers, 50 tradesmen (10 bakers, 10 carpenters, 10 shoe repairmen, 10 upholsterers, 5 cabinetmakers and 5 stonemasons plus 50 professionals and technicians. The selection is to be made at Lisbon, Oporto and Funchal as follows: Lisbon and Oporto 50 farm workers, 50 professionals and technicians and 50 tradesmen; from Funchal 50 farm workers and 75 vineyard workers. Other points which should be made a matter of record are as follows:

- (i) Female domestics are not available in Portugal. A suggestion from the Portuguese authorities that the allotment of 100 be converted into 100 farm workers was turned down by the Deputy Minister.
- (ii) The suggestion that part of the Portuguese movement for this year be from Ponta del Gada [sic] (Azores) was also turned down by the Deputy Minister."¹⁵

It is interesting to note that item (ii) would continue to be pursued by Portuguese officials who were determined to include a small sample of Azoreans to demonstrate to Canadian authorities that they would meet Canada's expectations and be suitable for future emigrant movements. Laval Fortier eventually agreed to include 20 Azoreans to be deducted from the farm workers already allotted and to be examined in Lisbon by Canada's selection team stationed in Paris.

This team, which was headed by O. Cormier and included Dr. G. Gaudet as well as Mr. P. Colville of the RCMP, went to Lisbon and Funchal and by May 6 had granted a visa to 186 of the 317 men who had been pre-selected in Porto, Lisbon and Funchal by the Portuguese authorities. All this work, including travelling from France to Lisbon, Funchal and back to Lisbon again, was accomplished in record time – about three weeks – proving to be an experience for both Canadian and Portuguese officials who were likely unaware of the future significance of their endeavours.

Difficulties encountered in recruiting this first group, according to the head of the Canadian team, O. Cormier, included:

The great majority of engineers cancelled their applications when they learned the conditions offered by Canadian authorities. They had been under the erroneous impression that the equivalence of their academic standing would be recognized

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anywhere in Canada and that they would be offered highly paid positions with specific contracts arranged prior to departure.

The Azorean farm workers had not yet arrived in Lisbon on April 20 and no one was clear about the type of tradesmen and technicians to be selected.

Except for the workers from Azores and Madeira, there had been no true pre-selection, only a registration of applications, and no provision was made by Portuguese authorities for substitutes of the 51 unaccepted by the Canadian team.

Except for those selected from the Azores who were all single, a large number of workers within the occupationally eligible were married, many having young children, a feature that had an important bearing on the time required for examination at each centre.

Portuguese emigration officials did not have enough applicants, especially in Oporto. They were also unaware that Canada would refuse any married worker if a member of his family could not comply medically with the standards.

As a result, the quota initially granted could not be fulfilled.

There were various other impediments to departure such as the deadlines for reserving space for sailings and the unlikelihood of having documents available on time.

Apart from X-rays, official documents such as Portuguese passports were ready only at the last minute. Then, an RCMP officer awaited the laborious checking of lists held by the British Passport Control authorities before conferring clearance for the emigrant. *(See Appendix H)*

Eventually, all difficulties were ironed out and when the final report from Paris arrived in Ottawa, all the men selected were already scattered throughout Quebec's and Ontario's vast land. Their courage and perseverance, hard work and adaptability facilitated a successful placement. Less than six months after their arrival, a plan to bring 700 agriculture workers, 200 railway workers and 50 tradesmen from the Azores was submitted by Dr. Caldeira Coelho and accepted by the Canadian Chief of Operations, C.E. Smith. *(See Appendix I and J)*

With experience gained from the previous year, the movement of '54 was expeditiously selected and examined. By the end of March, three boatloads arrived in Halifax opening forever the doors for hundreds of thousands more to follow in the next four decades.