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“We Help Them Because Their Need Is Great”

The Canadian Anti-Draft Movement

I wish that I were able to incite
Young men in every land to disobey
For wars will cease when men refuse to fight.

To kill our brothers for a nation’s right
Is not a method we can use today.
I wish that I were able to incite.

When leaders threaten to resort to might,
I know that idols all have feet of clay.
For wars will cease when men refuse to fight.

The cause of peace is shared by black and white
And freedom fighters show a better way.
I wish that I were able to incite.

Non-violent resistance has no bite
While undecided pacifists delay.
For wars will cease when men refuse to fight.

With power to reinforce in what I write
The things that protest-singers try to say,
I wish that I were able to incite
For wars will cease when men refuse to fight.

- Tom Earley, “Incitement to Disobedience”
If the late 1960s were a period of readjustment of the hegemonic order, the anti-draft movement in Canada was in the thick of it. The year 1965 marked a major turning point in US strategy. As the US government engaged in higher-profile engagements such as major B-52 bombing raids, raised its troop ceilings to over two hundred thousand, and watched as its people endured images of Vietnamese refugees in Vietnam and American corpses in body bags, the slow trickle of resisters into Canadian urban centres steadily grew to a stream. This increase coincided with both a tactical focus on the use of US ground troops and an increase in desertions from the US military.

In the midst of this global political landscape, Canadian discussions about nationalism, culture, Quebec, and the American war on Vietnam percolated in complex ways among the general public and in the halls of government. Canadian support for American war resisters in the Vietnam War era was similarly complex. The movement manifested itself in different ways. A network of anti-draft groups emerged across the country to provide various services to the American immigrants before and upon their arrival. Among other issues, anti-draft groups dealt with a quickly changing employment situation, which went from a labour shortage and 3 to 4 percent unemployment in 1966 to 5 to 6 percent unemployment in late 1969 and early 1970, with spikes especially among youth and in regions outside Ontario.

The Canadian anti-draft movement, including its network of groups with varied roots and origins and different experiences in interacting with American “visitors” and immigrants, eventually helped to shape the public and personal perceptions of anti-draft activists and groups in Canada. Individuals who shared the anti-draft sentiment also played a role; many helped these immigrants without ever coming into contact, directly or indirectly, with the anti-draft network. As well, there was broad sentiment against the draft not only among activists but also among student organizations and others who were not directly involved in the anti-draft movement, but only some of these groups were actively involved in supporting war resister immigration, either working with the anti-draft groups or independently.

The term “anti-draft group” refers to all types of groups specifically organized around the issue of American war resisters in Canada. Within
that broad type existed "aid groups," groups usually containing both Canadian and American activists whose purpose was to aid war resisters no matter what their motivations, and "exile groups," groups defined by a membership composed solely of American immigrants. War resisters who received help from both types of groups formed mostly positive impressions of the anti-draft groups and had mostly positive experiences of Canadian support. The groups were fairly effective, although not always entirely reliable.

The anti-draft group activists and the resisters who interacted with them had their disagreements. Debates about the relative value of draft dodging and deserting as antiwar actions, about assimilation and nationalism, and about the right way for Americans to be "political" surfaced both in public disagreements and in private moral and tactical dilemmas. Nonetheless, what emerges most strongly from the existing documents and from interviews with antiwar immigrants and supporters is the sense of a cohesive movement engaged in a dual role: direct support for immigrants and political advocacy.

The anti-draft movement emerged in a political landscape in which strong feelings about the American draft and the war in Vietnam were abundant. Indeed, anti-draft sentiments were mainly formed in the broader Canadian peace movement. Draft resistance was part of the antiwar movement's demands, and war resisters were often directly involved as participants. Groups like Students Against the War in Vietnam (Toronto) made demands to bring the GIs home now and to end the US draft. Students in general played a key role in the burgeoning anti-draft sentiment. As early as 1967, student unions such as the University of Toronto Students' Administrative Council gave money to the "Toronto Anti-Draft Movement." In 1968, the nationwide student organization, the Canadian Union of Students (CUS), began to take an interest in the anti-draft movement. The first time CUS discussed the war was at its thirty-second congress in the early fall of 1968. In October of 1968, the organization considered becoming a "bureau of inquiry" for draft dodgers and setting up a "cross-Canada link-up"; one subsequent conference included a war resister. Off campus, antiwar organizations drew strong links between opposition to the war and draft resistance, featuring draft dodgers and deserters as speakers at public events and demanding an end to the draft south of the border.
On this activist base, a movement to support the American war resisters was built. The movement enjoyed fairly consistent, albeit passive, support from the Canadian public. The young movement maintained its connections to the antiwar and student groups but also drew from other sources, and, almost from the start, it existed independently from broader movements and groups.

Groups and individuals got involved for various reasons, rooted in traditions and in current political dialogues. The groups that formed to support the war resisters reflected this complexity of beginnings. We can trace the beginnings of this movement through to its establishment as a decentralized, yet fairly unified, network of groups and individuals well-placed to advocate on behalf of war resisters throughout the period.

**Emergence of the Anti-Draft Movement in Canada**

While the problem of the draft was a part of a larger concern about the legitimacy of the Vietnam War for Canadian antiwar activists, eventually a specific movement arose to support those Americans who came to Canada to avoid the draft or to desert from military service. The groups through which Canadians worked to support them were numerous and geographically dispersed. Part of a self-aware activist community with the capacity to use the mainstream media to its benefit, they created highly effective networks for information sharing and communication both between groups and to potential immigrants, for mounting joint campaigns, and for reinforcing each other’s actions to create momentum to win gains on behalf of the war resisters. A transnational movement, they enjoyed support from American groups while also forging their own approaches towards politics and strategy and developing their own internal sense of history. Ultimately, they formed the nucleus of a broad and vibrant, though comparatively small, social movement in support of war resisters that succeeded in shaping public perceptions, bettering border conditions, and affecting public policy.

Aid groups were listed in the various editions of the *Manual for Draft-Age Immigrants to Canada*, a publication of the Toronto Anti-Draft Programme (TADP); twenty-three groups, located in Calgary, Edmonton, Vancouver, Victoria, Winnipeg, Fredericton, Moncton, Sackville, Newfoundland, Guelph, Hamilton, Kingston, Kitchener-Waterloo, London, Oshawa, Ottawa, Peterborough, Port Arthur-Fort William, Toronto,
Windsor, Charlottetown, Montreal, Regina, and Saskatoon, at some point listed contact people. The history, ideological positions, and effectiveness of the groups also varied. Only a few Americans got involved in these groups, but they were very influential; some groups were run at various times by antiwar activists. Figures such as Bill Spira, a prominent activist in the Toronto Anti-Draft Programme, and Joan and Jim Wilcox, American immigrants who played key roles in the initiation and operation of Ottawa Assistance with Immigration and the Draft (Ottawa AID), and many others shared the leadership of the anti-draft movement in Canada.

The anti-draft groups counselled anyone and everyone who requested it, regardless of their motivation for immigrating. This lack of bias was likely the result of the connections this new movement had with the draft counselling movement south of the border. The groups were not typically very structured, although some did have a board. Groups provided headquarters and message boards, as well as drop-in centres, and developed expertise in correspondence, dealing with the media, and conducting research for publications.

It is generally thought that the first committee to be formed was the Vancouver Committee to Aid American War Objectors (VCAAWO). While the size and weight of that committee make such an impression understandable, the files of then co-editor of Montreal-based Sanity magazine Hans Sinn call the claim into question. It appears that the VCAWWO was founded in October 1966; therefore, the Montreal Council was likely the first active Canadian anti-draft group, since activity in Montreal began in February of that year. The truth is probably that committees formed in Vancouver, Toronto, and Montreal at roughly the same time, taking different routes for their development.

From the start, the transnational nature of the anti-draft movement and its shared roots in pacifist traditions of conscientious objection were evident. Early correspondence and documents of the nascent committee in Montreal establish a picture of a group with international and Pan-Canadian links, a movement that took its role very seriously and that placed a premium on the sharing of information.

In February 1966, Hans Sinn, responding to multiple requests for information from draft resisters, began compiling information for the publication of a fact sheet for potential American immigrants. The inquiries may have come as a result of the feature article on war resistance in the
February 1966 issue of *Sanity*. Sinn wrote to the Central Committee for Conscientious Objectors (CCCO) and the War Resisters League (WRL), two well-established American pacifist organizations, asking for information on an American's status regarding citizenship, draft board requirements, and legalities should he decide to immigrate while in various stages of the draft, including desertion. Sinn followed up with telegrams in late February and contacted a war resister couple with whom he was acquainted: Virginia and Lowell Naève. They had been sponsored by friends to immigrate to Canada and had arrived with their son, who was as yet too young to be drafted, in 1965. Lowell was a Quaker registered for alternative service in the United States, who had decided to evade even that. The Naèves were in touch with many other Americans who were interested in immigrating. Virginia Naève wrote,

> There simply needs to be more concerted effort. If I have the information at my fingertips and can pass on information and get people together then that will be good. The better the information the less bog down.

> I need information for people to hang onto. All they know for the most part is they can't stand the idea of their sons or themselves tolerating the situation in the USA.

> I have the contacts in the USA who can help once they know we can help up here. I've been on the steering comm. of WSP [Women Strike for Peace] since it was started. CNVA [Committee for Nonviolent Action] I've worked with, the Quakers, WRL [War Resisters League], WILPF [Women's International League for Peace and Freedom].""

On 4 March, Sinn received a reply from Arlo Tatum of the CCCO, who referred Sinn to the Student Union for Peace Action (SUPA) fact sheet, which was being drafted at the same time in Toronto, and to SUPA's Tom Hathaway, a landed immigrant who had just been ordered to report to the draft board.

Seeking more, and clearer, information, Sinn sought legal advice. The advice he received suggested that draft avoidance was not a legal obstacle to immigration. Further, no sponsorship was required, although a job or student status would help. Potential immigrants were advised to apply from outside Canada; however, such application could be made at a border point or from inside the country after entering as a visitor.
"We Help Them Because Their Need Is Great"

Using the advice and additional information provided by Tatum, Sinn drafted a four-page "Fact Sheet on Immigration to Canada." Perhaps not surprisingly given Sinn’s journalist status, the original fact sheet was treated as a media release. It appears that upon receiving the Vancouver pamphlet, "Immigration to Canada and Its Relation to the Draft," Sinn stopped producing the Sanity fact sheet.

Sinn’s inquiries led to further requests from the United States, as US groups referred draft resisters to Sinn for information. The Naeves began receiving forwarded correspondence from Sinn, and Sanity subscribers were asked to help support war resisters. In April 1966, inquiries about British Columbia prodded Sinn to write to SUPA’s Sandy Read, who was based in Richmond, British Columbia, to seek information on the involvement of BC residents in anti-draft work. Sinn, Virginia Naeve, and her colleague Mary considered whether to do a mass mailing of the information sheet. Eventually, several dozen copies were sent to American groups. Sinn also contacted Hathaway and sent him copies of the Sanity fact sheet.

As the campaign in Montreal progressed and linkages with other Canadian cities and American groups strengthened, more and more Americans residing in the country illegally were approaching Sanity clandestinely, seeking legal advice and hoping to keep a low profile, as Sinn’s 21 May 1966 letter to Hathaway indicates:

We have had some experience with draft dodgers who are here furtively. They contacted us asking for legal advice without even giving their name. There seems to be some quite unjustified fear, that the peace movement would make a big thing of things for publicity purposes of its own. All we do is give them the name of a lawyer who has agreed to give free advice.

We send the names and addresses of people who are willing to assist US refugees to Virginia [Naeve] for now. Like yourself we are still trying to get the hang of things, to find out the best procedures and the actual potential.

A meeting of all those actively interested should certainly be arranged.

Alfred Friend of the Toronto Peace Center is interested and has some names of Toronto people who are willing to help.

We have tried to establish contact with people in Vancouver but so far no luck. SUPA has also put out a fact sheet and we were told that a Vancouver lawyer put the information together.
By late spring of 1966, SUPA in Vancouver was working on establishing whether support already existed there. Read wrote to Sinn, “Rumour has it there is some group around Vancouver which will supply aid (mainly legal). I would imagine it is the civil liberties council but I don’t know because it was a Maoist [sic] who told me about it and he wasn’t saying too much. As for myself – I can’t do much but I could probably put someone up for awhile when they first arrive.” Eventually, Sinn met Meg and Benson Brown of the Vancouver group. By 1967, Canadian anti-draft publications were getting wide circulation in the United States, and an Arlington, Virginia, student newspaper, the Underground, had published the Vancouver fact sheet. There were nascent committees in Ottawa and Winnipeg, and Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), the main student New Left group in the United States, had “overcome their initial reluctance” and were doing anti-draft work. The February 1967 issue of Sanity reprinted the SDS resolution on draft resistance, which stated,

Since the primary task of SDS is building a movement for social change in the United States, we do not advocate emigration as an alternative to the draft. Nevertheless we realize that this option is being considered by many young men. We will thus provide information about emigration, and will encourage those who emigrate to build international support for the draft resistance unions and to work for an end to the war.

SDS was willing to assist emigration, and that assistance was framed as an extension of the antiwar movement. Their statement implied an expectation that émigrés would be engaged in antiwar and anti-draft activities.

The same issue of Sanity listed the VCAAWO, the Toronto SUPA office, and the Montreal committee as groups set up to “aid US draft resisters.” These groups had strong connections to the antiwar movement, but as a rule they did not require, or even expect, immigrants to get involved. The tension this engendered between activists, both American and Canadian, later provoked some debate in the anti-draft movement.

In 1967, individuals in various cities began corresponding with one another about setting up committees. They sought and shared information with each other on specific border points and conditions for crossing, employment conditions, and housing, and made attempts to make sure advice provided to potential resisters was consistent. Border experiences
tended to change over time, which made the sharing of information even more important for this decentralized movement.28

Into late 1966 and early 1967, Sinn continued to reply to letters and to seek out networks with activists in other cities, and the CCCO and the WRL continued to refer inquiries to Sanity. Sanity, meanwhile, transitioned out of playing the role of an anti-draft group and became a source of information on draft dodgers, even encouraging war resisters to immigrate.29 Activists also began to ask themselves whether deserters could go to Sweden, because deserters had begun showing up in Canada and the groups were unsure whether deserters could be deported.30

Montreal Council to Aid War Resisters (MCAWR)
The Montreal Council to Aid War Resisters (MCAWR) proper was formed in 1967, but it had existed in nascent form for almost two years prior. The board had a division of labour, which included public relations, treasurer, and secretarial positions. The Montreal committee’s practice continued to be one of information sharing and communication. Like other groups, it became more and more formalized in its approach. All of its documents were in English.

The Montreal group used research and materials produced by the VCAAWO and the Toronto Anti-Draft Programme (TADP).31 It also produced its own materials, including fundraising flyers and form letters containing additional advice and updates enclosed with copies of “Immigration to Canada and Its Relation to the Draft.”32 The Montreal committee solicited information from other anti-draft groups for regularly issued revised editions of their broadsheet.33 It also published reports to the “Friends of the Council,” donors solicited by form letter.34 The Montreal Council also provided training to their counsellors.35

One of the most important activities of the council and other groups was advocacy on behalf of war resisters to the federal government. The Montreal Council “pressed” the federal government to clarify its policy on deserters in early 1969 and worked with Ottawa Aid, the TADP, and the VCAWWO on various campaigns. The organization also continued to have less formal links with other groups, including the CCCO.36 In May of 1971, the MCAWR merged with the American Deserters Committee to form the American Refugee Service, probably to reduce duplication of services,
and perhaps as a result of agreements reached at a pan-Canadian conference in 1970.\footnote{37}

The Montreal Council existed in a Montreal that Sean Mills has characterized as host to many interrelated, though largely neighbourhood-based, activist groups and committees, with English- and French-speaking groups operating mainly, although not exclusively, in isolation from each other.\footnote{38} The MCAWR appears to be no exception.\footnote{39} On the whole, there does not appear to have been any substantial support by francophone activists for the war resisters in Montreal.\footnote{40}

**Vancouver Committee to Aid American War Objectors (VCAAWO)**

Perhaps the most significant of the anti-draft groups, partly due to its geographical location, the VCAAWO was formed in October of 1966 by a group of University of British Columbia professors, some of their family members, and a lawyer. The group initially performed some research and then began counselling American immigrants. Demand forced them to formalize their operations, and they eventually opened an office, conducted research, received and responded to correspondence by mail, and published information sheets aimed at educating potential draft dodgers and deserters about how to immigrate to Canada and what to expect upon arrival. The VCAAWO counselled more and more individuals and connected American immigrants with community members for housing, employment, and legal and health care services.\footnote{41} Here, again, was a group that began informally but became more formalized in its approach over the next several years.

Groups such as the Vancouver Vietnam Action Committee referred potential American immigrants to the VCAAWO as early as 1967.\footnote{42} The VCAAWO engaged in fundraising and began to forge links with other anti-draft groups in Canada.\footnote{43} The VCAAWO pamphlet “Immigration to Canada and Its Relation to the Draft” could be found on file in many of the anti-draft offices that subsequently formed. It likely informed anti-draft group counsellors as well as potential American immigrants. The Vancouver information sheet was adapted and published by the Montreal Council to Aid War Resisters (MCAWR) and was updated and re-issued until the early 1970s. For instance, the November 1966 version emphasized that “a number of Americans who have immigrated to Canada have renounced
their citizenship and have thereby voided their military obligations,” and referred to the anticipated changes to immigration policy, which were finally enacted in 1967. Further revisions did not emphasize the renunciation of citizenship tactic; there was some disagreement among the groups regarding the efficacy of the tactic, and although the practice did continue, the points system made such a move unnecessary. The pamphlet was mailed to individuals who had made inquiries and to some American draft counselling groups. Contact information for other anti-draft groups was regularly updated.7

Other VCAWWO publications included an addendum memo to “Immigration to Canada and Its Relation to the Draft,” which updated certain sections on regulations and provided suggestions for additional reading regarding whether to immigrate to Canada; “Teaching in British Columbia: An Unofficial Guide,” aimed at American immigrants who had the qualifications necessary to apply for teaching jobs; and copies of “Why They Chose Canada,” an article from Weekend Magazine (26 November 1966), distributed in response to requests for discussion of “the position of emigrating to Canada” in WRL News. The VCAWWO used the media to good effect. Hardy Scott, a draft dodger who arrived in 1967, recalls being interviewed for articles in Ladies’ Home Journal. He agreed to those interviews on the condition that the magazine also print the VCAWWO’s address. As a result, the committee received more inquiries.49

Most of the work was done by volunteers, and linkages to other groups, while they did exist, were fairly informal. VCAWWO activities included counselling and providing information on immigration, jobs, and housing for an average of five or six American immigrants per day. Half of these immigrants were deserers.50

In late 1969, the VCAWWO consisted of an office and its volunteer and meagrely paid staff; no actual committee – that is, a more or less organized decision-making body with meetings – existed.51 At the same time, however, the VCAWWO was using its own letterhead, which is a sign of formalization as well as an indication that the organization had access to resources. The VCAWWO’s networks with other groups were yielding information for prospective American immigrants about other cities, border conditions, and employment prospects. Some letters referred to better job prospects to the East, including in the Prairie provinces. One letter gave contact
information for the Calgary committee. Another stated that draft dodgers were still crossing the border more easily than other American immigrants, although, by late 1969, deserters should not have been subject to discrimination at border points; the minister of manpower and immigration had announced on 22 May that deserter status would not be used to keep immigrants from entering Canada, as a result of a campaign to change the policy.52

The Vancouver group also did its own research and produced briefs as part of anti-draft group attempts to influence immigration policy. The document “Note on Fugitives from Justice,” published in May 1967, is one example; it was an opinion piece regarding the soon-to-be-announced points system and its potential for abuse and manipulation by immigration officials. Later documents were written in response to the unfair and uneven treatment of American immigrants at border points and in immigration offices within Canada. In late 1967, the VCAWWO wrote “A Note on the Handling of Draft-Age Immigrants to Canada,” a document aimed at informing Deputy Minister of Immigration Tom Kent (who served under Minister Jean Marchand until July 1968) about discrimination at the border against draft-age Americans in general. The brief appended statements from thirty-six recent arrivals whose experience with officials had been negative. In January 1969, the VCAWWO prepared a brief, “A Further Note on the Handling of Draft-Age Americans Who Apply for Entry into Canada.” The brief formed a part of the 1969 campaign to open the border and included affidavits from war resisters.53

Perhaps because of its reputation as a northern counterpart to California, Vancouver became a destination for a large number of war resisters, which meant that the VCAWWO was one of the most active committees in Canada. In Desertion: In the Time of Vietnam, Jack Todd describes the scene:

The [Vancouver] committee [to Aid American War Objectors] draws the usual suspects from the radical fringe in the late '60s: crunchy granola hippies, Trotskyites, Maoists, wide-eyed do-gooders, zonked-out druggies, moochers, marchers, anarchists, macho types who babble endlessly about guns and bombs and revolution, deserters who have been to Vietnam and back (or claim they have) and who seem always on the verge of some subterranean explosion.54
One resister, who later became involved in the committee, recalls, “It was an active committee; there were many people who would provide initial housing for people to stay, help to find jobs, be drivers to take people down to the border and then bring them across again, to meet people when they did come in; the three big things were housing, jobs, and getting landed ... We seemed to never be in dire straits.”

Another Vancouver anti-draft group, Immigration Aid to Refugees of Conscience, also produced materials, including “On Being a Kept Person,” a flyer originally published by the Unitarian Church group Canadian Assistance to War Objectors (CATWO, or sometimes, CAWO). The flyer encouraged war resisters to keep a low profile as boarders with temporary housing and exhorted, “No fraternization with teenage daughters (it’s been tried) ... [N]or will parents of older children be receptive to having their offspring counselled on ways and means of subverting parental authority (it’s been done).” A commensurate document, “So You’re Having a War Resister,” exhibited the same light tone in encouraging housing volunteers to be clear about their expectations from boarders.

CATWO, the Unitarian group, had a steering committee that met regularly from at least January until August of 1968. The group kept minutes of its discussions of the job situation and set up a hostel, among other activities. “The Care and Feeding of War Objectors” was the CATWO precedent to “So You’re Having a War Resister,” titles that compared war resisters to pets and babies. The humorous tone was likely adopted in order to approach non-activists in a friendly way, to encourage their active support through the provision of housing. Depicting war resisters as dependent and in need of help was also part of the tone of these flyers.

CATWO and the VCAAWO had a friendly relationship. The January meeting of the steering committee welcomed a guest from the VCAAWO, Mrs. Riddell, who outlined the need for job offers, a hostel, drivers, money, duplication services, and volunteers. The CATWO began funding the VCAAWO at one hundred dollars per month in March 1968. It sought to avoid duplicating efforts of the VCAAWO and concentrated on job counselling. Eventually, the CATWO and the VCAAWO decided to discuss amalgamation. They also sought to integrate the North Shore Housing group because “an accident of history” had resulted in three overlapping groups forming at the same time. It is unclear whether the amalgamation
ever occurred, but the VCAAWO certainly continued to exist until at least 1972.

**Ottawa Assistance with Immigration and the Draft (AID)**

Meanwhile, in Ottawa, the group Ottawa Assistance with Immigration and the Draft (AID) helped American immigrants with immigration regulation legalities. A third of its budget was dedicated to these services. By some accounts, Ottawa AID was founded by Jim Wilcox, an American who became an English professor at Carleton University, but Joan Wilcox (Jim’s wife) recalls that two women started the group (the other the wife of a Carleton sociologist). Ottawa AID later established the Coffeehouse as a gathering place in a francophone United church at the corner of Elgin and Lewis Streets, run in late 1970 by Mennonite Bob Janzen and his wife. By that time Jim Wilcox had stepped back, but the committee was still very active. Joan Wilcox recollects,

> We started up really under the tutelage of the Toronto Anti-Draft Programme ... for two reasons: one, they had been doing a lot of work, but they were primarily getting people landed at the border, which was then possible under the Immigration Act, but sometimes the border was getting increasingly tight ... So they enlisted the Ottawa Peace in Vietnam group to work with Parliament to try and do what could be done ... and secondly, to assist with the actual immigration of those young men who would qualify with an internal application ... So those were the two initial reasons for our start up, and then it just expanded and expanded.

My husband and I had just recently moved here, and he was in his first year teaching at Carleton. He was teaching all new courses, and I was looking for something to keep me busy and was ready to start getting a little more politically active, and I wound up attending a meeting of the Ottawa group for peace in Vietnam, whatever it was called, and found that their most pressing need at the time was to develop something Toronto had been asking the peace group here for help [with], and they’d had the odd draft dodger come and they didn’t know what to do with him and so on. So another young woman and I, the wife of a sociologist from Carleton and I, said, well, [it] sounds like we could do that. So we got a hold of copies of the Immigration Act and it just grew from that.
My husband became interested; he was more interested in lobbying, although we both did some of everything, but that’s where he focused. And gradually our group expanded.\textsuperscript{53}

Wilcox was one of many women involved in the anti-draft groups. There was no noticeable gender division of labour in the groups themselves. Women in these groups, however, were acting in the context of growing awareness of women’s rights on the one hand and observable male dominance of activism and war resistance on the other.\textsuperscript{54}

As the Ottawa group expanded, so did its services:

[We did] everything there was to be done \textit{[laughs]} Our primary focus was providing info and support to the young men and women who were here as a result of the war – mainly draft dodgers, increasingly war deserters, and their partners if they came with a partner … The specific work entailed immediately providing for their physical needs, housing, food, that sort of thing, but in the long term providing … [assistance with] preparing their applications … helping them get documents, helping them understand the forms, helping them understand the ways of presenting themselves that would be truthful but the most positive.\textsuperscript{55}

As Wilcox recalls, the Ottawa group met from time to time with the Toronto Anti-Draft Programme (TADP) and a group from Montreal: “We worked closely in the sense that Toronto would send us people that they were feeling they might have trouble with or just their overflow, and Montreal would send us people they thought we could be more of assistance with.”\textsuperscript{56} The Ottawa group also placed great importance on information and communication across the growing pan-Canadian network.

\textit{“Words from Canadians”: Toronto Anti-Draft Programme (TADP)}

If the VCAAWO was a significant group, and Ottawa AID was important for its proximity to Parliament Hill, the Toronto Anti-Draft Programme was perhaps the most influential, given its base in Canada’s largest city. The TADP formed in late 1966 out of a committee formed by the Student Union for Peace Action (SUPA) at the University of Toronto.\textsuperscript{57} SUPA had begun to receive queries about immigration in the winter of 1965, which had resulted in the SUPA pamphlet “Coming to Canada?”\textsuperscript{58} After SUPA
placed the VCAWWO publication “Immigration to Canada and Its Relation to the Draft” on its literature list, it received dozens of requests for further information; SUPA subsequently set up a support office on the University of Toronto campus. Tony Hyde, a twenty-year-old university dropout from Ottawa, conducted research, information, and publications work, and, in 1966, he had already helped “about fifty” resisters, meeting them at the bus station and finding them temporary housing.

Eventually, SUPA published its own pamphlet titled *Escape from Freedom, or, I Didn’t Raise My Boy to Be a Canadian.* Boasting a yellow cover with a political cartoon lampooning an American mother, which reflects the often tense familial connections of many American immigrants, its twelve pages dealt with the questions of how to oppose war and how to deal with conscription. The pamphlet also provided a basic outline of immigration laws, including prohibited classes, visitor status, student status, and landed immigrant status. It suggested that “any American deserter would not be accepted as a landed immigrant.” The booklet instructed potential immigrants how to apply (in person from within Canada, by nomination, by mail from outside Canada, or in person at the border) and explained the details of the border application. Finally, it outlined questions of extradition and deportation and sketched the basics of life in Canada. While the authors’ position on desertion was somewhat inaccurate, they were correct in stating that deportation was illegal, describing it as a “blatant infringement” on individual rights. The pamphlet concluded with contact information for consulates, immigration offices, SUPA’s 658 Spadina Avenue offices, and the Vancouver Committee to Aid American War Objectors. There was also a condensed leaflet form of “Escape from Freedom.” The ironic title was typical of many anti-draft publications and fact sheets and reflected a common war resisters’ stance on US foreign policy. It also quoted Erich Fromm’s 1941 work, *Escape from Freedom,* a Freudian and Marxist analysis of social tendencies to seek out authority. Fromm was a member of the Frankfurt School at the same time as Herbert Marcuse, whose influence on the New Left is well-documented. The title thereby suggested that to leave the United States was to resist authority.

SUPA did not encourage Americans to immigrate because they did not want to offend the American peace groups who wanted them to stay home to oppose the war. Instead, as Hyde explained in a 1966 interview with *Weekend Magazine,* SUPA counselled American immigrants about work
regulations and helped with filling out forms and the process for getting landed status. “It’s all very informal, but we might have to get some kind of organization going,” he said. For various reasons, including pressure from New Left figures such as Tom Hayden, who viewed draft dodging as a weaker tactic than desertion or direct opposition to the war, SUPA eventually dissociated itself from the anti-draft movement. Ultimately, SUPA dissolved, leaving the Toronto draft resisters program and its office as a legacy of its Toronto activity. The anti-draft committee reinvented itself as the Toronto Anti-Draft Programme.

The TADP, like other anti-draft groups, existed mostly because of the willingness of volunteers to act in various capacities, including immigration, housing, and employment counselling. A series of individuals played a coordinating role, starting with Mark Satin, who worked for several years with the TADP from before its break from SUPA in 1967. Satin drafted the first edition of the Manual for Draft-Age Immigrants to Canada. In September of 1967, the TADP set up a restructured Anti-Draft Committee to provide assistance with the program, with subcommittees and regularly scheduled meetings. The subcommittees included Information Campaign, Fundraising, Legal Research and Aid, American Immigrants Employment Service, and Newsletter.

Quaker Nancy Pocock and her husband, Jack, were steadily involved in the Toronto group from 1965 into the 1970s. The Pococks administered a Quaker fund to address immigrants’ immediate needs upon arrival. The funds came in large part from American Quakers. Pocock recalled that the work could be overwhelming: “Pretty soon they were almost swamped, and finally one of them ... took it on as a full-time thing ... everybody finds after they do it for a while, they get completely exhausted and drained.”

The Pococks were central figures in the TADP from its inception. In a May 1970 interview, Nancy noted that “[Jack has] been on the committee [executive board], ever since they’ve had it ... We were always sort of advisors for the Toronto-Anti-Draft [sic] ... They put him onto dealing with the media ... We had a steady stream in here of newsmen from all over the world.” With Bill Spira, the Pococks likely represented the steadiest involvement in the anti-draft movement by Canadians. By 1968, the TADP was receiving one hundred letters and an average of seventeen
visitors every day; it had six staff and provided hostel accommodations, an employment service, a loan fund, and legal referrals. Its support came especially from church groups and University of Toronto faculty members, some of them perhaps recently involved in student movements. The program made use of volunteers, both Canadians and American immigrants. By 1970, the TADP boasted several full-time staff, of which Spira was one.

The Canadian anti-draft movement produced publications and pamphlets, the tools that the movement used to coordinate its work, which, while illustrating a level of maturity and development, now also constitute a valuable source of information about the groups, their history, and their activities. Overall, the movement was fast-paced, with a high degree of mobility and turnover. The generation of large amounts of information was part of its architecture. Self-conscious as a movement with a purpose, the endeavour, driven in part by intellectuals including journalists, students, clergy, and academics, contributed directly to the ideological debates playing out in the period.

Arguably, the most important publication of the Canadian anti-draft movement, the Manual for Draft-Age Immigrants to Canada, was a window into the activities of Canadian supporters of draft dodgers and deserters from the American military between 1967 and 1970. The Manual promoted itself and the TADP as the authority on immigrating to Canada and discouraged the use of "amateur" or "underground" information sources. It also documented the movement's achievements and played a role in the swiftly changing ideas among anti-draft activists and American immigrants.

The Manual was published six times between January 1968 and 1971. It provided a snapshot of the diversity of the Canadian anti-draft movement, with contributors representing a cross-section of antiwar and New Left circles in Toronto, where anti-draft activity was the largest and best organized. Each new edition of the manual provided updated information such as group listings and changes in immigration procedures, and, in 1971, the manual referred potential immigrants to American draft counselling services in part to reduce the number of refugees, given the high unemployment rate of the early 1970s. The first edition had a limited run of five thousand copies and cost two dollars per copy. The demand for the
first edition was such that the second edition of the manual, which was published in March 1968, had a run of twenty thousand copies, and the third, ten thousand. 91

The fourth revised edition of the Manual for Draft-Age Immigrants to Canada, published in December 1969 but cover-stamped 1970, also in a run of ten thousand copies, contained quotations from two immigration officials. The first was from John Munro, a parliamentary secretary for the Department of Immigration, who on 12 June 1967, said, “An individual’s status with regard to compulsory military service in his own country has no bearing upon his admissibility to Canada either as an immigrant or as a visitor; nor is he subject to removal from Canada because of unfulfilled military obligations in his country of citizenship.” The second was an extract from Minister of Manpower and Immigration Allan MacEachen’s 22 May 1969 speech in the House of Commons; MacEachen stated, “If a service-man from another country meets our immigration criteria, he will not be turned down because he is still in the active service of his country … The selection criteria and requirements applying to him will be the same as those that apply to other applicants.” 92 These quotations were probably included for political reasons, coming as they did soon after the May 1969 victory of the anti-draft groups’ campaign to open the border to deserters. By including them, the anti-draft movement both asserted its victory and claimed responsibility for it.

Later editions moved away from national symbolism in cover art and content. The 1971 edition included a section titled “Of Frying Pans and Fires,” by Ron Lambert, which outlined a debate between two streams of Canadian nationalism – one resistant to United States domination, and one, “colonially-minded,” justifying US foreign policy and its domination of Canadian decision making – and encouraging readers to choose one or the other. The inclusion of Lambert’s piece points to how Canadian nationalism and debates about tactics and identity were intertwined among American war resisters and Canadian anti-draft activists. 93

Historians, including J.M.S. Careless, professor and chairman of the Department of History at the University of Toronto, Elliott Rose, associate professor of history also at the University of Toronto, and Kenneth McNaught, professor and editor of Saturday Night Magazine, helped with the general text of the manual and with the sections on war resisters’ immigration history. 94 In these historical sections, the authors claimed that
Canada's history was one of providing sanctuary to various kinds of war resisters. This idea was a major part of advocacy efforts on behalf of war resisters. The introductory section, titled “Words from Canadians,” contained short messages from lawyers and church officials, welcoming American immigrants. These pages suggested that Canada and the United States were not much different from each other in many important ways, and that Canadians ought to welcome resisters, without judging them. In the network of anti-draft groups, activists commonly held the idea that resisters deserved support no matter their personal reasons for coming to Canada. There was a debate about tactics but it tended not to affect the decision of whether to support individual resisters.

Reflecting the continuing transnational and decentralized nature of this movement, the TADP kept copies of other groups’ publications, including CCCO counselling handbooks and US military directives and regulations. The TADP kept careful track of policy and legislative changes to immigration processes, including the Immigration Act and amendments. Extensive and thorough counselling services were available to American war resisters at the TADP offices. By 1968, the caseload of the 2279 Yonge Street office had risen to around twenty-five per day from five or six in 1967.

Correspondence with anti-draft groups in the United States and Canada kept the TADP informed about rumours and facts about border crossings and other issues that were useful in counselling prospective immigrants. For instance, a 1968 letter stated that rumours regarding plans to “close” the border had been denied by Department of Immigration officials, but the Detroit/Windsor, Toronto Airport, Buffalo/Fort Erie, and Lake Champlain (NY) border crossings were not reliable due to officials who “believe in the war”, “we are keeping the draft counsellors listed in Chapter 24 [of the Manual] informed of all new developments.”

TADP received financial support from a variety of sources. Donors included individuals, such as lawyers, professionals, rabbis, reverends, immigrants, and individual Canadians, and groups, including the Buffalo, New York, branch of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, Women Strike for Peace, the Queens College of the City University of New York Student Activities Financial Board, the United Methodist Church, the Friends Meeting of Washington, and the Windsor War Resisters.
As the largest of the anti-draft programs, the TADP eventually developed a minimal amount of bureaucracy to keep track of its activities and communications. A TADP counsellor form tracked first and repeat visits and phone calls and categorized them, American or non-American, priority or non-priority. This checklist approach may well have been introduced to deal with a high volume of queries in 1972-73, when the Department of Immigration introduced programs to fast-track visitors and illegal immigrants. A description of services from around 1971 shows that the TADP classified American immigrants to prioritize their being processed. The “middle-class draft dodger,” twenty to twenty-four years old, with wife or girlfriend, often with money, a car, and familial support in the United States, was the easiest to get landed. The “working-class draft dodger,” eighteen to twenty-one years old, with a high school diploma but few skills, not much money, and usually no prior counselling, often either returned south or was sent back for counselling and a more considered decision. Deserters, the “largest and most difficult group,” were mostly working-class, stereotyped by a negative perception of desertion, typically alienated from family, with little if any work experience or skills, sometimes no high school, and often no hope; some deserters, typically aged seventeen to twenty-one, were deported for breaking laws in Canada.

Other Toronto Anti-Draft Groups
The TADP was not the only anti-draft group in Toronto. In 1970, the Black Refugee Organization (BRO) formed to cater to the needs of black American immigrants. The BRO worked with the TADP; the TADP referred black American immigrants to the BRO. After 1970, further Toronto services to black resisters were provided by Ebony Social Services. Red White & Black (RWB), also formed in 1970, attempted to foster communication between Americans, Canadians, and the various anti-draft groups through its publication EXNET, which provided updates from anti-draft groups. A flyer titled simply “Red White & Black” stated the purposes and intentions of RWB: a free school, news bureau, drop-in centre, bulletin and news; fostering a sense of community among Canadians and American immigrants; and encouraging communication between anti-draft groups. Its offices, donated by the University of Toronto Students’ Administrative Council, contained its services and a drop-in centre. RWB successfully forged links with Toronto area groups, including churches. Around 1970,
RWB held a Vietnam War memorial service at Queen's Park; representatives from the Canadian Council of Churches, Anglicans, Mennonites, Catholics, Lutherans, the United Church, Presbyterians, Jews, Buddhists, and atheists attended. Music at the event was provided by “Munoz,” a deserter. In 1970, the TADP, Toronto American Deserters Committee (TADC), and RWB discussed merging into the Committee to Aid Refugees from Militarism (CARM). CARM eventually established itself in a community centre in a Toronto area with many immigrants.

**Nova Scotia Committee to Aid American War Objectors (NSCAAWO)**

Like other groups, the Nova Scotia Committee to Aid American War Objectors (NSCAAWO) was part of the pan-Canadian network, keeping regular contact with other aid groups. The Nova Scotia committee also kept copies of publications on file, and, like other groups, monitored border conditions in order to advise potential American immigrants. The Nova Scotia committee existed from 1966 until 1972, overlapping with the Halifax Committee to Aid War Resisters [sic]. Quaker and landed immigrant war resister Richard Lind was the main organizer, with assistance from Rev. Don McDougall, the Dalhousie University Chaplain. In 1971, both of the main NSCAAWO counsellors were students and landed immigrants.

The NSCAAWO kept in touch with other anti-draft groups, including the Winnipeg, Toronto, Vancouver, and Montreal committees and American exile organizations such as AMEX magazine. To facilitate counselling, the committee kept copies of government publications, lists of other anti-draft groups in Canada and their contact information, as well as some directories of American counselling centres, and made use of the MCAWR broadsheet and the Manual, as well as TADP fact sheets. The committee also played its role in keeping track of difficult border points and monitored the ongoing status of American immigrants. In 1971, the committee noted that more American immigrants were finding their own way through the system, but also anticipated more referrals from Toronto. The NSCAAWO maintained close ties with Nova Scotia church organizations and academics, who often offered temporary housing. It received its 1971 funding from the Canadian Council of Churches, the Halifax Friends Meeting, and individual donors. The NSCAAWO also maintained links with local student groups and international groups and organizations.
Dozens of other groups existed in various centres, at various times from 1966 to 1974. For instance, the Lakehead Committee to Aid American War Objectors formed in late 1969 or early 1970. The Winnipeg committee was likely established in 1970 and formally closed its operations on 17 April 1974. The Alexander Ross Society, based in Edmonton and founded in early 1968, published its “Notes on Immigrating to Canada” in March of 1970; the publication outlined the factors considered in the points system of assessment for immigrant status and provided information on sponsorship, nomination, and student status.

Black War Resisters
Some black draft dodgers came to Canada as well. One compared his situation to that of the slaves who came on the Underground Railroad. However, numbers remained low in proportion to the percentage of black military personnel. American scholars have examined the economic stratification among war resisters that divided deserters from others along class and racial lines. Renée Kasinsky, Frank Kusch, and historian David Sterling all argue that war resisters with “marginal” backgrounds were more often returned to the United States by border officials and immigration officers, and that black dodgers found immigration particularly difficult and wished to return because they could “go underground” more easily. This argument stands in stark contrast to the media’s explicit use of the term “underground railroad” during the 1960s and 1970s to describe the conduit for draft dodgers and deserters seeking to cross the border—a large part of the myth of Canada as a haven for war resisters. The beneficiaries of this “underground railroad” were, apparently, overwhelmingly white. As one black draft dodger told Kasinsky, “From where I was the tendency for the blacks was to go into the army because that was a way out ... It represents a way out for any poor person.”

In 1970, black war resisters in Toronto formed their own aid group, the Black Refugee Organization. They noted the Manual did not even mention a black community in Canada, and they saw a need for housing with black families and for counselling for blacks by blacks to make the experience less alienating. As one black war resister commented at the time, “There’s not much in the way of a concentrated black community, like in the big US cities. They’re just not organized here – they’re very un-together. And
a lot of American kids, the whites, are here for bullshit reasons – that makes it hard on the rest of us.”126 This resister may have been referring to a perceived lack of commitment to the cause of war resistance. Black resister groups formed in response to this lack of community and support. The BRO was explicitly conceived as having “no political thing in mind. Like, there’s no political objective or anything like that. Like, our main concern is the guy that is in trouble with the military. The organization itself is just to help black resisters [sic] and deserters.”127

Bill Spira estimated that 2 percent of resisters who contacted the TADP were black, which he put down to a combination of economic deprivation as a motivation for staying in the army and the availability of close-knit black communities in which to take refuge instead of emigrating.128 In 1970, black deserters told Race Relations Reporter of a “subtle anti-black bias” among Canadians and surmised that the reason for lower numbers of black war resisters was racism.129 The Vancouver Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends suspected racial discrimination at the border. In a June 1969 letter to Minister of Manpower and Immigration Allan MacEachen, the group described the hostile demeanour of an immigration officer towards a white war resister whose wife was black, both of whom had recently tried to immigrate. The letter was a follow-up to a face-to-face meeting that had occurred in May.130

**Women War Resisters**

Although many women were active in the anti-draft movement, the extent to which aid groups considered women war resisters is unclear. At least some anti-draft activists took note of the existence of women resisters. In early 1970, AMEX, the magazine of the Union of American Exiles in Toronto, reported the creation of a women war resisters group made up of wives of resisters.131 A women’s caucus meeting at the May-June 1970 Pan-Canadian Conference of US War Resisters was rated a success by AMEX; critical of the common assumption that they were in Canada only because their husbands or boyfriends were there, the women made a “non-proposal” to respect women war resisters as equal alongside their male counterparts.132 The October-November 1970 issue of AMEX contained a letter from Stephanie Durant berating the magazine for continuing to report that ANTITHESIS, the Montreal American Deserters Committee...
"We Help Them Because Their Need Is Great"

publication, was written by deserters, thereby excluding women from
their reportage. Generally, both the anti-draft movement of the period
and scholarship about American war resisters have neglected women war
resisters, treating them as either companions of men or ignoring them
completely.

Some women war resisters became part of the women’s movement in
Canada. Carolyn Egan recalls,

We came in August of 1969. I think in the Spring of 1970 I was walking
down Bloor Street and saw posters for a series of meetings being put
on by the Toronto Women’s Liberation Movement and I got involved in
that, and that was my first political involvement aside from my union ...
I started getting involved in meetings of the Toronto Women’s Liberation
Movement, which was a movement made up of women from the student
movement for the most part, some working women, who came from a
socialist perspective and had been active in the antiwar movement, and
one of the first things I got involved with was the Indo-Chinese women’s
conference, which the Toronto Voice of Women got involved with, and
other women’s groups.

It was primarily Canadian women who were involved in organizing
it, and it was very political, very anti-imperialist, and it was a very good
organization ... Quite a good group to get involved with. The Toronto
Women’s Liberation Movement saw itself as a socialist organization, and
the war was seen as an important part of our work.

Many of the women who came to Canada as war resisters probably found
their voice through the women’s movement. Only rarely did they find their
voices as women within the anti-draft movement. Voice of Women (VOW),
a pacifist organization that participated in anti-draft activism, did so as
only one part of their antiwar activity.

Exile Groups
Another type of group was the exile group. Exile groups existed in several
centres and were made up exclusively of American immigrants. They were
narrowly defined as self-identified exiles – that is, participants understood
themselves to be maintaining an American identity. For some of these
immigrants, while the act of immigrating was itself political, exiles had a
continuing political duty to continue to oppose the war. For others, the importance of exile groups was less about politics and more about recognizing that Americans in Canada should help each other. In general, exile groups either worked for assimilation of Americans into Canadian society (a minority viewpoint), or advocated a militant set of exile politics. This debate played out inside the groups and in the pages of exile publications such as AMEX. Tangled up with these ideas were contested notions of Canadian independence and colonial status as well as competing ideas of what types of actions and ideas could in fact be considered political.

The Toronto-based Union of New Canadians was founded by Mark Satin, an activist with the TADP and editor of the Manual for Draft-Age Immigrants to Canada, and others in May 1967. As its name indicates, the Union of New Canadians was oriented toward assimilation. The group sought to maintain a decentralized structure, with a meeting chairman, a secretary to keep notes, and an editor for a publication, the New Canadian. A later formation, the Toronto-based Union of American Exiles (UAЕ), was formed some time before February 1969. Their initial goal was also the acclimatization of Americans into Canadian society. A UAE flyer explicitly called for Canadians to offer housing to draft dodgers and Americans to help with acclimatization. Another flyer invited Americans “in social exile” to drop by a table with a UAE banner to get help with “employment, housing, and social contact.” Eventually, the Union of American Exiles and its magazine, AMEX, clarified their political position to the effect that they advocated for exiles to continue to actively oppose the war. The pages of AMEX make the transition clear.

Another major group of this type was the Regina Committee of American Desperers (RCAD). Formed in 1969, it was likely the result of mergers of earlier, looser efforts. RCAD was founded by Dick Perrin, who worked with a variety of individuals and organizations to make the group effective. RCAD was a practically oriented group, working to support deserters, proposing the establishment of a farm with support from the other Regina-based aid group, and actively helping American immigrants who were seeking assistance, sometimes by interacting with their family members. The group’s appearances in the local media drew donations and other support.

The Toronto American Deserters Committee (TADC), formed in December of 1969, was an example of an exile group whose orientation
focused on the supposedly inherently radical nature of desertion and the need to maintain the deserter (and ergo American) identity as means of opposing imperialism. The TADC’s stated goals were to house and feed deserters or draft resisters until they could become landed immigrants; to provide facilities for socializing; and to provide personal counselling, including medical and psychiatric care. The TADC believed not only that deserters were a special group with special needs but also that the act of desertion, as opposed to draft dodging, was inherently radical, as this excerpt from a TADC flyer illustrates:

Failing to understand the sequence of events involved in the act of desertion is to have failed to comprehend the act itself and the effect desertion has on the future of the individual and the society in which he will assume a role.

A breakdown in the understanding of Desertion as a total life commitment [sic] comes precisely at this point. This breakdown is revealed in a common misconception of people involved in aid work and those people who should be involved but are not because of a failure to understand the commitment required and the application of energy and resources necessary to fulfill the needs demanded by the act of Desertion and its newfound relationship to the world community.

This failure has derived from aid persons and groups recognizing their role, at this point, as being only one of:

1. finding immediate shelter, food and a means of self-support;
2. immigrating the individual as soon as possible;
3. help in finding a job, educational opportunities, etc.;
4. opposing discriminatory practices of the country into which the Deserter has sought safety.

They are essential; but to stop here could, in fact destroy all that of value which has been accomplished thus far.

Thus, for the American Deserters Committee, the traditional role of aid groups such as the TADC fell short. The committee outlined further needs that could be fulfilled, including psychological counselling and transition measures that must embrace the act of desertion, not merely treat deserters
like any other immigrants. Implicit in their outlook was the assumption that deserters would maintain their identity as a deserter, and thus that they needed to be connected with deserters-oriented community work, the form of which was not specified. Of course, the other implicit identity to be maintained was American. This identity played into debates about assimilation and later about the fight to win an amnesty from the US government after 1973.

Another example of this type of exile group was the Yankee Refugee group, based in British Columbia, which established an American Deserters Committee Program in 1969. The program took partial credit for MacEachen’s admission of discrimination at the border and the internal directive to bar deserters in what the group referred to as his “early June” announcement. The success had been a result of movement activity, not benevolence on the part of government, the group argued in its newsletter. Melody Killian, a Yankee Refugee organizer, had been pessimistic about the possibility of success of the campaign and even went so far as to attempt to find ways to ship deserters to Sweden. While MacEachen had indeed admitted to the policy of discrimination at the border, his policy reversal took place in May, not June. The inaccuracy of the Yankee Refugee group’s knowledge of the campaign timeline and the evidence of animosity between, at least, Killian and members of both the VCAAWO and the TADP, cast doubt on their active involvement in the campaign.

The group asserted that summer 1969 did not mark the end of the “deserter crisis,” a reference to the border difficulties addressed by MacEachen’s 22 May policy announcement, and urged readers to apply class analysis to the issue. They were drawing attention to the ongoing issues deserters in particular were having with amassing the necessary employment and education points to get landed status. In the meantime, the Vancouver American Deserters Committee (ADC) Program was committed to several ongoing tasks, with a particular radical twist to each: aiding all deserters, including providing underground sanctuary; fighting repression, including RCMP harassment; making propaganda, armed with which draftees could enter the military and disrupt from within; organizing American immigrants within Canada because “deserters are the most radically conscious”; supporting Canadian and Quebec struggles for “self-determination and socialism”; fighting “American chauvinism in ourselves”;
and being active as revolutionaries. The group expected that getting Canadians involved in these activities would “radicalize” them as well.146

The exile groups did, of course, undertake helpful concrete and substantial actions to support American immigrants. The Vancouver ADC, for instance, ran two hostels.147 The Vancouver and Montreal deserter groups published newsletters. The Montreal group had an informal division of labour with the MCAWR, whereby the ADC helped deserters and the MCAWR helped draft dodgers. Over six months in 1969 and 1970, the Montreal ADC claimed to have helped around five hundred deserters and estimated a further 1,200 would be helped by the end of 1970. The Montreal ADC also operated a hostel and participated in public meetings and demonstrations.148 A deserter committee also existed in Ottawa.149

The Anti-Draft Movement: Transnational, Pan-Canadian
Throughout the period during which Americans required their assistance, the Canadian anti-draft groups forged and maintained a domestic network of communication among themselves and with the resisters. These connections included communication and interaction between the Canadian anti-draft movement and similar groups and activists in the United States, and with disparate Canadian groups and individuals including lawyers, churches, and the Voice of Women.

Groups in the United States provided assistance in distributing materials and information. In Canada, lawyers and intellectuals, MPs, and especially church groups were instrumental in helping the war resister network pave the way for immigration. Until the churches got really invested in the cause, funding was a significant obstacle for the network. The actions of these external groups and individuals shaped, in turn, the perceptions held by war resisters of Canadian society and the Canadian anti-draft movement.