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Global Mobility, Local Stasis: Refugees, the State, and the Struggle for Citizenship at Airports in Late Twentieth Century Canada

In September 1965, 20 year-old British national Elspeth Ann Whitley arrived at Toronto's Malton International Airport after a flight from London. She was met at the airport by a group of photographers, a Mountie escort, the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, and unexpectedly, Prime Minister Lester B. Pearson, who happened to be travelling out of the city that day and spent a few minutes chatting with her. Whitley got all this attention because she was Canada's 100,000th immigrant that year, having applied and been accepted at a Canadian embassy in England a few weeks earlier.[1]

Two decades later, on January 1, 1989, a 22 year old Indian male named Chhinder Paul arrived at Montreal-Mirabel International Airport. He was met at the airport not by an excited crowd of VIPs, but by an immigration officer who took him aside for questioning. Paul informed the officer that he was a refugee who feared for his safety in India and asked to stay in Canada. He was detained and his case referred to a two-person adjudication panel, which met a couple days later and ruled that he was not a genuine refugee. Paul was ordered deported within 72 hours, one of the first to have been removed from the country under Canada's tougher, more streamlined refugee system introduced at the beginning of that year.[2]

Whitley's arrival was anticipated because she had applied for landed immigrant status outside the country at a Canadian embassy, following existing legal procedures in which people

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[1] *The Globe and Mail*, September 30, 1965, 5.
[2] *The Globe and Mail*, January 7, 1989, A1.

were required to file a claim abroad. Conversely, Paul's arrival was unexpected but likely not surprising, given that his decision to board a plane and request admittance at a Canadian airport had followed that of hundreds of thousands of other foreign nationals who employed the same strategy with varying degrees of success during the 1970s and 1980s.

These two contrasting stories help frame a period in which the act of migrating and filing a claim to enter Canada increasingly went through airports as jet travel shrunk the world and became the principal means of global movement by the late 1960s. Not all migrant experiences were of course created equal, something that the period between the late 1960s and late 1980s, especially helps to illustrate in the context of late twentieth century Canada. While British nationals like Whitley received a warm reception at the airport and little resistance from the state in desiring to enter Canada, hundreds of thousands of others like Paul from the non-West global south stepped off jets in the 1970s and 1980s and confronted the power of the nation-state and its self-professed right to deny admittance to its territorial space.[3] Their respective experiences confirm a paradox of sorts that my talk today will discuss: while jet travel rendered Canada more accessible to different areas of the global south and undeniably presented new possibilities for migrant mobility, airports, through the manifestations of sovereign power that came to map and organize these environments, could still just as easily curtail individual mobilities and produce local stasis.

In this paper, I want to explore how with the advent and maturation of jet travel Canada's major international airports became key contested sites at which the struggle for citizenship was increasingly enacted between the Canadian state and many individual claimants in the late

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[3] The emergence of a border enforcement regime in Canada dates back to the early twentieth century. See Kornel S. Chang, *Pacific Connections : The Making of the U.S.-Canadian Borderlands* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012).

twentieth century. To frame and animate this struggle, I focus on the federal government's disciplinary efforts to more forcefully control the mobility of bodies at the airport, paying special attention to how these measures disproportionately impacted people from the global south who arrived at Toronto International Airport and Montreal's two international airport during the 1970s and 1980s and were subsequently detained and deported in significant numbers.

In seeking to reinforce control over its borders and protect national priorities in an age when more people were on the move than ever before, the Canadian state employed practices that blurred legal boundaries to control, assess and ban persons, predominantly from the global south, who it did not consider legitimate visitors. Its actions marked an effort to reassert national prerogatives in an age when global developments were unsettling historical methods of managing immigration and refugee selection. The federal government's determination to wield its sovereign power against arriving travellers, and the broader circumstances underpinning it, helps to illuminate the ways in which major international airports were reshaped as flashpoints for conflict between national interests and imaginaries and changing transport and mobility possibilities and patterns on a global scale.

The increasing ubiquity of jet travel, and its importance to the migrant journey, soon intersected with new internal and external developments to bring the global south squarely into national conversations about immigration and citizenship. Air travel in the jet age had replaced steamship travel as the primary mode of transatlantic migration by the mid-1960s, leading Halifax's Pier 21, the busiest national port for immigrant arrivals, to shut down in 1971.[4] Moreover, in 1967 the federal government introduced revisions to the Immigration Act,

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[4] Trudy Duivenvoorden Mitic and J.P. Leblanc, *Pier 21 : The Gateway That Changed Canada* (Halifax, N.S.: Nimbus Pub., 2011).

highlighted by a new points system, that were designed to make the process fairer and more equitable and eliminate racially discriminatory language from the Act that had traditionally favoured people from Europe over other areas of the world.[5]

More changes to the country's immigration laws followed, particularly regarding refugees. In 1969, Canada signaled its commitment to admit refugees under international law by signing the UN Geneva Convention on Refugees. This obligated Canada to accept persons who showed up at a Canadian embassy around the world and could convincingly prove that they were genuine refugees who had a reasonable fear of persecution if they returned to their country of origin. In 1976, further revisions to the national Immigration Act cemented Canada's obligation to the Geneva Convention by creating a designated immigrant class for humanitarian refugees, giving Canada the power to select persons abroad who qualified as refugees on "humanitarian" grounds.[6]

In writing refugees into the 1976 Act, the Canadian government signalled a desire to continue its historical immigration policy of off-shore selection, which had meant picking people for resettlement and citizenship at its embassies worldwide. The emphasis was on choosing worthy persons for Canada, not the other way around. Yet the technological advances of the jet age profoundly unsettled this historical arrangement, creating a new global transport geography characterized by accelerated flows of bodies across time and space. As airlines sought to expand their services worldwide, a new global order based on hypermobility, as sociologist John Urry

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[5] Ninette Kelley and Michael Trebilcock, *The Making of the Mosaic : A History of Canadian Immigration Policy* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010), 357.
[6] Howard Adelman, "Canadian Refugee Policy in the Postwar Period" in Adelman, ed., *Refugee Policy : Canada and the United States* (Staten Island, N.Y.: Center for Migration Studies of New York, 1991), 200-01.

and others have observed, was created, one which was rooted in international airports that functioned as global transit points, capturing and linking more populations and places.[7]

This is not to suggest that a new hypermobile global order was a completely inclusive one; for a variety of reasons, it was not. It is also problematic to suggest that the majority of global refugees, of which there were millions in the 1970s and 1980s, were able to use air travel to geographically relocate. In fact, most did not have that luxury and experienced far more localized resettlements, if that, as a result. Nevertheless, jet transport was available for those who could get to an airport, possess identity documents, and pay for a plane ticket. Therefore, the jet age is relevant to discussions about the relationship between citizenship, mobility, and the global south in late twentieth century Canada because air travel reoriented Canada's geographic position, negating the remoteness that had historically made it an unconventional country of asylum for people outside of the United States. More specifically, then, jets made it much easier for some migrants to bypass and circumvent traditional Canadian immigration controls that were based off-shore at embassies. In the process, this fundamentally changed where claims of citizenship could be made and altered the calculus by which the state assessed individual claimants and policed points of entry. By extension, the terrain of the airport, as the processing point for jet travel, was marked and reshaped as an active and unstable border where negotiations over citizenship played out between the state and the petitioning individual.

As Canada's busiest airports in Toronto, Montreal, and to a lesser extent Vancouver received and processed more bodies, the state started to pay greater attention to managing and regulating mobility in these environments beginning in the late 1960s. Alongside worries that

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[7] John Urry, "Flying Around", in Urry, *Mobilities* (Cambridge: Polity, 2007), 135-56.

existing facilities could not handle the bigger jumbo jets that would soon be introduced to commercial air travel, the government was moved to act by the rising number of persons eligible for admittance under the 1967 Immigration Act and able to legally file a claim for landed immigrant status at a point of entry because of a clause in the act.[8] The sheer number of people who chose to do this, particularly from the global south, led the government to reverse its decision to allow claims at points of entry in 1972 and bar appeals to deportation orders, an early indication of how national laws defining immigration were rewritten, and specifically restricted, with new global mobility patterns in mind. By this time, 13,000 people had applied for landed immigrant status under the provision and were awaiting hearings in the country's backlogged appeal system, forcing the government to issue a general amnesty to this group. This did not count the thousands, numbering in the thousands, who were deported between 1967 and 1972 after exhausting their appeals.[9]

Witnessing the immigration backlog build-up and speculating on its causes, the Toronto Star blamed freer movement for weakening the state's control both over immigration selection and border control. One editorial stated, "Prime Minister Trudeau prides his government as one that toughly defends the country's security. Yet its immigration practices are so lax that Canada's borders are like a collapsed seawall over which flows flotsam and jetsam from all over the world…Why should those immigrants who can afford to fly here on a gamble get special appeals when their compatriots who apply at the Canadian embassy get no recourse from rejection except to apply again later?…Canada is the only country that lets visitors jump the immigration queue."[10] This argument would continue to be repeated in various public

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[8] Adelman, "Canadian Refugee Policy in the Postwar Period", 199.
[9] *The Globe and Mail*, June 23, 1972, 1.
[10] *Toronto Star*, October 24, 1972, 6.

conversations about the integrity of the nation's immigration and refugee system over the course of the next two decades.

As more bodies took to the skies in the early jet age, the federal government concentrated more heavily on implementing a newly sophisticated border regime at airports. In an effort to streamline the flows of arrivals, it introduced a new passenger inspection system at its busiest airports in the early 1970s that in basic terms sought to swiftly sort and categorize persons based on their relationship to risk, creating Primary and Secondary Inspection lines; the lower the risk, the faster the admittance.[11] Immigration officials were the arbiters of this exchange and their decisions were conditioned by the dual and competing pressures of speeding up passenger flows and protecting national security. In practice, attaining this balance oftentimes proved elusive, especially during particularly busy periods involving multiple arriving flights, leaving officials to make heavy-handed, questionable sorting decisions that were sometimes deeply racialized. Aware that some flights from the Caribbean contained people who would make a claim upon arrival, officers sometimes referred every person on particular routes for secondary inspection in the early 1970s, an embarrassment to the Immigration Department and clear indication that some officials defined a risky passenger in racial terms.[12]

The role of race in the border screening process continued to dog airport officials throughout the 1970s and 1980s. In 1979, a government-appointed study was initiated following a rash of complaints, over 100 in total, lodged with the Canadian Human Rights Commission

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[11] Letter from D.P. Hall, Immigration Official, to Gordon Watts, Co-ordinator of Inspectional Services, Customs and Excise Operations, November 12, 1974. Library and Archives Canada. RG-76, Series B-1-c, Volume 1033, File No. 50003-1-238, Volume 3, Immigration Administration – Ports and Posts – Toronto International Airport.
[12] Letter from Officer-in-Charge, Canada Immigration Centre, to Gordon Watts, Coordinator of Inspectional Services, October 1, 1971. Library and Archives Canada. RG-76, Series B-1-c, Volume 1033, File No. 50003-1-238, Volume 2, Immigration Administration – Ports and Posts – Toronto International Airport.

that alleged racial discrimination by immigration officials at Toronto, Montreal-Dorval, and Vancouver Airports.[13] Immigration officers, for their part, dismissed outright racism on the job, but acknowledged that they did engage in profiling. Denying it was racism, they argued profiling helped them to distinguish truth from fiction and rapidly sort bodies in an environment where they were overworked, understaffed, and under pressure. As one official said, "sure, prejudice could influence our decision, but we're told to be impartial and objective…There are certain attitudes you have towards certain types of people, though. You ask a West Indian girl whether she supports her mother and father. Does she have children? You wouldn't automatically ask an unmarried English girl if she has children. I suppose that's a type of racism."[14] Another concurred with this assessment, affirming "and you do become suspicious of certain kinds of people because you keep hearing the same ones over and over again. You can't help working by stereotypes a bit, because the stereotypes are there, every night."[15]

At the same time, the stereotyping and profiling that shaped the border screening process could work the other way too, rendering some people more mobile and freer in the airport. Mobility historian Tim Creswell has argued that the workings of global capitalism prioritize the movement of those with power and capital, or what other scholars have termed "the kinetic elite".[16] At airports in 1970s and 1980s Canada, this process regularly played out, although a particularly instructive example is a time when it did not. In 1973, Peter Dowding, a businessman who worked in and represented a company based out of Argentina, lodged a complaint against Canadian officials for what he believed was an unnecessarily lengthy

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[13] *The Globe and Mail*, September 21, 1979, 1-2.
[14] *The Globe and Mail*, July 31, 1975, 4.
[15] *The Globe and Mail*, August 13, 1975, 4.
[16] Tim Cresswell, *On the Move : Mobility in the Modern Western World* (New York: Routledge, 2006). See also Jana Costas, "Problematizing Mobility: A Metaphor of Stickiness, Non-Places and the Kinetic Elite", *Organization Studies* 34(10), 1467-1485.

examination. Having been detained for about 15 minutes because of an employment visa mix-up, he harassed nearby officials and was described in an incident report as having a "condescending and hostile attitude" during his own examination. While Dowding was quickly admitted after the matter was cleared up, he was left hurt and upset, declaring that "I would much rather have applied for a visa before going to Canada, and been admitted immediately, then suffer the humiliation that I did at Vancouver Airport."[17] In saying this, he betrayed a presumption that despite the absence of a visa his economic status still granted him preferential entry at the border.

Some Canadians shared Dowding's belief that mobility should be predicated on one's relationship to capital and power. Arthur Earle of Niagara-on-the-Lake contended that "perhaps the most absurd aspect of the Toronto system is to throw all passengers…into the same clearance halls. The result of this is that the poor businessman returning from a visit of a few hours to Detroit or Chicago finds himself standing behind lines of returning holiday makers and immigrants who present much more complex immigration and customs problems than he does."[18] Others, meanwhile, suggested a relational element between mobility and citizenship. J.H. Govan of Pickering revealed that "I am frequently asked what was the purpose of my trip. It is none of the government's business for what reason I leave the country and return if I am a Canadian citizen. If I were a foreigner coming into the country the question would be valid. But for a Canadian coming home it is senseless."[19] In expressing these sentiments, individuals like Earle and Govan endorsed a border screening process that prioritized and concentrated on policing risk. In doing so, however, they ascribed riskiness and suspect behaviour and motivation

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[17] Letter from R.J. Curry, International Airport Specialist, to E.W. Galbraith, Facilitation Manager, CP Air, May 22, 1973. Library and Archives Canada. RG76, Series B-1-c, Volume 1034, File No. 5003-1-374, Part 1, Immigration Administration – Ports and Posts – Vancouver International Airport (1967-1975).
[18] *The Globe and Mail*, November 13, 1982, T7.
[19] *The Globe and Mail*, November 6, 1982, T6.

disproportionately to immigrants and individuals who lacked status and wealth, which in turn reinforced the stereotyping and profiling that already had come to characterize the screening process at airports.

For many arrivals from the global south, the border screening process at airports played out much differently than it did for Peter Dowding, an experience ironically shaped by the relative freedom of movement that jet travel afforded them. This was especially the case for refugees. By the mid-1970s, refugees had become the focus of the Canadian state because of their legal right, under both the UN Convention and Canada's Immigration Act to make a claim in Canada. If they made a claim and were deemed eligible, they were admitted. If they were determined ineligible, they entered a different stream that gave them the right to appeal that sometimes brought their temporary detention.

The process of detention and the experience of detainees can be particularly instructive for considering how the state relied on different forms of power to condition and restrict individual mobilities in spaces at and around airports. It also sheds light on how government refined historical practices of enforcement in using citizenship and identity documents like passports as tools to govern populations and individuals, and differentiate and remove non-citizens from the body politic.[20] In particular, hotels adjacent to major airports were vital components of this governance project, housing detainees who were ascribed as the riskiest refugee cases in the appeal stream under questionable legal and moral circumstances.

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[20] John C. Torpey, *The Invention of the Passport : Surveillance, Citizenship, and the State* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000). On the history of the passport and citizenship in the Canadian context, see Radhika Viyas Mongia, "Race, Nationality, Mobility: A History of the Passport", *Public Culture* 11(3), 527-556.

Beginning in the mid-1970s, the Department of Immigration formally took out leases on hotels in Montreal and Toronto to use for detaining airport arrivals after previously housing them in jails until public concerns about putting non-criminals with criminals caused them to reconsider. In Toronto, the government rented out two floors of a wing in the Avion Hotel, numbering about twenty rooms in total. The state justified the lease on this and other hotels in Montreal and the detention of individuals in these spaces by claiming that they were either threats to public safety or unlikely to appear at their appeal hearing and sought to downplay any comparisons that these hotels were basically substitutes for city jails.[21]

Yet the leased space at the Avion operated as an experience of incarceration than anything else. The detention wing was cordoned off from the rest of the hotel, and the windows of its rooms were barred from the outside. Security guards were hired to police the wing and were stationed at its entrance, and eligible visitors, which included only the detainee's lawyers and family, had to sign in. People detained more than 48 hours had their status reviewed by an adjudicator, a process that was then repeated every seven days. Airlines that transported detainees into the country had to pay their costs, which amounted to approximately $60 per day in 1975 dollars including room, food, and security labour.[22] Summing up the Avion, one lawyer called it "a Kafka-esque place like a little, lost part of the world".[23]

Concerns were soon raised about the living conditions and restrictions imposed on the movement of detainees. One of the more notable cases occurred in 1981, when 100 Sikh men were detained at the hotel as likely flight risks after officials disputed their refugee claim at the airport following their arrival from India. After more than two weeks in detention, the vast

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[21] *Toronto Star*, April 25, 1974, A1, A6.
[22] *The Globe and Mail*, August 12, 1975, 4.
[23] *The Globe and Mail*, May 10, 1984, L5.

majority started a hunger strike to protest and highlight squalid conditions at the hotel, claiming that they were subjected to verbal and physical abuse from the security guards and significant overcrowding in single rooms. The strike lasted eight days and failed to produce any sustained changes, but does constitute how some people tried to actively subvert state power.[24]

More efforts to paint the Avion experience as carceral in nature occurred as the 1980s progressed. In a 1985 report, the Toronto Refugee Affairs Council criticized conditions in detention centres both at the Toronto airport and at the Avion, concluding its findings were "more than sufficient to warrant a serious independent review into the conditions of detention in order to establish standards appropriate to Canada's best traditions." The report focused on 15 Iranian refugees, alleging that they experienced discrimination and ill-treatment at the hands of immigration officials and hotel security guards. In particular, at the Avion they were denied the mandatory daily hour of fresh air under UN standards, getting only a half hour walk in the fenced-in back parking lot. They also were detained several to a room, again in violation of the UN regulations. The report also highlighted the behaviour of security guards, describing it as "hostile" and aggressive", noting that detainees were threatened with transfer to a city jail if they broke the rules, and suggesting that they lacked the sensitivity to handle detention because their firm primarily had experience guarding factories and warehouses.[25]

Evidence of troubling conditions at the Avion intersected with growing concerns that the state was violating the individual rights of detainees in other ways. In particular, in February 1985 the RCMP allegedly questioned more than a dozen Iranians who had claimed refugee status in detention rooms at the Avion without the presence of Immigration officials or lawyers and

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[24] *Toronto Star*, August 13, 1981, A18.
[25] *The Globe and Mail*, February 15, 1985, 1-2.

without informing the detainees of their right to counsel. Those questioned claimed that they were "grilled" about their political affiliations and activities and also photographed and fingerprinted. Immigration lawyers accused the RCMP of subverting the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, but it defended its actions on the basis that Iranians were non-citizens and not subject to the Charter. Inspector T.J. Wylie, an RCMP representative, argued that "it's an individual judgment [of an officer] based on what the interview is about...[and they are] not Canadian citizens, so I don't think it [the Charter of Rights] applies here."[26]

This statement is significant because it suggests that certain representatives of the state justified the denial of basic rights to detained persons on the basis of their status as non-Canadians. Yet this logic conveniently ignored their basic human rights under both under international and Canadian law, framing their in-limbo status as reason to deny them, to use Giorgio Agamben's phrase, the right to have rights. Taking Agamben's argument further, it is therefore possible to see airport hotels detention centres like the Avion as zones of exclusion where detainees were in but not of Canada, and where they confronted and experienced sovereign power in extra-legal and quasi-judicial forms.[27] Airport hotels thus constituted an extension of the deterritorialized airport border and the enforcement regime that policed it, serving as a space that formally denied detainees entry to Canada, and its refugee appeals process, from within its territorial space, thereby constructing a particularly and subjectively elastic border in this case.[28]

By the end of the Avion Hotel's lease in 1985, it had housed a large number of detainees at considerable cost. Determining the exact number of detainees is impossible, but some figures

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[26] *The Globe and Mail*, February 20, 1985, M2.
[27] Giorgio Agamben, *State of Exception* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005).
[28] Kim Rygiel, *Globalizing Citizenship* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2010), 105-08.

help shed light on its vital role within the larger border enforcement regime present at the airport. In 1982, an average of seven to ten people were sent to the hotel by officials each night, reaching approximately 2,400 that year, all of whom spent varying degrees of time there ranging from overnight to several weeks or months.[29] In 1983, Air Canada the country's biggest air carrier, spent about $850,000 to accommodate 1,200 detained passengers, mostly in Toronto.[30] At this time, the average length of stay at the Avion was about eleven days, but at the end of January 1985, four had been detained for more than six months, nine from three to six months, 17 between one and three months, and 18 less than a month.[31]

These numbers reflected a dramatic spike in refugee claims in Canada during the 1980s, numbers that rose right through the end of the decade with the majority of migrants arriving from the global south. Between May 1 and August 22, 1983, 1257 people claimed refugee status at Montreal-Mirabel alone, with claimants coming primarily from Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Iran, Iraq, and Afghanistan. 8,400 claims were made in 1985, over 18,000 in 1986, and 6,120 in just the first six weeks of 1987.[32] By the end of 1988, the total refugee backlog stood at over 80,000.[33] The number of claims in the appeals pipeline completely overwhelmed the country's refugee appeal system, polarized public opinion and attitudes towards refugees and the national immigration program more generally.

Tensions specifically arose over the number of so-called 'bogus' refugees who were disembarking at airports without legal documents that they had destroyed or eaten in mid-flight and filing claims that the government refused to consider as genuine, seeing them as economic

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[29] *Toronto Star*, August 9, 1982, A15.
[30] *The Globe and Mail*, May 10, 1984, L5.
[31] *The Globe and Mail*, February 15, 1985, 1-2.
[32] Victor Malarek, *Haven's Gate : Canada's Immigration Fiasco* (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1987), 104.
[33] *The Globe and Mail*, December 29, 1988, A1.

migrants motivated by the prospect of financial betterment. As the number of designated illegal refugees grew, national media outlets also fanned the flames of societal discontent. The Globe and Mail even recommended the introduction of a universal visitor visa on travellers in defense of the self-selective national immigration and refugee policy. It declared that "Canada already has visas on 98 countries, but waits for each new turn of the refugee roulette wheel to extend the list. This incremental advance toward a universal visa means that thousands more phonies may establish a foothold here. Why not move immediately to a universal visa – with exemptions for the United States, Japan, Australia and most of Western Europe?...Rather than waste manpower resources in belated efforts to send counterfeit claimants home, Ottawa should adopt a timely measure that would keep them from reaching our shores in the first place."[34]

Some government officials, while not endorsing something so draconian and regressive, tacitly agreed that Canada's right to determine citizenship on its terms was paramount. As Mike Mulcahy, immigration officer, said "I think it comes down to, who's in charge? Is Canada going to be in charge of its borders? Or is any Tom, Dick, and Harry that can buy the plane fare or the bus fare going to be in charge of the borders? And I happen to think we should be in charge."[35] In some respects, this debate boiled down to anxieties about a perceived vanishing sovereignty over borders and about controlling the pace at which the Canadian national community evolved in an era when multiculturalism had officially become public policy and immigration from the global south was increasing. As the host of an AM radio talk show in Montreal put it, "there's a mistaken assumption in the media that most people feel compassion for these refugees. Well, I can tell you that's not the way people feel."[36] There were, however, others who saw the refugee

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[34] *The Globe and Mail*, June 18, 1987, A6.
[35] "Who Gets In?", dir. Barry Greenwald, 1989. National Film Board of Canada.
[36] Malarek, *Haven's Gate*, 74.

question not as a time for xenophobia to run wild, but as an opportunity to reconsider national procedures and policies in a globalizing world that offered some refugees new movement opportunities. To quote Victor Malarek, immigration reporter for the Globe and Mail, "[Traditionally] Canada has been afforded the luxury of being able to sit back and play its international and humanitarian commitment to refugees from behind a desk, selecting who it wants and how many it wants. However, in the past five years, those once seemingly insurmountable barriers are being easily circumvented by the sheer doggedness and increasing sophistication of refugees."[37]

In response to the wave of new refugee claims, between 1985 and 1989 the federal government used the pretext of an invasion of bogus refugees in Canada to propose a series of measures aimed at thickening the border by further impeding refugee rights and mobility. As sociologist Anna Pratt has argued, this marked the culmination of efforts by the Liberal and Progressive Conservative governments during the 1980s to concentrate more on criminalizing and barring so-called risky individuals instead of admitting at-risk ones in accordance with international humanitarian obligations.[38] The most visible manifestation of this strategy were two bills introduced in 1987 by the Mulroney government as intended amendments to the Immigration Act to legalize further disciplinary force against refugees. Among other things, the proposed bills, C-84 and C-55, sanctioned indefinite detention if one's identity was in question, and delegated officials the power to detain individuals for seven days, instead of the previous 48 hours, before a hearing, and then up to 21 more days without a follow-up hearing. In an effort to crack down on lost and phony documents, it also asked air carriers to take on new

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[37] *The Globe and Mail*, December 19, 1984, M1.
[38] Anna Pratt, *Securing Borders : Detention and Deportation in Canada* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2005).

responsibilities of border enforcement, requiring that they collect traveller passports before the trip and hand them over to immigration officials upon arrival, and increased fines for carrying undocumented passengers from $1,000 to $5,000.[39]

And as if anticipating the increasing number of refugees it expected to detain under this legislation, Benoit Bouchard, the Minister of Employment and Immigration, also briefly toyed with the idea of constructing a new giant refugee detention centre somewhere between Toronto and Montreal in 1987 before shelving the plan because of public outcry. The centre was to be made up of prefabricated housing units capable of holding up to 2,500 people for up to 28 days.[40] The government eventually tinkered with its measures in the two proposed bills, in the end introducing a new refugee appeals system in 1989 that sped up the process by which citizenship was evaluated at the airport, giving officials the power to deport individuals with rejected claims within 72 hours of their arrival, and making an appeal of a rejected claim more difficult from inside the country. As mentioned earlier, Chhinder Paul was one of the first to be subjected to this system.

The proposed and enacted revisions to the appeals system in the late 1980s represented the culmination of efforts by the Canadian state to complicate the process by which refugees could file claims inside Canada. Taken as a whole, they constituted a national response that gestured to and sought to contest the shifting realities of contemporary globalization by nullifying jet travel's dramatic reshaping of mobility possibilities. By seeking to reassert sovereign control over global mobility within Canadian territorial borders, the state tried to recast the logics guiding how and where government officials determined which bodies got to be

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[39] Government of Canada, Bill C-84 and C-55, Backgrounders C-E. City of Toronto Archives, Series 39, File 228, Refugee and Immigration Committee, 1989; *The Globe and Mail*, August 19, 1987, A8.
[40] *The Globe and Mail*, August 17, 1987, A1-2.

Canadian. In so doing, by emphasizing rapid deportation and limited appeals it also worked to reorient discussions and politics of citizenship away from the airport as much as possible, a struggle that had been waged there with increasing frequency and intensity since the late 1960s. Because of the new possibilities for mobility offered by the jet age, then, and with a world increasingly on the move because of shifting geopolitical realities, Canada's busiest international airports came to be reshaped and mapped by the intersections of sovereignty, citizenship, mobility, and transport during the particularly turbulent decades of the 1970s and 1980s.