

# Canadian Security Intelligence Service Records Acquired by the National Archives of Canada

by J.W. O'Brien

In 1982 the National Archives and the then Security Service of the RCMP agreed to plan for the regular disposal of the records of the Security Service and for the transfer to the Archives of those records which had permanent value as archives. The Archives was concerned that security and intelligence records of long-term research value were preserved. The first disposal "schedule", or timetable, on files relating to individuals, was approved by the National Archivist in early 1983. A similar disposal schedule for files on organizations was approved in 1989, and work will continue until all of the records of CSIS are covered by such retention and disposal authorities. In addition to the scheduling plan, attention was focused by a variety of interest groups on the records of the Security Service which were surplus to the mandate of the new agency, CSIS.

As a result of these efforts, in January 1990, the National Archives accepted the transfer of 512 boxes of archival records from CSIS. To mark the importance of the event, the records were turned over in a ceremony attended by the National Archivist, the Director, CSIS, and other senior officials of the two institutions.

The records themselves, dating from 1919 to 1988, in Record Group 146, include central registry files created at headquarters and in the various divisions and detachments of the Security Service of the RCMP, and inherited and maintained by its successor. The files contain correspondence, memoranda, reports, briefs, clippings and other printed material related to individuals and organizations involved in the labour movement including protests, demonstrations and strikes in Canada. Similar records document separatist terrorist activity and infiltration into various sections of Canadian society. Also included is a small group of headquarters administrative files containing mainly reports, briefs and papers on various aspects of labour activity in Canada.

Access to this classified and sensitive information is in accordance with the provision of the *Access to Information Act* and the *Privacy Act*. It is important to point out that the access status of these records has not changed as a result of their transfer to the National Archives. By agreement with CSIS, and in accordance with government policy, the Archives consults with CSIS concerning the

accessibility of all requested records. CSIS has no further use for these records and, in fact, could not retain some of them as they fall outside the current mandate of that agency. With this and future transfers, the Archives has ensured the preservation of historically valuable records. Researchers should be aware, however, that due to the classified nature of these records and the finding aids to them, much of the information will be unavailable for research for a considerable period of time.

The National Archives takes considerable satisfaction from its eight-year effort aimed at the acquisition and preservation of these records. Given their value, their protection is an important contribution to future historical scholarship in Canada.

## Montreal to Host the 1995 International Congress of Historical Sciences

At their August 1990 general assembly in Madrid, the International Congress of Historical Sciences (IHS) accepted Canada's invitation to host their next congress in Montreal in 1995. The 1995 congress will bring together 3,000-4,000 historians from all over the world. The IHS was looking to hold its next congress outside Europe and chose Montreal over the competing application of Tokyo. The CHA wishes to thank Claire Dolan who served as the society's representative to the IHS and who assembled the application to host the conference. She was assisted by Brian Young who will succeed her as the CHA representative to the IHS for a five year term. A local organization committee will be struck shortly by the CHA in consultation with the Institut d'histoire de l'Amérique française.



## Grants and Scholarships

The Canadian Northern Studies Trust announces its **Special Awards for Northern Residents** to permit individuals with broad northern experience to devote a period of study to academic fields related to their concerns. The Trust also offers **Studentships in Northern Studies**, normally valued at \$10,000 each, to support students engaged in a research project with special relevance to Canada's Northern Territories and adjacent regions. Applications for both programmes are available from the Association of Canadian Universities for Northern Studies, 130 Albert Street, Suite 1915, Ottawa, ON, K1P 5G4; 613-238-3525.

**Manitoba Heritage Federation Grant Applications** for individuals or non-profit organizations involved in the promotion, encouragement, development, or preservation of the heritage of Manitoba. Applicants are advised to consult with professional heritage organizations before submitting their proposals. For more information contact Mary Ann Haddad, 1-800-782-0399.

The American Antiquarian Society **1991-2 Research Fellowship Programme** awards a number of short and long-term visiting fellowships. Among the fellowships are six open to non-Americans, three of which are open to doctoral students. A brochure and application forms are available from John B. Hench, Director of Research and Publication, American Antiquarian Society, 185 Salisbury Street, Worcester, MASS., 01609, USA; 508-752-5813. Application deadline is January 15, 1991.

## In Memoria

Esther Clark Wright, a life member of the CHA since 1945 passed away June 17, 1990 at age 95. She authored 15 books including *The Loyalists of New Brunswick*.