

Crash Landing: Citizens, The State and Protest Against Federal Airport Development, 1968-1976

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Abstract

During the 1960s both the federal and provincial governments continued to take on new and larger responsibilities. During this same time period citizens began to mobilize and challenge the state on a number of social issues including race, gender, labour, urban sprawl and the environment. Citizens believed that not only did they have the right to challenge the authority of government in planning public policy, but they also had a right to participate in the decision-making process as much as any bureaucrat, expert, or elected official. In planning airports in Pickering, Ste. Scholastique and Sea Island, the federal government was opposed by citizen groups in each of these three cases. Citizens believed their voices were not being heard and that government officials did not respect them. As a result, they disrupted the meticulously laid out plans of elected officials and policy planners by drawing on evidence and expert advice. The conflict over federal airport development is an example of the evolution of the consultation process with citizens, as citizens challenged the way public policy was planned. Governments now had to justify policies like expropriation for the public good since citizen groups would form over any intrusion into their private lives. The debates over airport planning highlights the role of citizens, bureaucrats, provincial and federal politicians as they all tried to navigate the complex shifting landscape of the Canadian state.

By 1976 the Pickering Airport had been canceled, Mirabel was opened, and the Sea Island runway expansion would be delayed for 15 years. Although the citizen groups never had complete victories, citizen participation became more paramount to state planning after these events. Public policy planning in Canada had become far more inclusive than ever before. Whether the politicians, bureaucrats or citizens were aware of the consequences remain to be seen.

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Table of Contents

Introduction.....	1
Chapter 1: Deconstructing Canadian Airport Development.....	17
Part 1: Mirabel, Québec: “A Justifiable Mistake”.....	41
Chapter 2: Où est l’aéroport?.....	41
Chapter 3: Pourquoi Mirabel?.....	68
Part 2: Pickering, Ontario: “On Their Knees”.....	96
Chapter 4: We Bin Robbed.....	96
Chapter 5: The Last Stand.....	123
Part 3: Sea Island, British Columbia: “Taken Under Advisement”.....	153
Chapter 6: Facts to Fit the Decision(s).....	153
Conclusion: Just Sign Here.....	194
Abbreviations and Figures.....	207
Bibliography.....	209

Introduction

In 1976 Transport Minister Otto Lang met with an audience of community members concerned about a proposal to expand Vancouver's Sea Island airport. He patiently answered questions about noise, passenger volume and alternate sites. In a telling moment, the experienced Cabinet Minister tried to explain the role of the civil service. When one Community Forum member spoke of visible bias of a Ministry of Transport (MOT) bureaucrat, Lang replied that the MOT official was "persuaded by the figures and believes in them. That kind of fact should be appreciated."¹ In this exchange the minister disclosed how greatly the government relied on the public service, a principal element in the make-up of the state. This is one example of how consultation over federal airport developed in the 1970s, and how citizens questioned public policy. Fundamentally, we are talking about an evolution in the public policy process as government representatives not only had to engage with citizens but also had to include them.

This thesis will examine conflict over federal airport development between the years 1968 and 1976. During this time period, the federal government engaged in a number of new airport construction projects including the Mirabel Airport north of Montréal, the Pickering Airport east of Toronto, and the Sea Island runway expansion near Vancouver. In all three cases, the federal government expropriated citizen's private property for the development of national airports. Expropriation is one of the most powerful tools of the state and one of the most intrusive. Citizen groups emerged in all three cases to protest, fight for their property and challenge the economic case that the federal government made for each airport. This project will

¹ Community Forum, "Interview with Otto Lang," May 15th, 1976, Eunice Robinson's Private Collection.

examine the relationship between the state and citizens against the backdrop of airport development.

This project started as an examination of citizens protesting against the state during the 1970s by looking at the development of national airports. Airports are one of the most fundamental pieces of infrastructure that a state should maintain. They are vital to the national economy by moving citizens and goods around domestically and internationally. The average citizen may not question the need for airports but rather where they should be located. Most infrastructure projects are planned by the state to respond to population demands and economic needs; a bridge, a hospital, a highway and yes, an airport, and having to move people out of the way to develop them.² Airports, require large amounts of land for runways, hangars, terminals and parking. Governments have to expropriate land around the site to make sure other activities and structures don't interfere with air traffic.³ Public works are the lifeblood of many communities and structures such as sewers, transit lines and roads. Citizens take for granted the infrastructure that support our everyday life once it is in place. It is only when infrastructure changes in some way, expanding, closing, moving—that the average citizen takes notice.⁴

Airport construction during the 1970s came at a time when the government of Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau was continuing to expand the modern state into new policy areas. Public works projects like airports were no longer about just putting shovels in the ground or providing a good photo op for a backbencher. Beginning in the 1950s, the federal government

² J. Barry Cullingworth, *Urban and Regional Planning in Canada*, (Canada: Transaction Inc, 1987), 5.

³ Bret Edwards, *A Bumpy Landing: Airports and the Making of Jet Age Canada*, PhD Dissertation. (University of Toronto, 2017), 4.

⁴ Our current government is one of many in a long line of national government's that heavily promoted infrastructure. John Ivison, "Liberal Infrastructure Plan not Sexy but Sensible," *National Post*, February 9th 2016. <http://news.nationalpost.com/full-comment/john-ivison-liberal-infrastructure-plan-may-not-be-sexy-but-its-sensible>

took an increasing role in regional economic planning and development, and the Trudeau government indicated it would continue to do so, with its creation of the DREE (Department of Regional Economic Development) in 1968 and the Ministry of State for Urban Affairs in 1971.⁵ In that context, airports were not just traditional public works construction projects; they had the potential to revitalize a depressed region of a province or increase growth. There was a lot more to gain or lose with the development of an airport beyond just expanding flight capacity. This was the time period of the mega project. Think of projects like the James Bay Dam in Québec or WAC Bennett's plans for the Peace River. Cities wanted to improve traffic with expressways and the federal government made the biggest expropriation for an airport in Canadian history with 97,000 acres expropriated for the Mirabel Airport.⁶

The federal government's attention to regional development created potential tensions with provincial governments. Intergovernmental conflicts over the intrusion of the federal government into provincial policy areas were further complicated by the emergence of a separatist political movement in Québec. These intergovernmental political conflicts played a

⁵ Cullingworth, 269. For our purposes the main branches of the federal government that dealt with regional planning are the Department of Regional Expansion (DREE) and the Ministry of State for Urban Affairs (MSUA).

⁶ Sean McCutcheon, *Electric Rivers: The Story of the James Bay Project*, (Canada: Black Rose Books, 1991). Tina Loo, "People in the Way: Modernity, Environment, and Society on the Arrow Lakes," *BC Studies*, (No 142/143. Summer/Autumn 2004). Tina Loo, "High Modernism, Conflict, and the Nature of Change in Canada: A Look at Seeing like a State," *The Canadian Historical Review* (Vol 97, Issue 1. March 2016). Danielle Robinson, "Modernism at a Crossroad: The Spadina Expressway Controversy in Toronto, Ontario ca. 1969-1971," *The Canadian Historical Review* (Vol 9, No 2, June 2011). In terms of the size of the expropriation in Mirabel sources seem to vary on the final amount of land expropriated but it seems to be between 88,000 and 97,000 acres. This gets more complicated as the federal government had many retrocessions after it returned some land to the farmers; Elliot J. Feldman and Jerome Milch, *The Politics of Canadian Airport Development*, (United States: Duke University Press, 1983). Suzanne Laurin, *L'Echiquier de Mirabel*, (Québec: Les Éditions du Boréal, 2012). Gilles Boileau and Jean-Paul Raymond, *La Mémoire de Mirabel*, (Québec: Éditions du Méridien, 1988). Éric Gagnon Poulin, "Mirabel: Au non du développement," (*Anthropologica*, Volume 58. No 2, 2016.). Bret Edwards, *A Bumpy Landing: Airports and the Making of Jet Age Canada*, PhD Dissertation. (University of Toronto, 2017). Bret Edwards, "Breaking New Ground: Montreal-Mirabel International Airport, Mass Aeromobility, and Megaproject Development in 1960s and 1970s Canada," *Journal of Canadian Studies*, (Volume 50. No 1. Winter 2016).

large role in the development of airports, creating tensions over where to build each airport and over how much federal government involvement a given province would accept. This would range from a passing interest from the provincial government in British Columbia to an intense media campaign waged by the province of Québec against Ottawa's intrusions into Québec's provincial jurisdiction. These differences would play out in each airport case. In addition, this would have profound consequences for the Trudeau government's short-lived Ministry of State for Urban Affairs (MSUA).

As the federal government was increasing its reach so was the general public who wanted more influence in government decision making. During the 1960s, citizens from many different backgrounds rose up and challenged various governments on a number of policy issues. As historians have documented, the 1960s were a time of protest in Canada.⁷ By the 1970s, government officials reluctantly gave Canadian citizens a limited seat at the policy table. Interest groups became a permanent fixture in Ottawa and protest groups formed on many policy issues. Groups mobilized in the 1960s over the peace movement, drugs, the place of Indigenous people in Canada, Québec nationalism, and students' role in the governance of universities. The early 1970s was a time where issues of urban sprawl, pollution and environmental degradation became more mainstream. As governments took regional planning more seriously, citizens became more involved in decisions affecting where they lived. Urban sprawl, the dwindling supply of farm land, the role of local government, and protecting green spaces had all become major policy

⁷ This is most pronounced in the 1960s where Canadians started to challenge their governments on a variety of social issues. Doug Owsram, *Born at the Right Time: A History of the Baby-Boom Generation*, (Canada: University of Toronto Press, 1996), 159. Bryan Palmer, *Canada's 1960s: The Ironies of Identity in a Rebellious Era*, (Canada: University of Toronto Press, 2009), 22-23.

issues by the mid-1970s.⁸ Issues that were once footnotes in government policy now became front and center as citizens challenged the top down regional plans that were promoted by governments. This became more pronounced when the federal government changed the laws around expropriation where citizens would have a right to a public hearing over expropriated land. In all three airport cases, citizen groups emerged to fight expropriation and challenge the claims of the federal government. People or Planes (POP) formed in Pickering, Center d'Information et d'Animation Communautaire (CIAC) formed in the Ste. Scholastique area and the expropriated territories and the Sea Island Ratepayers Association (SIRA) represented residents from the Sea Island community which was expropriated for the runway expansion. By fighting the government over the decision to expropriate their land for the airports these citizen groups challenged the narrative that policymakers knew best.

As some citizens became more engaged in the policy process they began challenging experts and as a result, the deference to authority that had been associated with citizenship began to decline. Although historians have documented that during the 1960s and 70s many citizens challenged expert knowledge over issues ranging from dumping fluoride in the municipal water supply to expressways, little has been said about the consequences of letting citizens be involved in the policy process.⁹ During the conflicts over federal airport development, federal bureaucrats and policy makers were constantly frustrated by politicians dithering over decisions, or members

⁸ Some of the earliest environmental groups in Canada formed during the 1970s: Ryan O'Connor, *The First Green Wave: Pollution Probe and the Origins of Environmental Activism in Ontario*, (British Columbia: UBC Press, 2014), 6-8. Rex Weyler, *Greenpeace and how a group of Journalists, Ecologists and Visionaries Changed the World*, (British Columbia: Raincoast Books, 2004), 9. For American examples, see Christopher. C. Sellers, *Crabgrass Crucible Suburban Nature and the Rise of Environmentalism in Twentieth-Century America*, (United States: The University of North Carolina Press, 2012). Jeff Crane and Michael Egan, *Natural Protest: Essays on the history of American environmentalism*, (New York: Routledge, 2009).

⁹ Danielle Robinson, "'The Streets Belong to the People' Expressway Disputes in Canada, C. 1960-75." (PhD Dissertation, McMaster University, 2012), 357-359. Catherine Carstairs and Rachel Elder, "Expertise, Health and Popular Opinion: Debating Water Fluoridation, 1945-80," *The Canadian Historical Review*, (Vol 89, No. 3, September 2008), 343.

of the general public challenging their authority. No matter how many times they brought out projections about growth in air travel, they were unable to convince citizen groups of the need of the airports and the associated growth that comes with a project of this size. Some historians have referred to this resistance as NIMBYism (Not in my Backyard), as homeowners fight against state intrusions into their private property. Protest groups had to be politically sensitive to the fact that the public could see them as greedy landowners that were only looking after themselves.¹⁰ By looking at the cases of federal airports we can see how expertise was challenged and maintained. We can investigate how federal bureaucrats tried to adjust to this new reality and how citizen groups responded to criticism. Throughout this process we can see how politicians themselves responded to citizens being more vocal and how new challenges to authority affected the traditional attitudes about politicians.

Finally, although the political landscape was changing in Canada with new policy issues and different groups contesting power, some historical trends around Canadian politics remained. Canada is a country governed by region and so are our politics. Due to Canada's immense geographic size and constituency based political system, members of Parliament have always played an important role in keeping Ottawa informed of local issues. Such issues may not even cross the borders of one constituency, yet they are the bread and butter issues that any politician has to deal with.¹¹ Many MP's have either sustained long political careers or had short stints in office if they did not understand and deal with the needs of the local populace. The old days of

¹⁰ Richard Harris, *Creeping Conformity How Canada Became Suburban, 1900-1960*, (Canada: University of Toronto Press, 2004), 155. Robinson, "'The Streets Belong to the People' Expressway Disputes in Canada, C. 1960-75," 17. Barry George Rabe, *Beyond nimby: Hazardous waste siting in Canada and the United States*, (Washington DC: Brookings Institution, 1994). Greg Brown and Hunter Glanz, "Identifying potential NIMBY and YIMBY effects in general land use planning and zoning," *Applied Geography*, (Vol 99, October 2018), 1-11.

¹¹ Patrick Malcomson and Richard Myers, *The Canadian Regime: An Introduction to Parliamentary Government in Canada*, 4th ed, (Canada: University of Toronto Press, 2009), 126.

MP's handing out jobs at the post office were over, but MPs could still direct public funds and resources to their community.¹² However, as citizens became more vocal and less receptive to authority figures and those in power, the traditional relationship between citizen and MP became interrupted. At the same time, because Canada had a strong party structure, it was difficult for local MPs to be independent.¹³ By the 1970s, this led to a decline in respect for MPs and their position. MPs were seen as nothing more than talking heads following the party line. Prime Minister Trudeau famously called backbenchers "nobodies." Although mostly confined to a locality or region, the airports examined in this study, quickly became provincial and national issues. The planning process around these airports became prime examples of how government consulted with citizens. In the middle of this battle, over public opinion between the state and citizens, were local MPs. We will examine how the protestors saw their local MPs and how MPs responded to these local issues that could have saved or destroyed their careers.

Aviation did not become sufficiently developed until the First World War. Until that time, most of the country's earliest runways were rudimentary and geared towards amateur fliers. In the post war period, the federal government started to take some interest in aviation by passing the *Air Board Act* in 1919.¹⁴ The legislation stipulated that the board was responsible for constructing all government aerodromes and regulating all aerial navigation. The federal government only operated the aerodromes for government use and had little money to give to

¹² For the role of patronage and Canadian political parties John English, *The Decline of Politics: The Conservatives and the Party System 1901-1920*, (Canada: Rock's Mills Press, 2016), 18. Jeffrey Simpson, *Spoils of Power: The Politics of Patronage*, (Canada: Collins Publishers, 1988), 8-10.

¹³ Donald J Savoie. *Breaking the Bargain: Public Servants, Ministers and Parliament*, (Canada: University of Toronto Press, 2003), 132. Robert Bothwell and Ian Drummond and John English, *Canada Since 1945: Power, Politics and Provincialism*, (Canada University of Toronto Press, 1981), 315.

¹⁴ T.M. McGrath, *History of Canadian Airports*, (Canada: Lugus Publications, 1992), 12-16. Edwards, *A Bumpy Landing: Airports and the Making of Jet Age Canada*, 13-15. Norman Ball, *Building Canada: A History of Public Works*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988), 286-290.

municipalities that wanted better runways.¹⁵ The shift from municipal to federally operated airports was gradual but as the federal government provided more funding, it became more necessary to assert control. During the Great Depression, Prime Minister Bennett established work camps to improve airports and to build the Trans-Canada Airway, eventually having a national system of fifty airports.¹⁶ During the Second World War, the federal government took over municipal airports. Post Second World War, many municipalities could not afford the operating and capital costs associated with enlarging airports. The Department of Transport bought out most municipal airports and started to develop international airports to expand Canada's position in aviation.¹⁷

Air travel increased dramatically in the post-war period as more people could afford to travel, and aircrafts became more sophisticated.¹⁸ By 1960, "Canadian commercial airlines carried over 5.5 million passengers, an increase of more than 300% over the previous ten years."¹⁹ In response to these numbers, and forecasts that called for high growth in passenger volume, the MOT embarked on expanding Canada's airport capacity.²⁰ As the federal government proposed to establish new airports in Toronto and Montréal, and expand runway capacity on Sea Island, the high economic growth that characterized the post-war period was coming to an end. If the 1960s were known as a period of growth and low unemployment, then

¹⁵ McGrath, 13.

¹⁶ Edwards, *A Bumpy Landing: Airports and the Making of Jet Age Canada*, 14. McGrath, 32-33. Airports are not specifically covered in the constitution. Although the federal government passed legislation on aeronautics, the JCPC ruled in the *Aeronautics* case that aerial navigation were matters of national interest and belonged to the Dominion Government: John Saywell and Osgoode Society for Canadian Legal History, *The Lawmakers: Judicial Power and the Shaping of Canadian Federalism*, (Published for the Osgoode Society for Canadian Legal History by University of Toronto Press, 2002), 214.

¹⁷ McGrath, 19.

¹⁸ Edwards, *A Bumpy Landing: Airports and the Making of Jet Age Canada*, 16.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Julie Harris, "Airports." in *Building Canada: A History of Public Works*. ed. Norman Ball, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988), 309.

the 1970s was seen as the time of stagflation. As unemployment and inflation rose in tandem, they had a dramatic effect on provincial and federal budgets. Stagflation coupled with the OPEC Crisis in 1973, profoundly affected Canadian air travel as ticket prices rose and traffic declined. The federal government would have to make decisions on these expensive public works in a time of economic uncertainty.²¹

Due to the changes in the *Expropriation Act* in 1970 that allowed for more public consultation, citizens became more vocal and the policy process became much more open in the 1970s. By examining how citizens and the state used the planning process and how consultation took place in all three cases, we can examine what the relationship between citizens and the state was like. Historians have been very good at documenting how citizens became more active and challenged the government on policy issues during the 1960s. We often celebrate the tenacity, courage and mobilization of the baby boomers during this time.²² I am not challenging the real and important political changes these activists made, whether it was contributions to the feminist movement or making politicians pay more attention to Indigenous issues. However, historians have not examined some of the profound consequences of citizen-led activism for the policy process. The conflict over federal airport development can be analysed as another example of big government trampling over citizens in the name of progress.²³ Indeed, in all three cases citizens'

²¹ Ian Robinson and Richard Simeon, "State, Society, and the Development of Canadian Federalism," Royal Commission on the Economic Union and Development Prospects for Canada, (Canada: Ministry of Supply and Services Canada, 1990), 236-238. For the impact of stagflation Wayne Simpson, "Discussion Paper No. 161 Wage Structure and Stagflation in the 1970s," Economic Council of Canada, 1980. Robinson and Simeon, 214 For the OPEC Crisis Peter C. Eglington, and Russell S. Uhler, "Potential Supply of Crude Oil and Natural Gas Reserves in the Alberta Basin," Economic Council of Canada, (Ministry of Supply and Services Canada, 1986), 18. Edwards "Breaking New Ground: Montreal-Mirabel International Airport, Mass Aeromobility, and Megaproject Development in 1960s and 1970s Canada," 27.

²² Doug Owsram, *Born at the Right Time: A History of the Baby-Boom Generation*, (Canada: University of Toronto Press, 1996), 159 Bryan Palmer, *Canada's 1960s: The Ironies of Identity in a Rebellious Era*, (Canada: University of Toronto Press, 2009), 22-23.

²³ One book on the Pickering Airport argued that government is out of control and boondoggles like the Pickering Airport are the result of this. Walter Stewart, *Paper Juggernaut Big Government Gone Mad*. (Canada: McClelland

land was expropriated and yet the Pickering Airport was never built, Mirabel has now been shut down, and the Sea Island expansion never made full use of the land. People's lives were ruined and billions of public dollars were wasted. This is a very familiar story. We have to look at the tensions that exist between local democracy and the public interest, and we must investigate the real value of public consultations, planning and expertise. There is a question of whom planning serves. Is it for the benefit of local residents or do provincial and national interests trump a small number of residents whose land was expropriated?²⁴ Both government and citizens make similar claims on being "experts", on what the best use of land is, and on what is fair and how much consultation is necessary. We need to reconsider what the functions of formal and informal public consultations are and how they affect policy decisions. Large infrastructure projects like airports are not going away. We cannot cancel every project. We need to fully examine this process and ask how the decision-making process is impacted.

Questions That Frame the Study

This study looks at the way citizens come into conflict with the state over public works projects by examining federal airports. Specifically, these projects look at the intersection of citizens, bureaucrats, and politicians as each group had different motivations for defending or developing these projects. Many urban historians have engaged with questions concerning urban renewal and the seemingly bitter conflict between citizens and bureaucrats in the 1960s and 1970s.²⁵ First, how did the state balance local democracy versus the public good? Second, how

and Stewart Limited, 1979), 12-14. Tina Loo, "People in the Way: Modernity, Environment, and Society on the Arrow Lakes," (*BC Studies*. No 142/143. Summer/Autumn 2004, 161-196. Suzanne Laurin, *L'Echiquier de Mirabel*, (Québec: Les Éditions du Boréal, 2012), 13-29.

²⁴ Adam Rome, *The Bulldozer in the Countryside: Suburban Sprawl and The Rise of American Environmentalism*, (United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 230. Richard White, *Planning Toronto The Planners, The Plans, Their Legacies, 1940-80*, (Canada: UBC Press, 2016), 6-7. Sellers, 7.

²⁵ For expressways, Danielle Robinson, "'The Streets Belong to the People' Expressway Disputes in Canada, C. 1960-75." (PhD Dissertation, McMaster University, 2012), 10-20.

did each side construct evidence in order to strengthen their public image and their respective arguments? Third, how did citizens mobilize against these projects and what strategies did they engage in? Fourth, how effective were public consultations in making public policy decisions? Finally, did greater public engagement in the decision-making process lead to better policy outcomes?

Methodology and Sources

This study is based on numerous archival sources at a municipal, provincial, and federal level. Repositories in Toronto, Vancouver, St. Therese, and Richmond in addition to provincial archives in Ontario and Québec, as well as university and private collections allowed me to accurately document the protests against federal airport development as well as the political process behind building these public work projects. These public records, court cases, letters, internal memos, and government commissioned reports were heavily supported by print media coverage which was vital to understanding how these events were reported and how the general public perceived these conflicts through the media.

Additionally, I conducted several interviews with politicians and protestors. Oral history, like any source, is questionable and after forty years, many of the people I interviewed were vague about certain details of the past. Despite the limitations of age and time I found the interviews very helpful in determining the motivations for people and seeing the emotion behind the printed word. The passage of time allowed interviewees to look back over the events in question and reflect. Newspaper articles and government reports provide us with facts, but interviews show us the faces behind the pages. The interviews allow us to understand the people who were involved in this conflict and reveal facts that might be easily overlooked in the print records.

This study looks to understand the conflict between the state and citizens through the debates over federal airport development. Although it would be easy to frame this as a study where citizens were abused by the federal government through expropriation and people simply fought back, it would do a disservice to both sides of this conflict. The state is not monolithic nor do politicians and bureaucrats share the same motivations. I hope by examining the state in this project, we can take a closer look at how government operates on a number of levels. This includes the use of expertise in these debates, the role of politicians as representatives of their constituents and members of a political party, as well as examining public policy planning through the permanent civil service and appointed representatives. This study is also useful as we examine how public works projects intersect at a municipal, provincial and federal level. In both the Pickering and Mirabel cases, urban development projects went side by side with the airports and in the case of Sea Island, the Ministry of State for Urban Affairs was heavily involved in the consultation process. This study gives us another opportunity to look at the short time that the federal government was involved in this kind of regional planning. The airport debates serve as one more example of the conflict that took place over urban development in the late 1960s but also as a rebuke of the state and the Trudeau government, in particular for the way policy development was conducted.

Study Structure

This study will be divided into four sections. In the first section, I will do a thorough review related to protesting in the 1960s, environmental activism through urban development, the scope of the Canadian state, regional economic development with a focus on DREE and the role of politicians. The subsequent sections will examine the cases of the Mirabel Airport in Québec, the Pickering plan in Ontario, and the proposed Sea Island runway expansion in British

Columbia. I have chosen this order for a number of reasons. The decision to build the Mirabel Airport was the earliest with the initial announcement being made in 1968.²⁶ The expropriations that took place happened before the changes to the *Expropriation Act* were made. This allows us to examine how decisions are made with little regards to local residents or stakeholder groups. Finally, the results from the Mirabel case directly affected how the Pickering Airport and Sea Island runway expansions were developed. From the protestor intentions we know that all three groups were in communication. They exchanged letters and talked about the tactics used in each other's case to bolster in each's claims.²⁷ One of the main arguments that CIAC made was that residents in Pickering got more compensation for their land. One of the members of CIAC André Bouvette visited Pickering to gather data on the expropriation there.²⁸ The treatment of Pickering residents versus the expropriated in Mirabel became one of the major flashpoints in the conflict over the Mirabel Airport.²⁹ The conflict over the development of the Pickering Airport began in March 1972 and was firmly resolved in September 1975.³⁰ Although there have been attempts to revive plans for the airport in the last forty years with the expropriated property remaining in the hands of the federal government, Pickering has never been built.³¹ Comparisons between the

²⁶ In late 1968 the federal government was reviewing the Higgin Report that had recommended Ste. Scholastique as the site for the new airport. Benjamin Higgins, "Meeting on Higgins Report," December 17th 1968, LAC MG 32-B46, Volume 30, File 6.

²⁷ "Le curé Duquette défend le sort de ses ouailles," *L'Echo du Nord*, February 21st 1973, Author's Private collection. "Jaffary, Montrealer join B.C. airport battle," *The Globe and Mail*, July 23rd 1975, VPL Pacific Press Clippings Vancouver International Airport. Jean Baker, "Sea Island Couple Deplore Québec Farmers' Treatment," *Richmond Review*, August 13th 1975, CRA. Richard Cleroux, "It was Pickering that set off the Mirabel Row," *The Globe and Mail*, January 11th 1974, CTASC.

²⁸ Interview with André Bouvette, April 5th 2016.

²⁹ Réne Lévesque et Robert Lussier, "Les Québécois de Mirabel doivent récupérer leurs terres," *L'Argenteuil*, April 16th 1975, SHGMI P053 S4 SS1 D81.

³⁰ Michael Rowan "Contested Land: Citizens, State and Resistance to the Pickering Airport, 1972-1975." (MRP, York University, 2013).

³¹ As recently as 2013 the Harper government had announced plans for the Pickering Airport with plans to develop a runway by 2029. The recent election of the Liberal government in 2015 halted those plans although Transport Canada continues to study the issue. Liam Casey, "Pickering Airport Foes Prepare to Fight Once More," *Toronto Star*, Wednesday June 12th 2013. Author's Personal Collection.

politics of and negotiations that occurred with Pickering and Mirabel are notable for many reasons, not least of which are the insights into Canadian federalism as it was practiced. Finally, the Sea Island runway expansion was officially delayed in August 1976 and dragged on until 1991.³² As the site that was resolved last, it was the most impacted by the developments in Pickering and Mirabel. The much more open consultation process that took place in Sea Island was a direct response to what the federal government experienced in Mirabel and Pickering.³³ By examining this case last, we can see a consultation model that is used more frequently today where citizens have a larger say in the planning process.

Each section begins by sketching a history of federal airport development and the negotiations that took place between the federal government and the provinces. I will turn to the announcement and the formation of the citizen group opposed to each project, followed by the debates over the airports and the political developments that followed. I will conclude with the decisions to open Mirabel, cancel Pickering, and delay Sea Island.

In a telling letter to O.G. Stoner Deputy Minister from the Ministry of Transport in 1973, Jim Davey in the Prime Minister's Office wrote that the Pickering Airport could very well serve as a test case for how future governments would deal with citizens over such projects like this. Davey continued that he believed the Airport Inquiry Commission could put to rest with the

³² Editorial, "Haunted Houses," *Vancouver Sun*, August 21st 1976, VPL Pacific Press Clippings Vancouver International Airport.

³³ Jim Davey, "Letter to Stoner," June 16th 1973, LAC MG 32-B46 Volume 86 File 5. This letter is quite prophetic as the Ministry of Transport completely changes the way they consult with citizens over airports after this period. During the debate over the Sea Island Airport off of Vancouver protest groups are actually on the committee that investigates whether to proceed or not. Needless to say this new method of consultation causes major problems: André Saumier, "Airport Planning Committee Paper," LAC RG 127 Volume 237 File Part 1. The more open consultation process can also be contributed to BC being more active on environmental issues during this time period than other provinces. The federal government had to be more careful at addressing environmental concerns in the case of the Sea Island Airport: Jack Davis, "Letter to Jean Marchand," February 15th 1973, LAC MG32-B46 Volume 89, File 14.

whole issue over Pickering, if the proper problems were addressed. If done right it could save the government a lot of time, money, and grief.³⁴ He was utterly wrong. By examining these three cases studies, we can understand that the consultation process used by the federal government failed to satisfy citizens, civil servants, and the politicians. This was not the start of a better way of working with citizens to build or debate government projects. It was the start of a time of distrust, doubt, and folly.

³⁴ Jim Davey, "Letter to Stoner," June 16th 1973, LAC MG 32-B46 Volume 86 File 5.

Chapter 1: Deconstructing Canadian Airport Development

Expanding airport infrastructure in Canada during the 1970s became more complex as the consultation process changed and evolved. Citizens wanted a seat at the public policy table. Infrastructure was shaped by the provinces trying to coordinate regional planning and the federal government addressing regional development and urban issues. By examining some of the literature that explores these themes, we can better understand the factors that affected infrastructure planning in the 1970s. I will begin by looking at the growth of the post war welfare state and how it impacted infrastructure expansion. I will investigate how planning changed during this time by looking at municipal, provincial, and federal sources. For our purposes, it is important to understand that the creation of both the Ministry of State for Urban Affairs (MSUA), and the Department of Regional Economic Expansion (DREE), by the federal government, played a key role in airport development. Next, I will examine legal changes through expropriation legislation. These changes had a big impact on how the federal government could plan public works projects. It is important to understand the opposing views that citizens and politicians have over expropriation. Finally, by examining citizen activism in the 1960s and 1970s, we can understand the criticisms that citizens had at that time about experts, planners, and politicians. By looking at some of the historical accounts, we can see how airport planning was affected by many different policy trends and historical factors that made coordinating public works much more difficult in the 1970s.

The Apex of the Welfare State

By the 1970s, the Canadian state at the provincial and federal level had expanded its powers and list of responsibilities. With the continuing dominance of the post war welfare state meant for politicians and bureaucrats, it wasn't a matter of why, but why not. The Second World

War was a time when the Canadian state intruded in an unprecedented manner into the private and public spheres to win the war. Since then, this intrusion has only continued to expand. The Second World War was the backdrop to major political and financial reform in Canada.

Politically, Second World War helped to expand and professionalize the civil service. Politicians had to depend more on experts and the bureaucracy to help develop the necessary policy tools to help win the war.¹ The fiscal and monetary policies that were put in place during the Second World War helped stabilize the Canadian economy, but, more importantly for our purposes, it meant the “expert” was here to stay. A strong civil service was needed to help shape postwar Canada. Bureaucrats looking back at this period believed that through the levers of the state, anything was possible.² Historians often refer to this period as the golden age of the Ottawa mandarin who built up the Canadian government, especially federally, and had access to the halls of power.³ Bureaucrats were very influential and had the ear of the government of the day. These connections and a booming Canadian economy allowed government officials to take on bigger and larger tasks, and for the state to take on more responsibilities.

The Canadian economy grew at a tremendous pace in the 1950s and 1960s. Employment grew and the revenue of the federal government continued to increase. During the 1960s the Gross Domestic Product increased by 69%, federal revenue by 75% and federal expenditures by 44%.⁴ The provincial governments also grew at an astounding pace as they built highways,

¹ Doug Owram, *The Government Generation: Canadian Intellectuals and the State 1900-1945*, (Canada: University of Toronto Press, 1986), 325-334.

² Ibid, 334.

³ J.L. Granatstein. *The Ottawa Men The Civil Service Mandarins, 1935-1957*, (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1982), xii. In addition, I found the memoirs of Gordon Robertson demonstrate that boundless optimism of civil servants during the post war period: Gordon Robertson, *Memoirs of a Very Civil Servant: Mackenzie King to Pierre Trudeau*, (Canada: University of Toronto Press, 2000), 18-47.

⁴ Robert Bothwell, Ian Drummond and John English, *Canada Since 1945: Power, Politics and Provincialism*, (Canada University of Toronto Press, 1981), 3.

hospitals and universities. From 1960 through 1980 the proportion of Canadian tax revenue under provincial control grew from 48% to 66%.⁵ Both the provincial and federal state had a larger capacity to create new programs and expand upon existing ones. There was boundless optimism, and a strong sense of progress towards the future. This ideology of progress shaped many states in the twentieth century including Canada and resulted in the state taking on larger and more complicated responsibilities. The Pearson government introduced many new spending programs including a contributory old age pension plan, medicare, and many cost shared programs.⁶ As the federal government expanded its role it had to negotiate with the provinces over the cost and scope of programs. Although political scientists and historians generally define the style of federalism after the 1960s as cooperative federalism, where the federal government and the provinces worked together and bargained over different programs, it was often not very cooperative at all.⁷ The growth of the provincial state often clashed with the federal government. The Quiet Revolution transformed Québec and challenged the way the federation was organized.⁸ The fights over national medicare and old age pensions have been well researched, and they demonstrate the limits of cooperative federalism. Elliot J. Feldman's and Jerome Milch's study in the 1980s of Canadian airport development demonstrated how federalism shaped airport planning.⁹ As much as the federal government may have had good intentions,

⁵ Richard White, *Planning Toronto: The Planners, The Plans Their Legacies, 1940-1980*, (Canada: UBC Press, 2016), 232.

⁶ Ibid, 304. Richard Simeon, *Federal-Provincial Diplomacy: The Making of Recent Policy in Canada: with a new Preface and Postscript*, (Canada: University of Toronto Press, 2006).

⁷ Patrick Malcomson and Richard Myers, *The Canadian Regime: An Introduction to Parliamentary Government in Canada*, 4th ed, (Canada: University of Toronto Press, 2009), 65.

⁸ White, 232.

⁹ Elliot J. Feldman and Jerome Milch, *The Politics of Canadian Airport Development*, (United States: Duke University Press, 1983), 211-231.

every Prime Minister learns to deal with the provinces.¹⁰ The Canadian federal state reached the peak of its centralization and expansion during the Pierre Trudeau government.¹¹ During that administration the federal government was reformed. Cabinet committees were strengthened, and ministers were expected to fight for their policies.¹² The Ministry of Transport (MOT) became one such agency as it planned and pushed the government to build huge airports.¹³

Planning Infrastructure and Modernism

Long term planning is fundamental for the state to exist. There is a need for the state to study issues in order to have a better grasp of what is going on in society, and then respond to it with the appropriate mechanism. While studying a subject, such as when the federal government conducted a Royal Commission on the Pickering Airport, it is in fact defining it. They are formulating an answer to a problem.¹⁴ During the 1960s and 1970s, all levels of government engaged in high level planning. With high levels of growth and population increases, different levels of government had to plan their infrastructure needs accordingly.¹⁵ James Scott in *Seeing Like a State* argued that through the force of law or the coercive powers of the state and the ability to represent society through maps, the state can refashion society.¹⁶ Scott's elements of a state sponsored modernist project are useful in defining how a state would develop infrastructure and how it may move the citizen out of the way. The most obvious tool would be the state's

¹⁰ For the fight over old age pensions and public health care, Penny Bryden, *Planners and Politicians: Liberal Politics and Social Policy*, (Canada: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1997), 78-164.

¹¹ Bothwell, Drummond and English, 320.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ J. Barry Cullingworth, *Urban and Regional Planning in Canada*, (Canada: Transaction Inc, 1987), 24. Of course Mirabel Airport in Québec was the biggest airport in the world at that time: "Montreal Moves Ahead with its Bonanza," *Canadian Building*, May 1972, Author's Private Collection.

¹⁴ Adam Ashforth, "Reckoning Schemes of Legitimation: On Commissions of Inquiry as Power/ Knowledge Forms," *Journal of Historical Sociology*, (Vol 3, No. 1, March 1990), 17.

¹⁵ Cullingworth.

¹⁶ James C. Scott., *Seeing like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed*, (United States of America: Yale University, 1998), 3.

power to expropriate for a public project. As we will see, citizens had very strong reactions to the state's power to expropriate. Cadastral maps are a powerful instrument of the state to define society geographically. During the fight over the Pickering Airport many of the citizens involved in the protest recalled that Transport Canada officials came to their hamlets and made presentations with their Bristol boards and colourful maps.¹⁷ The maps outlined whose property was going to be expropriated, and what land was going to be paved over. Fernand Gauthier recalled when he worked for Bureau du Amalgamation du Nouvel Airport de Montréal (BANAIM) at the beginning of the planning process for Mirabel that there was a giant map of the territory that wrapped around the office.¹⁸ Maps are a powerful symbol of state legitimacy. Not every citizen can just produce a map and claim this is what society will look like.¹⁹ Maps represent how the state can reshape society as lines on a page. Scott examined four elements that make up modernist state planning exercises. By examining these aspects through the lens of planning in Canada we can see how the Canadian state produced a high modernist ideology around planning.

The first element is the administrative ordering of nature and society. As Scott explains this level is vital to the maintenance of any modern state. This includes all aspects of the state: policymakers who make recommendations on solving issues, bureaucrats who implement law, the police who enforce the law and the public's day-to-day interaction with the state. This can be as simple as being told what trees may be cut down on one's property or filling in the national household survey.²⁰ The state does not have to be developing a mega project to continuously

¹⁷ Interview with Tommy Thompson, February 28th 2013.

¹⁸ Interview with Fernand Gauthier, April 14th 2016.

¹⁹ Scott, 3.

²⁰ Ibid, 4.

administer society. This is a constant function of the state. The post war period transformed the federal government and the provinces whose constitutional responsibilities for health and welfare became more paramount in modern times.²¹

The second element of Scott's high modernism involves the state moving beyond administering into comprehensive planning. Scott argued that the state is infused with the ideology of high modernism where the state is rationally planning society like a science, and that state operatives, which include both politicians and bureaucrats, benefit from this.²² These projects were developed in an unprecedented scale especially after 1945 and we can see examples by municipal, provincial and federal governments in the 1960s and 1970s.²³

The City of Toronto engaged in modernization planning in the late 1950s and early 1960s. As the city grew into a larger metropolis, city planners had to prepare for the projected growth.²⁴ They undertook many projects including studies for urban renewal, zoning, parks, transit and developing the inner-city.²⁵ The involvement of the Government of Ontario with the Toronto-centered Region plan took urban planning to a much more ambitious level.²⁶ Montréal also engaged in a flurry of construction activity as it came off the success of Expo 67. In the mid 1960s, the city issued a record number of building permits, totaling over 300 million dollars in value, and the majority were for new construction.²⁷ Mayor Drapeau built up Montréal with projects like the development of the Metro, the Decarie Expressway and the Olympic Park

²¹ Bryden, 164-169.

²² Scott, 4-5.

²³ Tina Loo, "People in the Way: Modernity, Environment, and Society on the Arrow Lakes," (*BC Studies*. No 142/143. Summer/Autumn 2004), 165.

²⁴ White.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ White, 221.

²⁷ S.D. Jowett, "No Quiet Revolution: Studies in the Sonic History of Montréal, 1965-1975," (PhD Dissertation, Queen's University, September 2014), 78.

complex.²⁸ We can see that cities were engaging in high modernist plans but so were provincial governments.

As discussed previously, as provincial governments grew in the 1960s they became more ambitious and engaged in more programs. This is especially true when we look at the provincial government of Ontario. The provincial state started to have a stronger presence in the lives of citizens as provincial functions such as education and health care were rapidly expanding during this time. In addition, Ontario was outgrowing its infrastructure and the population was expanding. Provincial officials set out to try to contain this growth and developed a number of plans to move Ontario forward.²⁹ Some of these ideas include instant cities that the province could coordinate and populate -- a trend that Scott claims was a twentieth-century phenomenon.³⁰ Century City was a proposal by the Ontario government in the mid nineteen sixties to develop an instant city in North Pickering. This is an example of the high modernism ideology that the provincial state started to develop during this time period. The provincial bureaucrats and politicians imposed their idea on citizens with little consultation.³¹ Charles Godfrey and Lorne Almack helped defeat the Century City proposal in 1971 by revealing a flaw in the sewage system. City planners had figured that spraying the sewage over the land would be an innovative way of dealing with waste. While Dr. Godfrey acknowledged that this solution might work in the summer, he pointed out it would be difficult to facilitate in the winter.³² That was the end of the Century City project. Scott argued that one of the main tenets of state record keeping and organization was land use and classification. The state has an ideal use for land be it

²⁸ Ibid, 70-80.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Scott, 97.

³¹ Interview with Charles Godfrey, May 29th 2013.

³² Interview with Dr. Charles Godfrey, May 29th 2013.

for a city or an airport. Yet as Dr. Godfrey and others pointed out, state officials did not think of local needs or factors that might impact the Century City project. This example is one of many in Canadian history where state officials ignored local knowledge to their own detriment.³³

The province of Ontario was also engaging in regional development. Successive Conservative provincial governments were very concerned by urban sprawl and the infrastructure issues that it was creating. Between 1956 and 1970 Toronto's population grew by almost 50 percent from 1,358,000 to 2,045,000, and more Ontarians were concentrating in urban areas.³⁴ The province tried to address some of the problems of urban sprawl by transferring authority over some services from municipal to regional governments. One of those services was transit projects, such as the Spadina Expressway, to help ease congestion.³⁵ One of the regional development plans was the Seaton community that was expected to have a population of 150,000 people and was going to be built south of the new Pickering Airport.³⁶ The Pickering Airport and Seaton Community fit into new federal policy priorities. These bold pronouncements of state policy did not go unnoticed as citizens started to rally against mega projects and big government.

The federal government planned several infrastructure projects to meet future needs. The Trans-Canada Highway was opened in 1962, the federal government having provided more than \$825 million dollars to the project. Every province had joined in the program, even Québec.³⁷ The same cannot be said for the National Transportation Act (NTA) where the federal government tried to create a national, uniform transportation system that covered air, sea and

³³ Scott, 27. For an excellent source on how the Canadian state reshapes land and responds to local needs, see Tina Loo, *States of Nature: Conserving Canada's Wildlife in the Twentieth Century*, (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2006).

³⁴ Cullingworth, 297-300.

³⁵ Ibid, 298. Danielle Robinson, "'The Streets Belong to the People' Expressway Disputes in Canada, C. 1960-75." (PhD Dissertation, McMaster University, 2012), 10-20.

³⁶ Pat McNenly, "\$2billion airport plan to create city of 150,000," *Toronto Star*, March 3rd 1972, CTASC.

³⁷ Bothwell, Drummond and English, 142. Larry McNally, "Roads, Streets, and Highways," in *Building Canada: A History of Public Works*, ed. Norman Ball, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988), 52.

highways. The federal government was not successful in negotiating with the provinces.³⁸ The debate over the Trans-Canada Pipeline, which was a factor in the Liberals being defeated in the 1957 election is important when looking at infrastructure from an economic perspective.³⁹

Bureaucrats from the Ministry of Transport planned the airports in Pickering, Mirabel and Sea Island. The federal Ministry of Transport (MOT) had studied the capacity of airports in the early 1960s and made several estimations on the increases in passenger volume. The forecasts called for an increase to 6.9 million passengers by the year 1980.⁴⁰ These forecasts provided the impetus for Transport officials to put pressure on the Liberal government at the time to act and sign off on a number of airport expansions.

During the 1960s and 1970s cities, the provinces and the federal government all engaged in high level planning and infrastructure development. These projects show all levels of government were engaged in modernist projects that used science and technology to better society, largely through the domination of nature.⁴¹ To complete some of these projects sometimes it was necessary for the state to use coercive powers to as Tina Loo puts it, remove “people in the way.”⁴²

The third element in Scott’s study is the use of the coercive power of the state to bring the high-modernist designs into fruition. The federal government had passed legislation dealing with

³⁸ Richard J. Schultz, *Federalism, Bureaucracy, and Public Policy The Politics of Highway Transport Regulation*, (Canada: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1980), 27.

³⁹ Bothwell, Drummond and English, 144.

⁴⁰ The Department of Transport was changed to the Ministry of Transport as part of a reorganization of federal departments conducted by the Trudeau government in 1970. Statistics Canada. *Aviation in Canada Historical and Statistical Perspectives on Civil Aviation*. Canada: Ministry of Supply and Services Canada, 1986, 173-174. Government of Canada, *Report of the Airport Inquiry Commission*, (Ottawa: Information Canada, 1974), 49.

⁴¹ Loo, 165.

⁴² Ibid, 161. Tina Loo, “People in the Way: Modernity, Environment, and Society on the Arrow Lakes,” (*BC Studies*. No 142/143. Summer/Autumn 2004), 161.

expropriation in several areas including railways and pipelines long before 1970.⁴³ When we look at federal airport development we can see how the state used coercive tools to legally take property away from citizens. Expropriation is justified by the state in the name of the public interest. In Canada it has been left to judges to clarify elements of expropriation, and the principle of value to an expropriated property.⁴⁴ Expropriation procedures generate controversy, as citizens debate the amount of compensation or resist being forced to leave their homes. As protestors fought against it, sometimes politicians would have to call on local, provincial or federal police forces to enforce the law. During the protests against the Mirabel Airport, protestors remember getting into a fight with the municipal police when they occupied a federal building. The police forced them to leave. When Mirabel opened, residents ran away when tear gas was used.⁴⁵ Coercive power -- expropriation, backed by the police power of the state -- facilitated high modernist plans.

The elements of Scott's study of high modernism suggests a framework for understanding how the federal government could plan and construct large infrastructure projects. However, these modernist airport plans, were disrupted by citizens. In the case of federal airport planning, citizens claimed their own legitimacy as members of civil society and challenged their respective governments.⁴⁶ In all three cases studied here a resistance formed against the plans. The state has the capacity to measure, plan and build projects. This encompasses many aspects. For our purposes we are concentrating on the ability to create and manipulate data, creating a

⁴³ Law Reform Commission of Canada, *Working Paper 9: Expropriation*, (Ottawa: Information Canada, 1975), 92-96.

⁴⁴ Cullingworth, 174-178.

⁴⁵ For police activity in Mirabel, Giles Boileau, and Jean-Paul Raymond, *La Mémoire de Mirabel*, (Québec: Éditions du Méridien, 1988), 128-130. Interview with Rita Lafond, April 1st 2016. W.H. Huck, "Letter to Baribeau," February 7th 1975, LAC MG 32-B46 Volume 81 File 1. For the opening of Mirabel, Richard Cleroux, "Trudeau Says Mirabel Airport will have Torontonians on their Knees," *Toronto Star*, October 6th 1975, CTASC.

⁴⁶ Scott, 27-28.

hegemonic vision through a variety of media sources and construct land for the legitimate use of constructing an airport. Civil society resisted the efforts of the federal government to build these airports and they did this by using the tools that we commonly associate with the state. These citizens entered the public sphere and shattered expectations of what citizens can achieve.

Infrastructure and Federal Regional Development

The history of public works in Canada runs parallel to the development of the modern Canadian state. This should come to no surprise as Canadian politicians supported the building of the canals, railroads, and highways that crisscrossed the landscape.⁴⁷ As James C. Scott has written, public works whether they are railroads or the rudimentary wall that surrounded an ancient city, are vital to a state's existence.⁴⁸ Public works in Canada have traditionally been associated with patronage and scandal. Corruption proliferated in Canadian politics as bribes and money exchanged hands. Patronage has remained a steady part of Canadian politics since the formation of the modern Canadian state. The Canadian Pacific Railroad that bound Canada from sea to sea brought down Prime Minister Macdonald in 1873 as a result of the Pacific Scandal.⁴⁹

In the 1960s public works took on a new role. With the economy performing well and experienced civil servants who believed in the power of the state, various governments took planning public works beyond their traditional role of job creation and patronage. However, politicians and the civil service became concerned with how particular regions in the country

⁴⁷ The building of the canal system alone created tens of thousands of jobs in the 1840s. Jobs that people desperately fought over: Ruth Bleasdale "Class Conflict on the Canals of Upper Canada in the 1840s," *Labour/ Le Travail*, (Volume 7, Spring 1981), 9-39. For the history of the railroad, Ken Cruikshank. *Close Ties: Railways, Government and the Board of Railway Commissioners, 1851-1933*, (Canada: McGill-Queens's University Press, 1991), 3. For the history of the Trans-Canada highway, David W. Monaghan, *Canada's New Main Street: The Trans-Canada Highway as Idea and Reality*, (Canada Science and Technology Museum, 2002), 1-90.

⁴⁸ James C. Scott, *Against the Grain A Deep History of the Earliest States*, (United State: Yale University Press, 2017), 13-18.

⁴⁹ Jeffrey Simpson, *Spoils of Power: The Politics of Patronage*, (Canada: Collins Publishers, 1988), 92-93. John English, *The Decline of Politics: The Conservatives and the Party System 1901-1920*, (Canada: Rock's Mills Press, 2016), 22.

were not sharing in these economic benefits. During this time, the federal government used public works not only to create jobs, but also as a tool for renewed regional development. The right project in a town or even a province could turn a have-not into a have. For the federal government the creation of the Department of Regional Economic Expansion (DREE) in 1969 represented the apex of regional planning as the federal government sought to facilitate economic development and social adjustments in less endowed parts of the country. Until DREE there had been no coherent national policy on regional economic development in Canada. DREE brought together a number of federal initiatives such as the Atlantic Development Board and the Fund for Rural Economic Development (FRED) under one single department.⁵⁰ DREE was supposed to provide funding for special programs in designated areas that needed economic development. Not surprisingly, the most contentious parts of the program was which regions would qualify for DREE funding. The regions that were designated in the beginning were the Atlantic provinces, eastern and northern Québec, parts of northern Ontario and the north east of the western provinces.⁵¹ For our purposes, it is crucial to understand that Montréal was designated a special region that could receive funding in the early 1970s. There was a lot of fear that the decline of Montréal would severely affect the future of Québec.⁵² The program was not just about regional development but also maximizing the presence of the federal government, which would be helpful during an election and the fight against the growing separatist movement in Québec. The fact that Montréal became a special region under DREE is directly linked to the

⁵⁰ R. Harley McGee, *Getting it Right Regional Development in Canada*, (Canada: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1992), xxvi-14. Guy Beaumier, *Regional Development in Canada*, Economic Division, 1988, 1-13. <http://publications.gc.ca/Collection-R/LoPBdP/CIR/8813-e.htm>.

⁵¹ Donald Savoie, *Regional Economic Development: Canada's Search for Solutions*, 2nd ed, (Canada: University of Toronto Press, 1992), 44.

⁵² Ibid, 46. Simpson, 342.

development of the Mirabel Airport. Much has been written about the failure of DREE. It is seen mainly as a case of patronage and cronyism. In addition, it failed to provide much stimulus to the regions that needed it most. Although the federal government continues to be involved in regional development, the policy has lost most of its luster.⁵³

In addition to regional development, the Trudeau government also sought to become more involved in addressing urban issues, creating the Ministry of State for Urban Affairs (MSUA) in 1971. MSUA's role was to examine urban issues from a federal perspective and help with the planning process. In some ways the ministry was to be a neutral arbiter between municipalities, the provinces and various federal departments. With this new departments the federal government was taking a heavy interest in urban development and planning much to the chagrin of the provinces.⁵⁴ Barney Danson, who served as Minister from 1974 to 1976, realized it was a severely restrained role. The provinces would never let the federal government interfere with how cities were managed or provincial planning. Participation in MSUA programs was more about access to federal funds than enthusiasm on other levels of government.⁵⁵ MSUA would play an important role in the development of the Sea Island Airport as the ministry tried to bring together different levels of government.

Expropriation

There has been very little written on expropriation in Canada, despite that the fact it is one of the most powerful tools used by the state for planning purposes. Before the reforms of the

⁵³ McGee, 115. Simpson, 342. Savoie, 220-224.

⁵⁴ Very little has been written on the Ministry of State for Urban Affairs. Zachary Spicer, "The Reluctant Urbanist: Pierre Trudeau and the Creation of the Ministry of State for Urban Affairs," *International Journal of Canadian Studies/Revue internationale d'études canadiennes*. (No. 44, 2011), 185-199. Zachary Spicer, "The Rise and Fall of the Ministry of State for Urban Affairs," *Canadian Political Science Review*, (Vol 5, No 2, 2011), 117-126. Arthur Fallick and Peter H. Oberlander, *The Ministry of State for Urban Affairs: A Courageous Experiment in Public Administration*, (Vancouver: The Centre for Human Settlements, University of British Columbia, 1987), 1-142.

⁵⁵ Barney Danson with Curtis Fahey, *Not Bad for a Sergeant*, (Canada: Dundurn Press, 2002), 197.

Expropriation Act in 1970, Canada had one of the most arbitrary systems of land seizure in the world. The federal government could seize your land without notice and the owners had no statutory right to an appeal. In the United States, the constitution provides a safeguard to your property being taken without due process. Under the common law system, which Canada operates, the Crown has the right to expropriate without compensation.⁵⁶ The discretionary nature of Canadian expropriation legislation has not gone unnoticed. There were many calls to reform expropriation laws in the 1970s as governments looked to the legal community for advice. For our purposes, we will look to federal legislation and Ontario, which conducted extensive studies in the late 1960s and early 1970s.⁵⁷

As mentioned previously, the federal government reformed the *Expropriation Act* in 1970. The Law Reform Commission of Canada published a report in 1976.⁵⁸ They believed, for the most part, that the changes made in the expropriation legislation embodied the principles of good expropriation law which are: equality, clarity and accessibility, openness, fairness and political responsibility. The Ontario Law Reform Commission also argued that fairness must be maintained in terms of compensation. The owner must be paid fairly, but not excessively, be it that the cost of the public work goes out of control. The state must also be generous to property owners who have a lot less power than the government in the bargaining process.⁵⁹ There has been a question of compensation levels, but also how the public are involved in the expropriation

⁵⁶ Cullingworth, 172-173.

⁵⁷ Ibid, 178.

⁵⁸ Law Reform Commission of Canada, *Report on Expropriation*, (Ottawa: Information Canada, 1976), 5. On the pre- 1970 Expropriation Act, George S. Challies, *The law of expropriation*, 2nd ed. (Montreal: Wilson & Lafleur, 1963), 4. Eric C.E. Todd, *The Federal Expropriation Act: A Commentary*, (Toronto: Carswell Co, 1970), 1-38. Eric C.E. Todd, *The law of expropriation and compensation in Canada*, (Scarborough, Carswell Co, 1992), 1-612.

⁵⁹ Law Reform Commission of Canada, *Report on Expropriation*, (Ottawa: Information Canada, 1976), 5. The Ontario Law Reform Commission, *Report of the Ontario Law Reform Commission on the Basis for Compensation on Expropriation*, (Toronto: Department of the Attorney General, 1967), 10-11.

process. Reports stressed that the state must accommodate the public and provide room for them to speak. Yet, there was also an acknowledgement that expropriation is a bitter process for citizens. In some ways, no matter what the government does, there will always be a certain amount of anger towards the state.⁶⁰

The *Expropriation Act, 1970* provided some much-needed changes such as the government now having to provide a notice of expropriation. If there are objections to the process, the Ministry of Justice must conduct a public hearing. The Crown can now only take possession when the expropriation has been confirmed and must help pay the legal costs of someone disputing a compensation claim.⁶¹ The case studies of Canadian airport development in the 1970s show some of the tensions that exist in the expropriation process. The Mirabel Airport was not under the revised statute, so residents had a lot less power in the process. Both Pickering and Sea Island had public hearings, but in the case of Sea Island the government went one step further and created the Airport Planning Committee (APC) where citizens and bureaucrats could work together on the development plan. By comparing these three different case studies we can see the different ways that expropriation was applied to property.

For scholars writing about the Canadian state, property was supposed to be protected not expropriated by the state. Ian McKay has written extensively about the Liberal Order Framework. He argued that the individual is the primary concern of the Canadian state and that liberal ideology best articulated this view of the ideal state: the protection of liberty, equality and property.⁶² But, the state sometimes clearly interrupts and intrudes into the private sphere. This

⁶⁰ R.B. Robinson, *Report on Expropriation Act*, (Ministry of the Attorney General, 1974), 1-2. Law Reform Commission of Canada, *Report on Expropriation*, (Ottawa: Information Canada, 1976), 10-11. Cullingworth, 184.

⁶¹ W. F. Whitman, "New Expropriation Act," August 5th 1970, LACV File Number 5400-4 Box 5.

⁶² Ian McKay, "The Liberal Order Framework: A Prospectus for a Reconnaissance of Canadian History," *Canadian Historical Review*, (Vol 81, No. 4, December 2000), 3-4.

creates a dilemma as to how citizens interact with the state.⁶³ Clearly the public and private spheres are not as separate as some would like us to think. Acts such as expropriation expose the limits between the so-called public and the private realms. Expropriation goes against the basic tenets of classical liberalism, yet the state uses its powers to act in a national interest. Individual rights are sacrificed for the security and betterment of the state. The contrast between how citizens and politicians respond to expropriation demonstrate the gap between serving the public versus the individual.

The method of expropriation used by the federal government for the Pickering Airport was vividly described in an interview with Lorne Almack:

The day they stuck a form letter in my mail box down the road here that said dear sir or madam your land is expropriated the government needs your land for a new airport. You are going to be treated well don't worry just keep paying your taxes and living here like you always have but we will look after you. I got that thing, I read it, and said no fucking way. You know I was mad what a rotten way to announce to people...⁶⁴

The expropriation for the federal airport was immediate and the land was seized. The provincial government also expropriated lands for the Cedarwood community though, as one POP member attests, it was much worse because the province was the only buyer of property and if the government chose not to use the land it would be offered back to the original owners.⁶⁵ For the residents of Whitevale, which included some POP members, being stuck in a three-and-one-half-year limbo was a miserable experience. Looking back, Gord Wilson questioned the democratic nature of his country when something like expropriation is legal.⁶⁶ André Bouvette of CIAC, citing Marx, claimed expropriation was an abuse of the state's power. Fernand Gauthier assessed

⁶³ Ibid, 10.

⁶⁴ Interview with Lorne Almack, May 23rd 2013.

⁶⁵ Interview with Gord Wilson, May 9th 2013.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

that the government was abusive to the people in order too fulfill their dreams of Mirabel.⁶⁷ For many former residents who lived through or were involved in these political battles, expropriation just had too high of a cost. Rita Lafond, one of the leaders of CIAC, said there was “a very deep suffering.”⁶⁸ Many people lost their land only to see these airports never built or in the case of Mirabel-shut down. The politicians I interviewed had different views on expropriation. Marc Lalonde, Minister and MP for Outremont from 1972-1984, scoffed at the idea that expropriation was an abuse. He argued that the state could not function if it couldn’t expropriate for essential public goods like roads and hospitals.⁶⁹ Jim Fleming, the MP for York West from 1972-1984, called expropriation an unpleasant power. Although he stressed that the government could make it fair and reasonable it would always be upsetting to the public. It is a necessary power for the state to have.⁷⁰ By looking at the conflict over federal airport development we can see how questions over expropriation played out in public debate.

Citizen Activism and Challenges to Authority

The protests against federal airport development by citizen groups is part of the emergence of social movements in the 1960s. During this time the state had to endure and negotiate with new groups that contended for power and influence in society. Interest groups challenged the way policy was developed within the political bubble and demanded a seat at the table.⁷¹ New political issues such as urban sprawl, environmental decay and land use emerged that galvanized citizens. Finally, citizens became more critical of traditional authority figures

⁶⁷ Interview with André Bouvette, April 5th 2016. Interview with Fernand Gauthier, April 14th 2016.

⁶⁸ Interview with Rita Lafond, April 1st 2016.

⁶⁹ Interview with The Honourable Marc Lalonde, April 6th 2016.

⁷⁰ Interview with The Honourable Jim Fleming, June 23rd 2016.

⁷¹ Miriam Smith, “Interest Groups and Social Movements,” in *Canadian Politics in the 21st Century*, 6th Edition, ed. Michael Whittington and Glen Williams, (Canada: Thompson Canada Limited, 2004), 218-219. Richard White, *Planning Toronto: The Planners, The Plans Their Legacies, 1940-1980*, (Canada: UBC Press, 2016), 6.

such as politicians and bureaucratic. This would have profound consequences for the policy process and how our system functions.

The expansion of the Canadian polity to include many new groups contesting power has been linked to a new understanding of democracy that developed in the 1960s. Richard Harris described this appropriately in *Democracy in Kingston* as he writes about the rise of the New Left in Kingston and its effect on politics in the city. Democratic reform in the 1960s was not necessarily about changing the system but improving and increasing the amount of citizen participation in government and making society more equal.⁷² This was shaped by international forces whereby Canada drew from British and American sources within the context of the Cold War. In Canada this was expressed by the New Left and the political developments within Canada.⁷³ Bryan Palmer described the New Left as a movement that was born on university campuses and resonated with students. Their ideology was a mix of Marxism and participatory democracy.⁷⁴ The New Left did not embrace class as the most important unifier of their movement. Class was not to be the agent of change. The ideology of the New Left was about being directly involved in change and was based more on generational differences.⁷⁵ This was not just about sending a petition to Parliament but actively trying to change or even destroy the system and its many manifestations. That system could be capitalism, patriarchy, environmental destruction or imperialism. The revolutionary consciousness of the time period meant new ideas

⁷² Richard Harris, *Democracy in Kingston A Social Movement in Urban Politics, 1965-1970*, (Canada: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1998), 5. See also John Sewell, *The Shape of the Suburbs: Understanding Toronto's Sprawl*, (Canada: University of Toronto Press, 2009), 1-260. Also see Richard White, *Planning Toronto: The Planners, The Plans Their Legacies, 1940-1980*, (Canada: UBC Press, 2016), 373-375.

⁷³ Harris, 10.

⁷⁴ Palmer, 282-283.

⁷⁵ Owram, 228.

were being formulated, debated and discussed.⁷⁶ This ideology was one way that some people in the 1960s expressed dissatisfaction with the status quo.

The 1960s was also a time when citizens began to question the notion of progress. The idea of unrestrained progress became intensified during the post war period when urbanization became accelerated in part due to fulfilling a social and economic need for more housing and state policies that encouraged the development of suburbs.⁷⁷ Suburbs did represent a new prosperity as many Canada moved into a more comfortable middle class but it also became a symbol of excessive growth and environmental destruction.⁷⁸ This anti-modernism inspired some members of the environmental movement who wanted to improve or change urban life. This manifested at different levels of society. In Toronto the election of Mayor David Crombie in 1972 signalled the beginning of a period of reform for the City of Toronto. Mayor Crombie challenged developers and the sprawl associated with the city. His leadership gave room for people to question how we live in our cities and how the state moves citizens to suit its needs.⁷⁹ Interest groups like Pollution Probe and Greenpeace formed, questioning how citizens relate to the environment.⁸⁰ Citizens became more involved with urban issues and challenging state plans. In Ontario, this included the campaign to stop the Spadina Expressway which was a galvanizing issue for Toronto in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The campaign, which culminated in the cancellation of the expressway by Premier Bill Davis in 1971, was one of the first successful

⁷⁶ Palmer, 283.

⁷⁷ Adam Rome, *The Bulldozer in the Countryside: Suburban Sprawl and the Rise of American Environmentalism*, (United States: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 35.

⁷⁸ André G. Kirk, *Counterculture Green: The Whole Earth Catalog and American Environmentalism*, (United States: University of Kansas Press, 2007), 23.

⁷⁹ Jon Caulfield, *The Tiny Perfect Mayor*, (Toronto: James Lorimer & Company, Publishers, 1974), 54.

⁸⁰ Ryan O'Connor, *The First Green Wave: Pollution Probe and the Origins of Environmental Activism in Ontario*, (British Columbia: UBC Press, 2014), 8-10.

urban campaigns against mega projects.⁸¹ Citizens also vigorously fought against Premier Davis's regional plans. They were highly unpopular and contributed to a period of low popularity for the Progressive Conservatives in Ontario. Some journalists even speculated that the modernist visions of Premier Davis would be the end of the successful Big Blue Machine in Ontario.⁸² The anti-airport groups can be associated with the environmental movement in Canada. The airports being developed clearly threatened citizens way of life. Whether it was the creeping urban sprawl spreading from Toronto to Pickering, a traditional farming community in Mirabel being replaced by an airport or runways expansions in Sea Island threatening the Fraser River; the anti-airport activists all had environmental stakes in these fights.

One of the consequences of citizens becoming more engaged in politics and developing their own interest groups was a growing cynicism and skepticism in politicians and experts. This has become more apparent after this period, as authors have noted how citizens became less trusting of politicians. Voters were more likely to be involved in interest groups and had less faith in political parties being avenues for change. There was a clear decline in trust towards authority figures.⁸³

Citizens also started to challenge the experts and how evidence was crafted by the state. Challenging the evidence of the state is less about protesting and more about getting on the level of the state. It's about using the language of government officials and creating a professional

⁸¹ Danielle Robinson, "'The Streets Belong to the People' Expressway Disputes in Canada, C. 1960-75." (PhD Dissertation, McMaster University, 2012), 21-69. Ian Milligan, "This Board Has a Duty to Intervene: Challenging the Spadina Expressway through the Ontario Municipal Board, 1963-1971," *Urban History Review*, (Volume 39, No. 2, Spring 2011), 25.

⁸² Cullingworth, 331. Johnathan Manthorpe and Norman Webster, "End of a Dynasty or Just a Case of the Staggers," *Globe and Mail*, May 25th 1973, CTASC. David Allen, "Davis Faces Criticism," *Toronto Star*, April 21st 1973, CTASC. David Allen, "PC Stalwarts Fear Bill Davis is Going too Far Too Fast," *Toronto Star*, May 19th 1973, CTASC.

⁸³ Neil Nevitte, *The Decline of Deference Canadian Value Change in Cross-National Perspective*, (Canada: Broadview Press, 1996), 94-106.

campaign.⁸⁴ The state relies on evidence to justify decisions and drafting reports is one of the functions of governments. Both politicians and bureaucrats have incentives to ensure that documents reflect the interest of pressure groups or the party in power.⁸⁵ During the marijuana legalisation debate that took place during the 1960s the provincial government of Ontario and Québec relied on government bodies to provide them with research to demystify the effects of marijuana and educate the public about its health effects.⁸⁶ These government bodies competed with other groups who either wanted to maintain the criminal charges against the drug or completely legalize it.⁸⁷ Social movements during the 1960s began to adopt an evidence-based policy approach as more citizens' questioned traditional authority figures. During this time period citizens became more concerned about their health and natural environment. In a Cold War climate where governments maintained that nuclear war could be a moment away, a growing chorus of people sounded the alarm about how nuclear testing was affecting our environment. In this age of high science, the state and corporations were confident in their limits and consistently reassured the public that everything was fine.⁸⁸ Yet people began to distrust the claims of corporations that the food they were eating was healthy and natural. During the 1960s, as people questioned how nuclear bomb testing would affect our environment, so more people looked to "all-natural food" and health food stores to find an alternative to scientifically crafted

⁸⁴ Charles Godfrey and Hector Massey, *People or Planes*, (Toronto: Copp Clark Publishing, 1972), 22.

⁸⁵ Marcel Martel, "'The Age of Aquarius': Medical Expertise and the Prevention and Control of Drug Use by the Québec and Ontario Governments." in *The Sixties Passion, Politics and Style*, ed. Dimitry Anastakis, (Canada: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2008), 100.

⁸⁶ Marcel Martel, "'The Age of Aquarius': Medical Expertise and the Prevention and Control of Drug Use by the Québec and Ontario Governments." 100-101.

⁸⁷ Ibid, 112.

⁸⁸ Catherine Carstairs, "Food Fear and the Environment in the Long Sixties," in *Debating Dissent: Canada and the Sixties*, ed. Lara Campbell, Dominique Clément and Gregory S. Kealey (Canada: University of Toronto Press, 2012), 32.

instant food.⁸⁹ As more chemicals were found polluting our environment like mercury, DDT and pesticides, more Canadians questioned corporations and the state about the truthfulness of their claims.⁹⁰

The 1960s was a time when some citizens lost some faith in science and technology but also when experts were routinely questioned.⁹¹ Catherine Carstairs and Rachel Elder demonstrate how profoundly untrusting the general public became in the case of the water fluoridation debates during the 1960s. Despite doctors and dentists reassuring the public that water fluoridation was safe, citizens remained skeptical, and constantly voted down water fluoridation in referendums.⁹² Some of this rhetoric can be seen in the literature about the Pickering Airport. Walter Stewart in *A Paper Juggernaut: Big Government Gone Bad* (1979) argued that the bloated bureaucracy and arrogant politicians were the main reason why the Pickering Airport was a terrible public policy decision. He argued that the decision to build the Pickering Airport was arrogant and wrong on every level. Stewart claimed the decision-making process in Canada had become centered on bureaucrats who told cabinet ministers what to do.⁹³ Although Stewart spoke about the state in his book, he implied that the relationship between citizens and the federal government had failed. All the mechanisms that seemingly connect citizens to the state such as the courts, politicians, public hearings failed to take into account the concerns of the

⁸⁹ Ibid, 32-33. Before the publication of Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* in 1962, people were already engaged in activism against DDT. Sellers, 2-4.

⁹⁰ Catherine Carstairs, "Food Fear and the Environment in the Long Sixties," in *Debating Dissent: Canada and the Sixties*, 44.

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Catherine Carstairs and Rachel Elder, "Expertise, Health and Popular Opinion: Debating Water Fluoridation," *Canadian Historical Review*, Volume 89, No. 3, (September 2008), 347.

⁹³ Stewart, 12. The relationship between public servants, Cabinet Ministers and the Prime Minister has been criticized over the years. Donald J. Savoie, *Breaking the Bargain: Public Servants, Ministers and Parliament*, (Canada: University of Toronto Press, 2003), 132. Donald J. Savoie, *Governing From the Centre: The Concentration of Power in Canadian Politics*, (Canada: University of Toronto Press, 1999), 239-274.

public at large. The result was that planners and consultants mishandled this mega project and wasted millions of taxpayer dollars with no results.⁹⁴

The sentiment that government had become bloated and unmanageable is a familiar line today. It is difficult for the average citizen to comprehend the size and scope of a modern state. Unless someone is well versed in a related field how could we expect citizens to know what the function of every ministry, crown agency or tribunal is? Many of the protestors who were interviewed describe government as insensitive, unresponsive and even abusive.⁹⁵ Eunice Robinson who was the daughter of one of the expropriated property owners in the Cora Brown community where the Sea Island Airport expansion took place spoke of the emotional cost of expropriation. It was a cost that is hidden and something that no bureaucrat could calculate when you give a citizen monetary compensation for a piece of property.⁹⁶ Policy planners and politicians had been use to making pronouncements and acting upon them. Making policy was no longer going to be so simple.

⁹⁴ Stewart, 14. Rowan, 10.

⁹⁵ Interview with Eunice Robinson, January 20th 2016. Interview with Rita Lafond, April 1st 2016. Interview with André Bouvette, April 5th 2016.

⁹⁶ Interview with Eunice Robinson, January 20th 2016

Part 1: Mirabel, Québec: “A Justifiable Mistake?”

Chapter 2: Où est l’Aéroport?

On October 6th, 1975 Prime Minister Trudeau opened the Mirabel Airport in Québec.¹ The crowd cheered as he spoke highly of the completed project. On the other side of the fence, residents ran away as police threw tear gas at them, fearing the protestors would set fire to some power lines.² Mirabel Airport may have been completed but for the citizens who lost their land, the battle was not over. It had just begun. Mirabel Airport was developed at a time when the *Expropriation Act, 1906* was still in effect. That means unlike other airport development projects that were being established in the 1970s that required some statutory public consultation, Mirabel required nothing more than a slip in the mail saying your land had been expropriated.³ For residents, this meant they had no formal mechanism of discussing their problems with the state. For policy planners and bureaucrats who had big plans for Mirabel it meant that citizens could easily be erased and removed, or so they believed.⁴

Mirabel was created in the context of the federal government’s growing interest in regional development and the Trudeau government’s careful handling of Québec’s place in Canada. There was a pronounced effort by the federal government to have a large and noticeable presence in Québec politics and promoting its policies there. The federal Liberal Party had been

¹ When the airport was first announced the airport was known as Ste. Scholastique but then was named Mirabel. These names will be interchanged depending on the source material and the term the speaker uses.

² Richard Cleroux, “Trudeau Says Mirabel Airport will have Torontonians on their Knees,” *Toronto Star*, October 6th, 1975, CTASC.

³ Government of Canada, “The Expropriation Act,” 1970. LAC Volume 30, File 5. Law Reform Commission of Canada, *Working Paper 9: Expropriation*, (Ottawa: Information Canada, 1975), 92-96. Bret Edwards, “Breaking New Ground: Montréal-Mirabel International Airport, Mass Aeromobility, and Megaproject Development in 1960s and 1970s Canada,” *Journal of Canadian Studies*, (Volume 50. No 1. Winter 2016), 23.

⁴ For the purposes of this study I will refer to the airport lands as Mirabel. The area was known as Ste. Scholastique and 16 municipalities were expropriated for the airport. However, for simplicity sake unless otherwise referred to I will indicate residents were from Mirabel. Éric Gagnon Poulin, “Mirabel: Au nom du développement,” *Anthropologica*, (Volume 58. No 2, 2016), 278-279.

the dominant political party in Québec federally during most of the 20th century. However, the Liberals struggled to respond to the Quiet Revolution and the rise of Québec nationalism.⁵ This was also a time when the federal government started to become more engaged in questions of urban development, regionalism and planning on a massive scale. The Mirabel Airport presented an opportunity for the Trudeau government to accomplish several of these objectives. The government expropriated 97,000 acres for Mirabel, which was the largest expropriation in Canadian history at that time.⁶ Only 17,000 acres were needed for the airport and future expansions. The rest of the land was reserved for an industrial park where the federal government planned to promote industries, located just north of Montréal. The airport would provide relief to the Dorval Airport in Montréal and the industrial park would create tens of thousands of jobs for Québeckers.⁷ For the 10,000 residents who would be expropriated for this grand vision there was a real sense of being pushed out and away. The long history of farming in the area was to be replaced with runways and factories. The Center d'Information et d'Animation Communautaire (CIAC) differed from the other protest groups that will be studied in this dissertation, in that its members generally supported the idea of a new airport in Montréal. Different communities did want the airport and the jobs that came with it. The group did not challenge the economic case for the airport. Rather, they questioned the size of the expropriation and the location of the airport.⁸ However, as the federal government continued to butt heads with

⁵ Robert Bothwell, Ian Drummond and John English, *Canada Since 1945: Power, Politics and Provincialism*, (Canada University of Toronto Press, 1981), 359-400; R. Kenneth Carty, *Big Tent Politics The Liberal Party's Long Mastery of Canada's Public Life*, (Canada: UBC Press, 2015), 21. For Liberal election result during the Trudeau years, see Joseph Wearing, *The L-Shaped Party: The Liberal Party of Canada 1958-1980*, (Canada: McGraw-Hill Ryerson Limited, 1981), 198

⁶ Suzanne Laurin, *L'Échiquier de Mirabel*, (Québec: Les Éditions du Boréal, 2012), 275-277. Éric Gagnon Poulin, "La Mobilisation Politique Des Expropriés de Mirabel," (Maîtrise, Université de Montréal, September 2009), 1.

⁷ Feldman and Milch, 74.

⁸ Interview with Rita Lafond, April 1st 2016.

the National Assembly over Mirabel, the federal Liberals soon realized that those 10,000 farmers were not going to let their land be taken without a fight.

I will begin by exploring the literature written about the Mirabel Airport and I will identify some of the gaps. Next, I will analyze the history of the development of the Mirabel Airport and show how it became the largest expropriation in Canadian history. I will examine the planning around Mirabel and discuss the limitations of the federal government's efforts. Finally, I will conclude by looking at the formation of the CIAC in 1969, the citizen group that emerged after the expropriations in Mirabel.

Literature Review

The literature on the Mirabel Airport is vast compared to Pickering and Sea Island. Most of the literature on the Mirabel Airport has been written in French, although there are some sources in English. In addition, most of the Anglophone scholarship was written in the 1980s. Bret Edwards has suggested that Mirabel scholarship can be classified into two types of studies: those looking at the political history behind Mirabel and those concentrating on the residents and their resistance.⁹ I agree with his division, but I would add that there is a clear difference between how English Canadian and Québec scholars treated the subject matter. Most English Canadian scholars were dismissive of the resistance mounted by citizens, perhaps because their resistance failed. However, this does not mean we should dismiss their experience or ignore the local history in this battle. Despite the availability of literature on Mirabel in both English and French, there are some gaps that need to be addressed, including a more robust analysis of the political history of the fight over Mirabel by looking at provincial and local newspapers, and a more careful reading of the negotiations that took place between citizens and the state. We need

⁹ Edwards, *Breaking New Ground: Montréal-Mirabel International Airport, Mass Aeromobility, and Megaproject Development in 1960s and 1970s Canada*, 28-29.

to fully analyze how consultation takes place between the protestors and the government. This will give us a better understanding of how regional ministers operate on sensitive policy issues in their home province and how the planners responded to the residents. Most of the literature on Mirabel has been written as a tragedy with the airport being showcased as the classic white elephant that cost taxpayers millions.¹⁰ Although I do not want to dismiss how the residents were treated, I do think we can analyze this issue with more nuance and learn more about the Canadian political system and how states can build public works successfully.

The English Canadian scholarship was primarily written in the late 1970s and early 1980s as some scholars started to assess the impact of federal airport planning. In his book on the Pickering Airport, Walter Stewart began by discussing the connection between Pickering and Mirabel and federal airport planning in the late 1960s. He argued that the Mirabel Airport is an example of government bumbling, mismanagement and arrogance. The political process around it was about evasion, concealment and outright lying.¹¹ Stewart assesses the airport as a project that was pushed through by political forces and that the civil service was looking for ways to justify the investment. It is true that Mirabel was poorly planned and that it was built during a bad time for air travel in Canada during the 1970s. However, the federal government never hid the intent of the public works project. The airport was supposed to spur economic development in Québec. In addition, it is difficult to choose which set of political forces can be justified or ignored. Mirabel could have been built between Ottawa and Montréal, but the provincial government would not support that decision. So, the federal government chose a location more acceptable to the province. Stewart could see that as federal bumbling, but it was a compromise

¹⁰ Ibid, 11.

¹¹ Stewart, 14-15.

to try and make the project work. Mirabel may have had one compromise too many.¹² Furthermore the author described the residents of Mirabel as “divided, inarticulate and frightened.”¹³ He goes on to write that most of the locals were pleased to sell their land and that there was no highly organized resistance.¹⁴ Stewart’s characterization of citizen protestors is unjust and wrong. The residents around Mirabel were highly organized and fought back relentlessly. Although they were not successful in stopping the airport from opening they made an impact on politics both provincially and federally.

In *The Politics of Canadian Airport Development*, Elliot J. Feldman and Jerome Milch present Mirabel as an example of federal and provincial conflict, giving minimal attention to the residents. Although there is some attention paid to The Center d’Information et d’Animation Communautaire (CIAC) conflict with the federal government including the issues of rent and the price of land, the authors overlook CIAC’s role in the conflict.¹⁵ Mirabel was not just an issue of federal-provincial squabbling over constitutional issues and planning. This was an infrastructure project that touched upon many public policy issues, and citizens were certainly aware and involved. There also is an assumption that because Mirabel was built, the government did not adjust its plans. Feldman and Milch base their research mostly on interviews conducted with officials and protestors.¹⁶ Interviews are a good source of information, but they are not sufficient on their own. By looking at government documents, newspapers and the protestors own records we can get a better understanding of the conflict over the airport. The authors also fail to analyze the role of political parties or MP’s themselves in the conflict. Québec MPs played an important

¹² Ibid, 15.

¹³ Ibid, 31.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Feldman and Milch, 63-65.

¹⁶ Ibid, 232.

role in the negotiations between the state and citizens and the link between the federal Liberals and Québec should not be understated. Although Mirabel was built, policy makers and politicians did engage in a series of negotiations with the residents. CIAC was quite successful in having their demands listened to, and politicians did engage with the group.

Finally, more recently, Bret Edwards looks at Mirabel as an example of a federally planned mega project that fit within the Quiet Revolution and urban transformation in Québec in the 1960s.¹⁷ Edwards investigates the changing role of airports, and their relation to people and places. I will build on his work, examining the narrative progress that shaped Mirabel and other airport projects and how citizens struggled against that ideology. Mirabel is an example of how the state can also refashion the environment as government officials determined what suitable uses of land would be. The Mirabel project was a large enterprise that required extensive labour, and many construction firms received lucrative contracts to help build the airport. The Trudeau government presented Mirabel as an economic project that would provide thousands of jobs to Québécois.¹⁸ However, although Edwards writes about CIAC and their efforts including getting higher settlements from the federal government for their land, there is still a clear dichotomy between state and citizens. Although the airport was a state-sponsored mega project that dominated people and place, the federal government still worked with citizens to find solutions to their problems. This was not a one-sided conflict. The resistance against it was vast and organized. The residents did hold their own against the state.

If we investigate the literature written in Québec we will find a much richer and more detailed account of the events that took place in the fight against Mirabel. Jean-Paul Raymond, the leader of CIAC, wrote a memoir about his fight against Mirabel with Gilles Boileau. Gilles

¹⁷ Edwards, 6. Edwards *A Bumpy Landing: Airports and the Making of Jet Age Canada*, 72-73

¹⁸ Ibid, 15-20, 24.

Boileau has continued to write about the issue including a publication after l'Assemblée nationale du Québec apologized to the residents who were expropriated.¹⁹ The memoir is written more like a social history of the conflict. It covers the time of the announcement leading up into the 1980s as residents fought to get their land back. Raymond gives an account of the long history of farming in the area that stretches back for generations creating a sense of longevity that ties the residents to the land. There is a real sense of place for Raymond. It's more than just farming; farming is in their blood.²⁰ This is important in understanding why the residents fought back so hard against the airport. This wasn't just their livelihood being taken away, it was also their history and identity. Raymond contextualizes the conflict well and shows the difference between the beliefs of the residents compared to the bureaucrats planning Mirabel. Although the memoir does talk about some of the major events and points of contention from the resident's point of view, it does so within the confines of Raymond's memories. There are useful anecdotes about the rent strike, the conflicts over the settlement amounts, the state's use of force against residents and how expropriation affected the residents. It is a powerful account of how difficult it could be for citizens to fight back against the government.²¹ This is a very useful guide to the expropriation of Mirabel from the resident's point of view. But it does not put the conflict into the larger context of Canadian politics at the time or even some of the different points of view within Québec. Although it does include some of the major events in the conflict such as the comparison between Pickering and Mirabel, we are missing how different actors within the

¹⁹ Giles Boileau, "La colère et le chagrin des gens de Mirabel," *Histoire Québec*, (Vol 10. No 3, 2005), 30.

²⁰ Giles Boileau, and Jean-Paul Raymond, *La Mémoire de Mirabel*, (Québec: Éditions du Méridien, 1988), 13-16. The interviews conducted with former residents really emphasize the relationship with their land and the trauma associated with losing it. Interview with Rita Lafond, April 1st 2016.

²¹ Boileau and Raymond.

provincial and federal government responded. Crucially, the memoir does not tell us a lot about how the citizens of Québec felt about CIAC and their public relations tactics.

More recent studies by Québec scholars have questioned the history of the Mirabel Airport, and the role of the citizens. Eric-Gagnon Poulin has written extensively on the Mirabel Airport. He directed a documentary called *Le fantôme de Mirabel* about the history of the airport, and its impact on residents decades after the expropriation. His published works documented the struggle of the expropriated as they fought to keep their land. Poulin draws on the work of Karl Marx, James Scott and other scholars to document how citizens developed consciousness to be able to resist the advancement of the state.²² He emphasises how the protestors became a collective to successfully mobilize against the federal government. Their positioning within their province in relationship to Québec nationalism is also important to understand. The rhetoric around comparing the expropriation of Pickering to Mirabel was instrumental in helping to turn public opinion in their favour.²³ Poulin drew on a number of government publications and conducted some interviews. However, his coverage of the press was limited. He only consulted *Le Devoir*, which did provide good coverage of the events in question but gives a one-sided perspective.²⁴ *Le Devoir* was a nationalist newspaper, supportive of the provincial government in its battles with the federal government.²⁵ By critiquing Mirabel through the lens of resistance literature, we lose sight of the positive objectives that the federal government was trying to meet.

²² *Le fantôme de Mirabel*, Directed by Éric Gagnon-Poulin and Louis Fortin, 2011.

www.youtube.com/watch?v=YeqtcEsw3IA. Éric Gagnon Poulin, "La Mobilisation Politique Des Expropriés de Mirabel," (Maîtrise, Université de Montréal, September 2009), 23-27. Éric Gagnon Poulin, "Mirabel: Au nom du développement," *Anthropologica*, (Volume 58. No 2, 2016), 280-286.

²³ Poulin, "Au nom du développement," 286. Poulin, "La Mobilisation Politique Des Expropriés de Mirabel," 71-74.

²⁴ Poulin, "La Mobilisation Politique Des Expropriés de Mirabel," 71-74.

²⁵ *Le Devoir* nationalist views can be seen in its editorials during federal and provincial elections during the 1970s. Nationalism and Québec's relationship with Canada affected which party the paper endorsed. Editorial, "Le meilleur choix," *Le Devoir*, April 25th 1970. Editorial, "Le manifeste electoral du parti liberal," *Le Devoir*, October

Finally, Suzanne Laurin, in *L'Échiquier de Mirabel*, writes about the expropriation, its impact on the residents of the territory and the collective pain that citizens still feel.²⁶ Laurin chronicles the plans to develop Mirabel through to the present as she reviews why the federal government decided to build Mirabel, the conflicts with the provincial government, and the many struggles of the residents. The author draws on a wide variety of sources including interviews, federal and provincial documents, CIAC records, and newspaper collections. Although the work documents many of the political struggles and moments of strife between the protestors and the federal government, its main question is asking what the territory of Mirabel represents? Laurin frames her study around this question and investigates how the territory is formed, its residents and its character throughout history and during the expropriation.²⁷ Although the study is very extensive and well researched, perhaps because of its broad timeline, it does not cover much of CIAC during the expropriation period of 1968 to the opening of Mirabel in 1975. There is some coverage of the issues concerning rent and the value of property, but more can be said about the issue of federal consultation. The author concludes by commenting that Mirabel has a unique history, it was an idea centered around an airport, and has a unique mix of “une agroculture et une et aéroculture.”²⁸ The identity of Mirabel had been shifting through history and will continue to alter in the future. For our purposes, although I would agree with Laurin about how the airport devastated the residents who were expropriated, especially as they fought to get back in their lands in the 80s and 90s, I believe a lot more can be said about the negotiations that surrounded Mirabel.

21st 1972. Editorial, “Le prochain parlement,” *Le Devoir*, October 27th 1973. Editorial, “Le parti le plus apte à gouverner,” *Le Devoir*, July 5th 1974. Editorial, “L’objection de l’indépendance,” *Le Devoir*, November 13th 1976.

²⁶ It was confirmed in an interview that Suzanne Laurin had some involvement with the protestors. Interview with Fernand Gauthier, April 14th 2016.

²⁷ Laurin, 14,

²⁸ Ibid, 273.

By examining the literature written on Mirabel we can learn a lot about the historical factors that affected the development of the airport. Although much has been written on the subject, there are gaps that do need to be addressed. I will present a more nuanced approach to the consultation that took place between the federal government and the protestors. I hope to show that the state had many moving parts during the development of Mirabel as individual MPs, the provincial government, the Liberal Party of Canada, the bureaucrats working on the project and of course Prime Minister Trudeau, all had different reasons for wanting to make Mirabel succeed. Second, by looking at newspapers both locally and across the province we can better understand that public opinion was not entirely behind the protestors or the over-reaching of the provincial government regarding jurisdiction over the airport lands.

Planning Mirabel

The Mirabel Airport was developed in the context of strong economic growth in Canada in the post war period. As the population grew and more Canadians used air travel as a means of transportation, the MOT started to assess the county's transportation needs. In the 1960s, it began to study the expanding capacity at Dorval (See Figure 1), which served Montréal and the surrounding communities. Government officials showed that passenger growth at Dorval had doubled from 2.5 million to 5 million passengers between 1963 and 1967.²⁹ The ministry started to explore the possibility of expanding Dorval. One of the problems was that it was estimated that by 1985 the airport would have reached full capacity. It would also be expensive to acquire land around the airport. In addition, noise abatement groups in Montréal were becoming very vocal about any attempt to expand Dorval. There was a lot of complaints in the 1960s about the

²⁹ Edwards Breaking New Ground: Montréal-Mirabel International Airport, Mass Aeromobility, and Megaproject Development in 1960s and 1970s Canada, 8. Ministry of Transport, "Montréal International Airport Technical Information," 1968, BAnQ Québec E7-1994-10-010/60.

sounds of jets.³⁰ The federal government turned to a consulting firm, Kates, Peat, Marwick (KPM) in 1966 to investigate the capacity problem. KPM recommended that if Dorval was not going to be expanded then the federal government should build a new airport.³¹ There was a notion of progress behind this recommendation. Canada would continue to grow, and more Canadians would move to urban centers and need access to air travel. The Department of Transport accepted these forecasts and Transport Minister Paul Hellyer moved the recommendations to Cabinet in the summer of 1968. The federal government announced plans to build a new airport in the Montréal area.³²

The issue of where the new airport would be located would prove contentious. In the context of Québec nationalism, any move by the federal government that even hinted at interference with provincial jurisdiction was going to be met with backlash from the provincial government. As the federal bureaucrats began to meet with their provincial government counterparts to discuss the location of the airport, there was another controversy brewing. The federal government was creating a new department to focus on regional development, and Mirabel was going to be one of its first projects.³³ In an early letter to Marc Lalonde, Principal Secretary to Prime Minister Trudeau, André Saumier of the Ministry of Forestry and Rural Development wrote a passionate letter detailing how a new airport would be important to Mirabel. Saumier wrote that “Si Montréal faiblit, le Québec périlite, et la crise qui suivra nécessairement aura des conséquences incalculablement sérieuses.” As mentioned previously,

³⁰ Feldman and Milch, 51. For noise problems in Montréal, see Jowett, 90-96.

³¹ Edwards, *Breaking New Ground: Montréal-Mirabel International Airport, Mass Aeromobility, and Megaproject Development in 1960s and 1970s Canada* 8. Feldman and Milch, 52. Laurin, 100.

³² Feldman and Milch, 53.

³³ Jean-Jacques Lemieux, *Comité Technique de Négociation on Nouvel Aéroport*, October 1968, BAnQ Québec E7 1994-10-010/52 File 32443. It seems that regional development came out of the older rural development branch. André Saumier, a bureaucrat who came out of that office, was heavily involved in development policy and would eventually join the Ministry of State for Urban Affairs. André Saumier, *Federal Structure for Development*, June 1968, LAC MG O7 Volume 440 File 735.13.

there was a profound sense that Montréal was in decline during the late the 1960s and it was feared that this would spread to all of Québec. The Minister of Forestry and Rural Development at the time was Jean Marchand. Marchand, a close friend and ally of Prime Minister Trudeau, would play a crucial role in the development of Mirabel. He had been recruited by Prime Minister Pearson as one of the three wise men from Québec along with Pierre Trudeau and Gérard Pelletier.³⁴ When Trudeau became Prime Minister, Marchand proved to be one of his trusted lieutenants. In a letter to Transport Minister Paul Hellyer in early 1969, Marchand wrote that “an investment of this scale... over the long run... will translate into more rapid growth of employment and earnings and, depending on where this occurs, will serve to increase or decrease economic disparities between regions.”³⁵ Marchand made it clear that he believed that a future airport would have profound economic implications for the province.

Marchand’s Cabinet posts points to where the emphasis on Mirabel was, and how crucial the project was seen to be. He became the first Minister of Regional Economic Expansion from 1969-1972 during the years when Mirabel was being planned and was Minister of Transport from 1972-1975 during the period of protest and expropriation.³⁶ His background as a union organizer would serve him well. Although he was the main minister responsible for Mirabel, the protestors had a lot of respect for him. Unlike many of the politicians and public servants who are described negatively, Marchand is remembered as someone who was charming, genuine and who respected the people.³⁷ It was not the Mirabel controversy, but a quite different

³⁴ John English, *Just Watch Me: The Life of Pierre Elliot Trudeau 1968-2000* (Canada: Alfred A. Knoff Canada, 2009), 8.

³⁵ Jean Marchand, “Letter to Paul Hellyer,” January 27th 1969, LAC MG 32-B46 Volume 28 File 2.

³⁶ Jean Marchand. https://lop.parl.ca/sites/ParlInfo/default/en_CA/People/Profile?personId=1097. Accessed July 25th 2018.

³⁷ Interview with Tommy Thompson. February 28th 2013. Interview with Fernand Gauthier, April 14th 2016. Interview with Lorne Almack, May 23rd 2013.

transportation issue – the federal government’s handling of language and air traffic controllers – that induced the resignation of Trudeau’s old friend in 1976.³⁸

The federal government hired Benjamin Higgins in 1969 to chair a taskforce to recommend the best site for the new airport. Higgins was a University of Montréal economist and although he was not an expert in aviation, he was interested in the economic implications of airport development. The *Higgins Report* analyzed three sites near Montréal based on land use, population and geographic factors. The southern site, near the border of the United States, was ruled out. There was a major concern that there would be interference between Canadian and American airspace. The western site between Montréal and the border of Québec and Ontario seemed ideal. There would be a lot of space to consider spinoff industries of the airport and the expansion of urban centers. The task force was not mandated to consider Québec’s reaction to a western site, but they were mindful of the concerns.³⁹ This would come to pass, as Premier Bertrand wrote to the Prime Minister numerous times saying that the airport should not be located near Ontario. He insisted that jobs should go to Québécois and that if the airport was located near the Ontario-Québec border, Ontario companies might get some of the benefits.⁴⁰ The northern site was the most favoured in terms of geography and the long-term shifts of population. The Higgins report makes clear that the federal government was studying Mirabel not just as infrastructure project that could fulfill transportation needs, but also as a project that would have economic multipliers for a region. From this perspective, the northern site was seen

³⁸ English, 305.

³⁹ Benjamin Higgins, “Report on Choosing Site of New Montréal Airport,” January 17th 1969, LAC MG 32-B46 Volume 16 File 11.

⁴⁰ Premier Bertrand, “Letter to Prime Minister Trudeau,” January 30th 1969.

as most beneficial to Québec, and therefore, as the federal civil service pointed out in a cost/benefit analysis, the least politically contentious site to the province.⁴¹

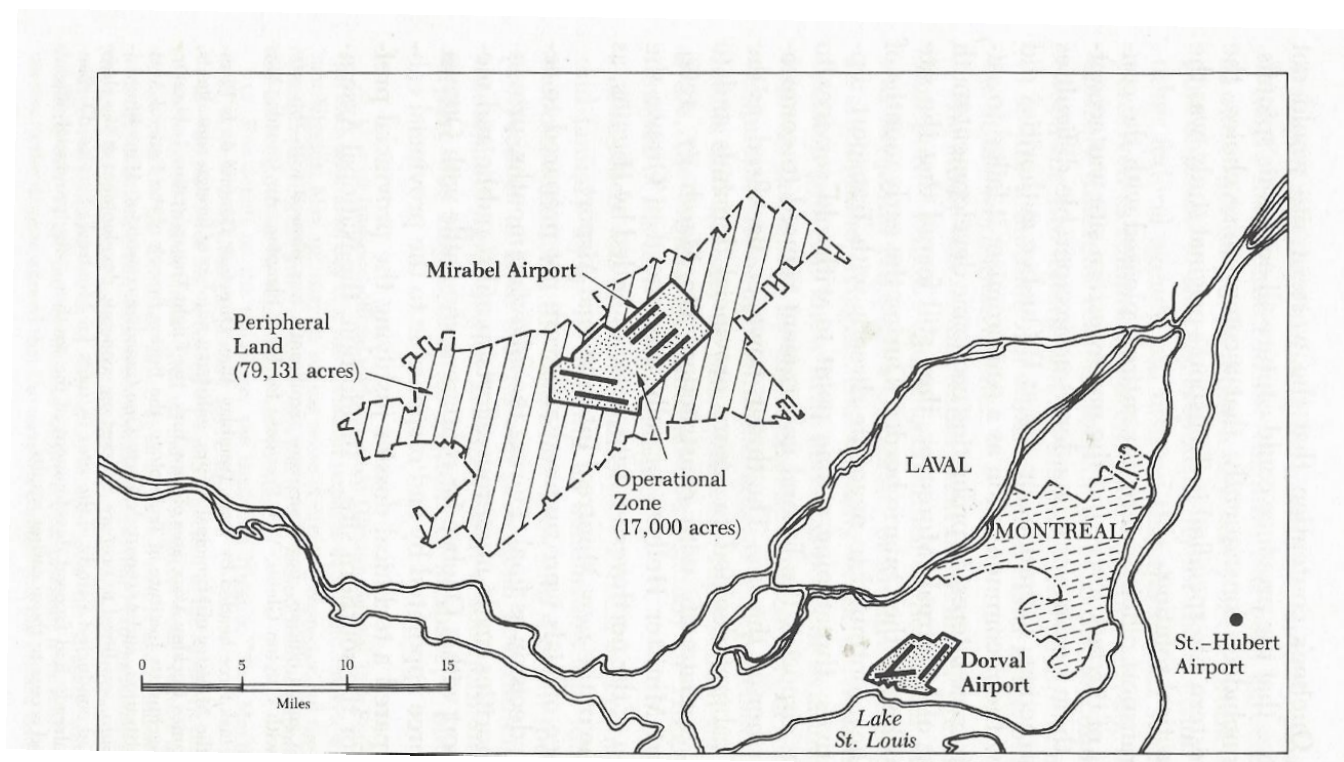


Figure 1: Map of Mirabel expropriation (Feldman and Milch, 58)

This did not mean, as it turned out, that the decision would not be contentious. On March 27 1969, the Prime Minister announced that Sainte Scholastique, north of Montréal (Figure 1), would be would be home to a grand airport.⁴² It is important, when looking at the history of the Mirabel Airport, to understand the scale of the expropriation, and the immense planning effort behind it. It was the biggest expropriation in Canadian history, and certainly one of the largest public works projects. In contrast to what would happen in the Pickering or Sea Island cases,

⁴¹ Benjamin Higgins, "Report on Choosing Site of New Montréal Airport," January 17th 1969, LAC MG 32-B46 Volume 16 File 11.

⁴² Edwards, *Breaking New Ground: Montréal-Mirabel International Airport, Mass Aeromobility, and Megaproject Development in 1960s and 1970s Canada* 17. Poulin, "Au nom du développement," 279. Laurin, 102.

which involved one or two population centres, in the case of Mirabel, the federal government acquired 97,000 acres in sixteen municipalities.⁴³ More than 10,000 people, who lived on 3,150 parcels of property were expropriated. Most of the residents were farmers.⁴⁴

When construction began in 1970, more than \$300 million dollars was spent on land acquisition and over 60 major construction contracts were awarded to various firms.⁴⁵ Apart from the 17,000 acres needed for the airport, the rest of the land was to be used for industrial development. As Bret Edwards argued, Mirabel was sold as a project for the 21st century. It represented modernity and progress. It was to be an economic magnet, that would bring jobs and advancement to a geographic area of Québec that was mostly known for farming.⁴⁶ The airport also offered another opportunity to show the world how much Québec had advanced within the period that we refer to as The Quiet Revolution. In a memo to Prime Minister Trudeau, Pierre Levasseur, who would become the Director of Planning for Mirabel, wrote that in the wake of the engineering and planning successes of events like Expo 67 and the Montréal Metro, Mirabel could show how French-Canadians can demonstrate their professional competence in building such an incredible project.⁴⁷ As we will see, there are conflicting ideas of what progress was and

⁴³ These municipalities include: Sainte-Scholastique, Sainte-Monique, Saint Hermas, Saint Canut, Saint-Jérusalem, Saint-Janvier, Saint-Benoît, Saint-Antoine-des-Laurentides, Sainte-Thérèse, Saint-Augustin, Sainte-Anne-des-Plaines, Saint-Placide, Sainte-Sophie, Saint-Colomban, Saint-André and Saint-Jérôme. Laurin, 26.

⁴⁴ Poulin, "Au nom du développement," 279. Edwards, *Breaking New Ground: Montréal-Mirabel International Airport, Mass Aeromobility, and Megaproject Development in 1960s and 1970s Canada*, 23.

⁴⁵ Edwards, *Breaking New Ground: Montréal-Mirabel International Airport, Mass Aeromobility, and Megaproject Development in 1960s and 1970s Canada*, 8. Norman, 308.

⁴⁶ Edwards, *Breaking New Ground: Montréal-Mirabel International Airport, Mass Aeromobility, and Megaproject Development in 1960s and 1970s Canada*, 17. For information on the type of farming engaged in Mirabel, see R.A. Stut and V. A. Heighton, "Economic Guidelines Agriculture Utilization at Mirabel Site," Canada: Department of Agriculture, December 1970. LAC RG 39 Volume 761 File Part 1.

⁴⁷ Edwards, *Breaking New Ground: Montréal-Mirabel International Airport, Mass Aeromobility, and Megaproject Development in 1960s and 1970s Canada*, 20-21; Pierre Levasseur, "Memo to Prime Minister," April 23rd 1969, LAC MG O7 Volume 440 File 735.13.

how it was to be achieved but it is important to understand how these values impacted the decisions around Mirabel.

Within days, the Québec premier argued that the announcement showed that the federal government was completely indifferent to provincial priorities. Premier Bertrand of the Union Nationale made the airport into an issue of Québec nationalism, a potent force close to a provincial election.⁴⁸ Municipal Affairs Minister Robert Lussier said they had nothing against Ontario, but that they had to keep what they had. René Lévesque, a former provincial Liberal but now the leader of the separatist Parti Québécois called the provincial government out, saying Québec had been duped by Ottawa.⁴⁹ The Québec government got its own experts to investigate if Ottawa had jurisdiction over the choice of an airport site. Professor Edward McWhinney, in a letter to Minister Lussier claimed that the old watertight compartments approach was old-fashioned and that governments had to work together. Ottawa could not unilaterally develop a regional development plan without the province as many of the elements within community planning are under provincial jurisdiction. In a series of critiques, Claude Ryan of *Le Devoir* argued that Prime Minister Trudeau was usurping Québec and that the *Higgins Report* did not respect the recommendations of the Québec government. Ryan did not mince words, as his editorials against the airport went on for three days.⁵⁰ Marc Lalonde recalled the editorials written by Ryan and his response to them. As Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister, Lalonde

⁴⁸ "Hellyer Praises Location," March 28th 1969, *Montréal Star*, BaNQ Québec E7 1994-10-010/ 51. Edwards, 17. Poulin, 279.

⁴⁹ "Bertrand Fumes Over Jetport Site," March 28th 1969. *Montréal Star*, BaNQ Québec E7 1994-10-010/ 51. "Lussier Attacks Jetport Site," April 23rd 1969, *The Globe and Mail*. "Québec a été dupe d'Ottawa une fois de plus," April 8th 1969, *Montréal La Presse*, SHGMI P053 S4 SS1 D8.

⁵⁰ Edward McWhinney, "Letter to Robert Lussier," May 1st 1969, BAnQ Vieux-Montréal 1993-08-002/42 File 2431-6-03 No 2. Poulin, 62. The series of editorials: "1) Trois Erreurs grossières de M. Trudeau," May 6th 1969 *Le Devoir*; "2- Les Critères économiques et sociaux : la rapport Higgins versus la documentation Québécoise," May 7th 1969 *Le Devoir*; "3- Les Considérations techniques excluaient-elles le sud," May 8th 1969, *Le Devoir*, LAC MG 32-B46 Volume 31 File 6.

responded to the accusations of *Le Devoir*. His own article challenged Ryan on his arguments that the numbers used in the *Higgins Report* were inaccurate, including the cost estimate for roads. Lalonde wrote that there was disagreement between the experts of the federal government and the province, but that did not mean the needs of Montréal would not be met. He concluded by saying the northern site was vastly superior to the southern site, which as mentioned previously, had issues being close to the American border.⁵¹

Although *Le Devoir* and some pundits in Québec were against the airport they were fighting a losing battle. First, the local press supported the decision of the Trudeau government. The editorial from *L'Argenteuil* wrote of cries of victory, while the *Montréal Star* wrote that Bertrand should probably not complain too loudly about getting large amounts of tax payer money. An editorial from Québec City *Le Soleil* accused Bertrand of doing nothing but fostering the flames of separatism.⁵² By looking at local newspapers, we can see that the press in Québec mostly supported the Trudeau government in their battle with Bertrand. Second, perhaps just as important, every time the Trudeau government did something in Québec they had to look over their shoulders to see how the rest of the country would react. Although there was some grumbling from the press about the usual sinkhole of federal money being dumped into Québec, many English language newspapers supported the stance of the Prime Minister and liked the fiery tone he took against the

⁵¹ Interview with The Honourable Marc Lalonde, April 6th 2016. Marc Lalonde, "Ottawa Responds to Le Devoir," *Le Devoir*, May 5th 1969, BaNQ Quebec E7 1994-10-010/51. The Québec government was not amused by this: "Analysis of Marc Lalonde Response to Le Devoir," May 5th 1969, BaNQ Québec E7 1994-10-010/ 52. The Ministry of Transport also commented on the editorials: Ministry of Transport, "Response to Le Devoir Editorial," May 1969, LAC MG 26 O7 Volume 440 File 735.13.

⁵² Editorial, "Le Nouvel Aeroport," *Québec City Le Soleil*, March 29th 1969, BaNQ Québec E7-1994-10-010/51. Editorial, "L'Aeroport, enfin, le suspense prend fin," *L'Argenteuil*, April 9th 1969, SHGMI P053 D8. Editorial, "Airport Debate Divisive," *Montréal Star*, April 3rd 1969, BaNQ Québec E23 1990 11-001/2.

Québec government.⁵³ The federal government, then, had largely won the battle with the provincial government over the location of the airport.

The federal government would continue to spar with the province over many issues that crossed jurisdictional boundaries. Although there would continue to be some nationalist rhetoric and criticism around how the federal government handled the project, much of this was silenced with the election of Robert Bourassa and the Parti Libéral in 1970. Bourassa's infamous promise in the election to create 100,000 jobs went well with his slogan "Québec au travail."⁵⁴ Mirabel Airport would prove to be crucial to Bourassa's plan to create all those new jobs. As much as the provincial government could be stubborn to deal with, there was a certain amount of mutual dependency between the Trudeau Liberals and Bourassa in Québec. This would play out during the expropriation process and during the construction of the airport.

The Formation of CIAC

The Center d'Information et d'Animation Communautaire (CIAC) was informally organized after the announcement that the federal government was going to expropriate the land of Ste. Scholastique for Mirabel Airport in 1969.⁵⁵ The entire territory was made up of 16 villages. One of the leaders of CIAC, Rita Lafond, described the announcement as sudden. The affected people only found out about the announcement on the TV or radio. As word spread across the territory, citizens began to gather at the local parish, which was the hub for many of

⁵³ For examples of negative editorials, "Too Expensive a Pawn," *Vancouver Sun*, April 14th 1969; "Sickening Performance," *The Winnipeg Tribune*, April 2nd 1969, BaNQ Québec E23 1990 11-001/2. Examples of positive editorials include "A Justified Response to Political Nonsense," *The Edmonton Journal*, April 3rd 1969; "A Disturbing Political Exhibition," *London Free Press*, April 2nd 1969, BaNQ Québec E23 1990 11-001/2.

⁵⁴ For information on Bourassa's election campaign in 1970, see Julien Brault, *Robert Bourassa*, (Canada: Les éditions Les Malins inc, 2010), 102-103. Feldman and Milch, 78. Edwards, 18. "Statement by Robert Bourassa," October 2nd 1970. BaNQ Québec E32 1987-10-004/ 124 File 2430-6-01-16.

⁵⁵ The entire territory was made up of 16 villages. Documents switch between calling the territory Ste. Scholastique and Mirabel. Laurin, 26; Edwards, *A Bumpy Landing: Airports and the Making of Jet Age Canada* 72.

these small communities.⁵⁶ Through the network of churches across the territory, residents quickly assembled to discuss the federal government plans and their options. Curé Georges Duquet, who would play an important role in the organization, documented some of the reactions to the airport. He wrote how people were concerned about their farms. Residents had been farming in the area for generations and they wondered why they were losing their property. Why had the government chosen Mirabel and not somewhere like Drummondville?⁵⁷

The residents did not organize immediately. Unlike in the other case studies, the people took time to assess the situation and work with the federal government. Fernand Gauthier, who worked with a research group conducting studies for the federal government, believed that residents hoped that the federal government would treat and respect them well, and offer just compensation.⁵⁸ Some authors have argued that the people of the territory were not as politically active as other airport protest groups and needed to find a collective consciousness to be mobilized. Looking back, Rita Lafond believed that many of the men, after the announcement, were emotionally drained and completely lost. She added that many people were afraid of going against the state. It is also true that many residents accepted the government's financial offer and silently disappeared from the fight.⁵⁹ So, there was a time lapse between the announcement of Mirabel and the organization of the residents. This must have affected the ability of the residents to prevent the airport's construction.

Mobilization happened gradually. The factors that seemed to effect mobilization were the federal government's efforts to negotiate with residents, including their studies of the residents

⁵⁶ Raymond and Boileau, 27. Interview with Rita Lafond, April 1st 2016.

⁵⁷ Georges Duquet, "History of CIAC," 1970, SHGMI P053 S3 SS14 D02.

⁵⁸ Interview with Fernand Gauthier, April 14th 2016.

⁵⁹ Poulin, "Mirabel: Au nom de développement," 283. Interview with Rita Lafond, April 1st 2016. Edwards, "Breaking New Ground: Montréal-Mirabel International Airport, Mass Aeromobility, and Megaproject Development in 1960s and 1970s Canada," 26.

themselves. It would be difficult for a small population to organize across a large territory. At first, a small informal group emerged to try and rally the population. Jean-Paul Raymond, a long-standing member of the community and a member of the UPA (L'Union des producteurs agricoles), emerged as the leader of the Comité de Expropriés. Residents respected him and knew the land well. Raymond's family had been farming since 1804 in the parish of Sainte-Monique des Deux-Montagnes.⁶⁰ He would be instrumental in organizing the residents, providing steady leadership and responding to politicians effectively.

Rita Lafond, the most prominent woman on the committee, was the wife of a farmer and a teacher. At first, she admitted there may have been some resistance as typically only men attended these kinds of meetings. Jean-Paul encouraged Rita and although she started doing basic clerical work for the committee, two years later she became director. Although women worked on the farms, expropriation, as Suzanne Laurin has argued, affected women directly. It wasn't just the loss of farm land, expropriation also impacted the family. Rita Lafond spoke to this point previously when she discussed how many men were broken but their wives pushed on.⁶¹ So although women participated in the committee, we should note that Rita Lafond was the only woman who was prominent in the press releases. Lafond would become a tenacious activist who fought for the residents and could stand up to anyone who got in CIAC's way, be it politicians or the police.

Curé Georges Duquet is an interesting figure in the Mirabel affair. As the local priest, he had a prominent social position in the community and was an important emissary. André Bouvette remembers that when he was doing his research in the community, he had to go through Duquet to talk to the residents. Duquet sent letters to government officials and spoke

⁶⁰ Interview with Rita Lafond, April 1st 2016. Raymond and Boileau, 14.

⁶¹ Laurin, 200. Interview with Rita Lafond, April 1st 2016.

publicly about the mistreatment of the residents. Nevertheless, some protestors accused him of being a collaborator. The Catholic Church may have affected Duquet's involvement, as it specifically asked him to stop being so involved in the protest. He did care about his congregation, but his influence may have been used both for and against the residents.⁶²

Although local residents like Raymond and Lafond helped to organize the population, it was academics who provided the intellectual base for their movement.⁶³ Both André Bouvette and Fernand Gauthier played important roles in helping to organize the residents, but also in pointing out flaws in the planning process. Both men were part of the Ecology of the Montréal International Airport (EZAİM). Bouvette was recruited directly by Dr. Jean-Noel Fortin to work on the study, while Gauthier, who was a social psychologist, had connections to Premier Robert Bourassa (1970-76; 1985-1994) and got a job through his political contacts. They both conducted research on the territory and gathered information about the residents.⁶⁴ Gauthier wrote in his notes, from the late 1960s, that the planning of the human resources was nothing more than a bunch of political promises. He documented that the people in charge had very little interest in what happened to residents or how the airport could provide opportunities for them. The academic made this clear in a series of newspaper articles where he attacked BANAIM and the federal government for failing to include the people in the planning process, and bureaucrats for

⁶² Interview with André Bouvette, April 5th 2016. "Le cure Duquette defend le sort de ses ouailles," *L'Echo du Nord*, February 21st 1973, Author's Private Collection. Georges Duquet, "Le Commission Patorale," June 17th 1971, BANQ Québec E7 1990-10-010/60. Interview with Rita Lafond, April 1st 2016. "Notes for an Address by Transport Minister Jean Marchand at Ste. Scholastique," November 9th 1973, LAC MG 32-B46 Volume 80 File 6. Also see Fernand Gauthier, "Évaluation et Prospective après une décennie," October 6th 1981. Author's Private Collection.

⁶³ Laurin, 198. Fernand Gauthier, "Évaluation et Prospective après une décennie," October 6th 1981. Author's Private Collection.

⁶⁴ Interview with Fernand Gauthier, April 14th 2016. Interview with André Bouvette, April 5th 2016

ignoring the plight of citizens.⁶⁵ He wrote it would better if “C’est ce qu’on ferait “si” on traitait la population comme une ressource créatrice.”⁶⁶ Gauthier realized he could do more good working with the residents. He advised them about organizing and gave them some media contacts. Although some of the protestors wanted Gauthier to be involved due to his connections and ability to address the press fluently in English and French, he realized it was important to step away. He did not want to become one of the leaders because he was not one of the residents.⁶⁷

Meanwhile André Bouvette did the work assigned to him for EZAIM but started to have issues with the mandate of the study. He had a Marxist approach to studying the population and did not believe their study should be strictly neutral. He wanted to get the people’s perspective. He quit the group and went to work for the residents. He got a job at St. Jerome College that allowed him the flexibility to work with the residents.⁶⁸ He continued to have an active role in CIAC. He and Gauthier were instrumental in helping galvanize the residents and getting them organized. They helped reform the Comité de Expropriés into CIAC. For the most part, the Comité kept residents informed of what was going on and discussed grievances against the federal government but in 1972 but they would become more activist in nature.⁶⁹

CIAC members educated themselves about social activism and protest. Some members like Bouvette communicated with those leading the protest against the Pickering airport, with

⁶⁵ Fernand Gauthier, “Notes From Meeting,” October 28th 1970, Rita Lafond’s Private Collection. Susan Altschul, “Sociologist says Residents may Revolt,” *Toronto Star*, September 14th 1970, LAC MG 32-B46 Volume 28 File 9. Fernand Gauthier, “Sainte-Scholastique...là où on parle de participation,” *Relations*, September 1971, SHGMI P053 S2 SS15 D10.

⁶⁶ Rose-Anne Giroux, “Les Citoyens Invites a Se Montrer Negatifs,” *Montréal La Presse*, October 9th 1971, SHGMI P053 S4 SS1 D39.

⁶⁷ Interview with Fernand Gauthier, April 14th 2016.

⁶⁸ Interview with André Bouvette, April 5th 2016. Poulin, “La Mobilisation Politique Des Expropriés de Mirabel,” 89.

⁶⁹ Poulin, “Mirabel: Au nom de développement,” 285.

whom they shared strategies and information.⁷⁰ Some members took a trip to France to meet farmers whose land had been expropriated, a trip that was financed through L'Office Franco-Québécois De La Jeunesse.⁷¹ The protestors admitted they did not learn a lot about organizing on the trip other than that it was important to maintain solidarity, to negotiate together and not alone. Members returned from the trip more determined than ever to bring the farmers in the region together.

Jean-Paul L'Allier the MNA for Deux-Montagnes helped CIAC receive funding for the trip to France. Throughout his tenure, he helped direct funding to the group and played an important role as someone who could communicate with the governments in Québec City and Ottawa.⁷² L'Allier represented the riding where the expropriation took place. He served as Minister of Communications in the Bourassa cabinet, yet he was extremely critical of Mirabel, and how the government treated residents. The protestors remembered him as an important ally who continuously supported the residents.⁷³

Jean-Paul L'Allier's support is one example of how CIAC's leaders learned to navigate the changing political landscape in Québec. As separatism moved from the fringes of Québec politics into the mainstream, it became impossible to ignore the nationalist rhetoric and the characterization of Ottawa as an unbending opponent of nationalist aspirations. In addition, as the Parti Québécois became a more powerful and vocal force in the National Assembly, it changed the political dynamic in the province. Provincial and federal parties were affected by Québec separatism and you can see this in how the protestors fostered their relationships. First,

⁷⁰ Richard Cleroux, "It was Pickering that set off the Mirabel row," *Globe and Mail*, January 11th 1974.

⁷¹ Interview with Rita Lafond, April 1st 2016. CIAC, "Projets de Stages Presentes A L'Office Franco-Québécois De la Jeunesse," November 3rd 1971, SHGMI P053 S2 SS11 D5.

⁷² Jean-Paul L'Allier, "Letter to Jean-Paul Raymond," November 13th 1973, SHGMI P053 S2 S22 D14.

⁷³ Interview with Rita Lafond, April 1st 2016. Interview with André Bouvette, April 5th 2016. Laurin, 124.

CIAC worked with any political party that supported its goals: federalist, separatist, Liberal, Conservative; it didn't matter so long as they were against the airport.⁷⁴ For example, despite the Liberal dominance federally, the group worked with the Progressive Conservatives, notably Roch La Salle. La Salle was the MP from Joliette and was against the airport. La Salle never forgot the support he received from the Mirabel residents. When the Mulroney government was elected in 1984, La Salle became Minister of Public Works and the federal government retroactively returned 80,000 acres and 1400 properties to the people.⁷⁵ At the same time, CIAC fostered a relationship with the Parti Québécois. The framing of the airport as something that was against Québec and favoured Ontario fit in with the Parti Québécois's critiques of the federal government. CIAC members were well aware of political climate in Québec.⁷⁶

Francis Fox, the Liberal MP for Argenteuil-Deux-Montagnes, played a crucial role in serving on the Comité de Conciliation with other Québec MPs to investigate the problems at Mirabel. The MP worked hard for the residents and tried to address some of their complaints. Citizens must have felt he was a good representative. Although based on previous results Argenteuil-Deux-Montagnes would be considered a safe Liberal seat, despite the airport issue in the riding, he was easily re-elected in the 1974 election, with a margin of victory 2 to 1 over his Progressive Conservative opponent.⁷⁷ CIAC was very successful in working with different parties. Jean-Paul Raymond, the leader of CIAC acknowledged in his memoir that there was a connection made between the future of Mirabel and Québec. The protestors played on this relationship very successfully.⁷⁸

⁷⁴ Interview with Rita Lafond, April 1st 2016.

⁷⁵ Laurin, 143.

⁷⁶ Boileau and Raymond, 35.

⁷⁷ Boileau and Raymond, 76. "Résultats officiels de l'élection du 8," *L'Argenteuil*, July 17th 1974, SHGMI P053 S4 SS1 D72. For election results, see Frank B Feigert. *Canada Votes, 1935-1988*, (United States: Duke University Press, 1989), 184-200.

⁷⁸ Boileau and Raymond, 35.

The protestors also engaged with the media and kept lines of communications open with the press. CIAC members recall that they organized many stunts to help get attention for their cause, but also to show the public what was happening on the territory. Some of the stunts were symbolic, such as spraying manure in front of the BANAIM offices.⁷⁹ Another protest on Parliament Hill involved burning a dummy of Prime Minister Trudeau. Protestors held placards calling Québec ministers like Minister of Public Works Jean-Etudes Dubé and Transport Minister Jean Marchand traitors to Québec.⁸⁰ This would play well into their narrative that the federal government was cheating Québec. Sometimes the protests would turn violent. When members of CIAC felt they weren't being listened to, they occupied the BANAIM headquarters on the territory. The bureaucrats working in BANAIM felt they had lost control of the situation and asked the Québec provincial police to intervene.⁸¹ Members of CIAC remember standing up to the police. Jean-Paul Raymond recalled getting hit on the head with a baton during the occupation. Such stunts and the reaction they provoked brought attention to the group and raised the profile of CIAC. It also caused considerable embarrassment for the federal government, as the narrative would shift away from Mirabel as a place for economic growth, to a place of hardships and mistreatment. The group was successful at getting the attention of the federal government and the media to their cause.

Despite taking some time to organize, CIAC was successful at uniting residents and fighting back against the federal government. As we will see, the group was able to change the

⁷⁹ Interview with Rita Lafond, April 1st 2016. Garth Pricheron, "An Odoriferous Protest," *The Gazette*, September 1974, SHGMI P053 S4 SS1 D74.

⁸⁰ Terrence Belford, "250 demonstrators burn Trudeau effigy, demand 'justice' in airport land payment," *Globe and Mail*, September 26th 1973, Author's Private Collection.

⁸¹ Boileau and Raymond, 129. Interview with Fernand Gauthier, April 14th 2016. Benoit Baribeau, "Letter to Jérôme Choquette," February 26th 1974, LAC MG 32-B46 Volume 83 File 1. Réjean Dupuis, "Les expropriés remettent un cadeau "empoisonné" au fédéral," *L'Echo du Nord*, April 3rd 1974, Rita Lafond's Private Collection.

debate about Mirabel from one about economic prosperity to one more inclusive of the concerns of the residents.

Chapter 3: Pourquoi Mirabel

The planning of Mirabel Airport took place at a time when there were no formal mechanisms for public consultation on the expropriation process. In order to voice their concerns, citizens had relied on a process that is best characterized as informal consultation. They relied on the political winds of the day and the willingness of the politicians they contacted through letters and demonstrations. Those who protested during the planning of Mirabel faced some setbacks, but they were extremely effective at embarrassing the government and negotiating with politicians, even if the focus of their activity was a church hall instead of a courtroom, legislature, or formal administrative hearing room. The residents may have been unsuccessful in stopping the opening of Mirabel, but history has shown that Mirabel had difficulties as soon as it opened.

This chapter will begin with the coverage of Mirabel from local, provincial, and federal newspapers to show how the airport was framed by promoters and CIAC. In addition, by looking at press coverage of the citizen group, we can see how the activists navigated Québec's changing political landscape. Next, I will explain how the federal government organized the airport and how it used the social sciences to study the residents and the landscape. Furthermore, I will show how comparisons with other citizens groups disrupted how the state responded to CIAC, and its claims. I will analyze how different levels of government and the bureaucracy attempted to negotiate with residents. I will conclude by examining the politics around Mirabel, and why despite mounting evidence, the federal government was determined to build this airport.

CIAC and The Press

Newspapers played a crucial role in the conflict over the Mirabel Airport. The reporting on the airport affected how politicians responded to the issue and how different political parties

approached transport policy. Local, regional and national papers all reported on the fight over Mirabel, as it became a storyline that dominated Québec politics. I will begin by showing how the federal government presented the economic benefits of the airport and how the Québec press questioned regional planning. Next, I will examine how the press reported on Mirabel and the activities of CIAC. By looking at the issues covered in the newspapers, we can see how Mirabel was framed, and how the protestors tried to fight back against the state.

Initial press coverage of Mirabel echoed the federal government's emphasis on the economic benefits the investment would bring to Québec. When the airport project was initially announced, Transport Minister Paul Hellyer and Minister of Regional Economic Development Jean Marchand promised that 75,000 construction jobs would be created, and the airport would employ 100,000 people.¹ These were jobs that were desperately needed. Communities wanted the airport built near them, so that the economic spin-offs would benefit their residents. The Prime Minister and the Transport Minister received many letters between 1968 and 1969 asking that the airport be located near them. Most chambers of commerce close to Mirabel were very pleased that the airport was going to be built in Ste. Scholastique. Without question, the communities wanted this airport.² After the initial announcement, an editorial in the *Montréal*

¹ Claude Turcotte, "L'aéroport fournira de 75,000 à 100,000 emplois," *La Presse*, March 28th 1969, SHGMI P053 S4 SS1 D7.

² Robert B. Major, "Letter to Prime Minister Trudeau," August 29th 1969, LAC MG 26 O7 Volume 439 File 735.13. André Villeneuve, "Letter to Paul Hellyer," October 31st 1968, LAC MG 26 O7 Volume 439 File 735.13. Val D' Ambrosio, "Letter to Prime Minister Trudeau," January 25th 1969, LAC MG 26 O7 Volume 439 File 735.13. Guy C. Gauvin, "Letter to Prime Minister Trudeau," February 2nd 1969, LAC MG 26 O7 Volume 439 File 735.13. "Resolution by City of Cornwall," February 3rd 1969, LAC MG 26 O7 Volume 439 File 735.13. Commentary on Chambers of Commerce include "Le thème de le Chambre de commerce cette année sera: Operation Aeroport un programme d'action qui se veut réaliste," *L'Echo du Nord*, October 22nd 1969, SHGMI P053 S4 SS1 D14. Rosa-Anne Giroux, "Si jamais l'aéroport de Dorval était fermé, ce serait pour "des raisons politiques," *La Presse*, August 4th 1972, Author's Private Collection. Gatineau Chamber of Commerce, "Letter to Prime Minister Trudeau," April 1969, LAC MG 26 O7 Volume 439 File 735.13. St. Jerome Chamber of Commerce, "Letter to Prime Minister Trudeau," April 4th 1969, LAC MG 26 O7 Volume 440 File 735.13. Since the western location was not chosen the Ottawa Chamber of Commerce was not pleased. Ottawa Chamber of Commerce, "Letter to Prime Minister Trudeau," April 1969, LAC MG 26 O7 Volume 440 File 735.13

Star said the airport would “provide great economic benefits to Québec.” Despite Premier Bertrand’s opposition to Mirabel’s location, *Le Soleil* wrote a very positive editorial about the millions of jobs that would be created around St. Jerome, and the implications for regional development.³ The *Montréal Gazette* was quite pleased with the decision of the location, although it focused less on its economic benefits than on its relieving pressure on, and noise in Dorval. In another editorial, the *Gazette* called Mirabel a necessary evil. Although expropriation was a blunt instrument, the paper reminded readers that government and airports are there to serve the people.⁴ One local newspaper, *L’Argenteuil*, argued that it was good that the decision had finally been made, and that the Prime Minister had been firm. The paper believed that to the extent that there was bad press, it came from people who were jealous that their community didn’t get the airport.⁵ Many newspapers supported the initial decision in January 1969 for economic reasons, although the press did pay some attention to the political feud between although the Québec and Ottawa, which filtered into some of the editorial coverage.

As the municipalities in the territory started to adjust to the expropriation, there were some issues around how much the federal government included local factors into planning. For example, Guy Mercier, the director general for the Saint-Jean Baptiste Society, wrote in *L’Argenteuil* that the airport would bring a lot of benefits for these small communities, and that it was good that the federal government was going to focus regional development on areas that had struggled. There would be a lot of opportunities in the construction of the airport. One of those

³ Editorial, “The new airport,” *Montréal Star*, March 28th 1969, LAC MG 26 O7 Volume 449. Editorial, “Le nouvel aéroport,” *Le Soleil, Québec* March 29th 1969, BAnQ Québec E7 1994-10-010/51.

⁴ Editorial, “Airport Site Excellent Choice,” *Montréal Gazette*, April 9th 1969. Editorial, “Necessary Evil,” *Montréal Gazette*, April 14th 1969, BAnQ Québec E23 1990-11-001/2.

⁵ Editorial, “Ste. Scholastique airport go-ahead should allay Québec controversies,” *L’Argenteuil*, May 14th 1969, SHGMI P053 S4 SS1 D9. In an interview, Rita Lafond also discussed that other communities were jealous of Ste. Scholastique for getting the airport. Interview with Rita Lafond, April 1st 2016.

opportunities was getting a job in building the airport. MNA Jean-Paul L'Allier said that it was important that the citizens in the region take an active part in planning the new development. He discussed how investments brought into the area would completely transform the region.⁶ Yet, residents found out quickly that there were not as many jobs as promised, and that planning Mirabel was not necessarily going to include the residents.

The federal government was not fully prepared to help residents' transition from farming into something different. Fernand Gauthier said that although there were courses offered for jobs, many of those expropriated were not qualified for the jobs being offered as they lacked a formal education. *L'Echo du Nord*, a local newspaper based in Saint-Jérôme, questioned whether anyone from the area would actually get an airport job. The paper noted that local construction firms said that they deserved preferential treatment when it came to contracts working on the airport. The federal government claimed that Mirabel was being designed with the people in mind, and with attention to how locals could get maximum benefits.⁷

A number of papers by 1971 questioned the federal government's effectiveness in regional planning. *L'Echo du Nord* questioned how much the region would sacrifice for progress. As BANAIM and SATRA planned the communities around the airport, the paper wondered why it had to give up its industry to become more tourist friendly, and how much control small towns in the path of the airport would even have.⁸ *Le Devoir* suspected that the

⁶ Guy Mercier, "L'aéroport international: un bienfait économique," *L'Argenteuil*, May 15th 1969, SHGMI P053 D9. "Airport region to be showcase of Québec's development," *The Lachute Watchman*, November 18th 1970, Rita Lafond's Private Collection.

⁷ Interview with Fernand Gauthier, April 14th 2016. Editorial, "Un son de cloche inquiétant sur le projet de Sainte-Scholastique," *L'Echo du Nord*, December 9th 1970, Rita Lafond's Private Collection. "Priorité d'emploi aux travailleurs de la construction à Sainte-Scholastique," *L'Echo du Nord*, March 3rd 1971, SHGMI P053 S4 SS1 D32. James Stewart, "Ste. Scholastique: Federal financing in wide spin off," *The Montréal Star*, December 11th 1971, BAnQ Québec E23 1990-11-001/2.

⁸ Editorial, "Saint-Jérôme doit-elle faire les frais du développement de Sainte-Scholastique?" *L'Echo du Nord*, March 3rd 1971, SHGMI P053 S4 SS1 D46.

federal government had not thought through all of the regional transportation issues related to the airport: to make Mirabel Airport accessible to Montréal it would be necessary to expand some highways, yet more highways through the city threatened to make it less liveable.⁹ A *La Presse* journalist observed that, because the Québec government had been slower than its counterpart in Ontario to engage in regional planning, it had left space for the federal government to assert a lot more control in the province through its Ministry of State for Urban Affairs. As cities became more powerful, so too would MSUA have more power in the province, regardless of how effective it was at planning.¹⁰ As well, Québec nationalists were prone to distrust federal moves into municipal affairs. Mirabel became caught up in this wider controversy of Canadian federalism.

L'Echo du Nord regularly reported on the airport and how it would affect the communities on the territory. The editorials in the paper supported the economic development of the territory, and although it questioned claims about the abundant jobs that were going to be created for local benefit, the newspaper continued to support the public works project. However, it remained very concerned about the impact on the population, and how the government was treating the people. Early on, the paper argued that in the name of progress the provincial and federal government were leaving the people behind. Despite promises to include the people in the planning, the planners had failed to account for the human factor in expropriation.¹¹ *L'Echo du Nord* reported on a few acts against public order; for example, the CIAC occupied BANAIM headquarters. At the same time, the paper showcased the views of the protestors, and how they

⁹ Editorial, "Les Mirages de Mirabel," *Le Devoir*, June 4th 1973, SHGMI P053 S4 SS1 D57.

¹⁰ Rose Anne Giroux, "Ottawa Multiplies les avances dans le milieu urbain," *La Presse*, October 24th 1972, Author's Private Collection.

¹¹ Editorial, "Mirabel Allons Nouse de Deception en Deception," *L'Echo du Nord*, March 20th 1974, SHGMI P053 S4 SS1 D68. Editorial, "Il ya un Probleme Humain Ste-Scholastique Celui des Expropries," *L'Echo du Nord*, June 30th 1971, BAnQ Quebec E23 1990-11-001/2.

were frustrated by the way the state had treated them. In an editorial that followed up on the state's use of force, the paper sided with the protestors, proposing that if the federal government had put as much effort in working to resolving the problems on the territory, as it did with opening the airport, then opponents would have had no reason to break the peace to get their point across.¹² *L'Echo du Nord* continued to support the idea of Mirabel and its economic benefits, yet, in commenting on CIAC also sought to side with the community. As a newspaper that spanned a community and lived on advertising, the editors attempted to travel a middle road.

The Montréal newspapers had a somewhat different perspective on the airport. The local English Montréal papers, *The Gazette* and *The Montréal Star*, were initially very supportive of the announcement in 1969, and stood by the federal government, especially when Prime Minister Trudeau held his ground against Premier Bertrand.¹³ Both papers nevertheless reported on the stunts that kept CIAC in the news such as their occupation of BANAIM headquarters, protests on Parliament Hill and the giant fête on the territory on eve of the airport opening.¹⁴ They also began to highlight some of the difficulties in the expropriation process. They raised questions about the environmental impact of the airport on local wildlife, in spite of claims that its impact would be minimal. They also reported on the fertile farmland that was going to be lost to development and adversely affect the fauna.¹⁵ The papers did not ignore the human side of the

¹² Editorial, "A-t-on atteint le fond du gouffre à Mirabel?" *L'Echo du Nord*, December 11th 1975, SHGMI P053 S4 SS1 D77. Réjean Dupuis, "Les agriculteurs de Mirabel occupant les bureaux du federal," *L'Echo du Nord*, August 29th 1973, Author's Private Collection.

¹³ Editorial, "The new airport," *Montréal Star*, March 28th 1969, LAC MG 26 O7 Volume 449. Editorial, "Airport Site Excellent Choice," *The Gazette*, April 9th 1969, SHGMI P053 S4 SS1 D8.

¹⁴ "Mirabel landowners protest," *The Gazette*, November 7th 1974, SHGMI P053 S4 SS1 D76. Crosbie Cotton, "Mirabel Protest Yields to Police," *Montréal Star*, December 6th 1974, SHGMI P053 S4 SS1 D77. Nigel Gibson, "Ste. Scho fete draws 15,000," *The Gazette*, August 11th 1975, SHGMI P053 S4 SS1 D85.

¹⁵ Chris Allan, "Ste. Scholastique jetport double 'catastrophe,'" *The Gazette*, February 9th 1971, LAC RG 39 Volume 761 File Part 1. Chris Allan, "We have to get rid of the birds," *The Gazette*, February 6th 1971, LAC RG 39 Volume 761 File Part 1. Norman Pascoe, "Farmers quitting land needlessly," *Montréal Star*, May 27th, 1972, Rita Lafond's Private Collection.

story and effectively contrasted Mirabel as an airport-centred industrial zone with the territory's long tradition of farming. In spite of their initial support for the airport, therefore, the English language press in Montréal provided coverage to the activities of CIAC and looked past the economic benefits of the project.

Indeed, by the time the airport opened, these Montréal papers questioned its viability. As the costs for the airport increased, and the technocratic vision presented by the planners and promoters became more modest, the press could no longer support such a project. Partly this was due to the economic realities of Montréal no longer being the central hub for transportation in Canada. By 1975, it seemed almost certain that Toronto had eclipsed Montréal as the gateway into Canada. As *Gazette* reporter Kendal Windeyer wrote, despite the efforts of Ottawa and Québec to stimulate the transportation industry, the decline of Montréal was beyond government control. If Montréal was not benefiting from the regional economic development, then Mirabel lost one of its main selling points to the public. In an editorial written close to Mirabel's opening, *The Gazette* outlined a key problem with the airport. Mirabel had become a serious financial liability with billions in additional infrastructure costs required to make it merely viable. Without that infrastructure, particularly a fast link to Dorval in Montréal, it became increasingly apparent that airlines did not want to land at Mirabel. In another editorial, the paper concluded that Trudeau's transportation promises were in shambles.¹⁶ By the time the airport opened Montréal newspapers no longer supported the airport. The idea that it would benefit Montréal and take pressure off Dorval, presumed clear in 1969, had been eroded by cost, time, the realities of airline economics, and local opposition.

¹⁶ Kendal Windeyer, "Transport hub now snarled in quagmire of change," *The Gazette*, May 2nd 1975, LAC MG 32-B46 Volume 81 File 2. Editorial, "Montréal's Airport Really Costing," *The Gazette*, September 15th 1975, SHGMI P053 S4 SS1 D86. Editorial, "From promise to shambles," *The Gazette*, September 30th 1975, SHGMI P053 S4 SS1 D86.

The coverage in the *Globe and Mail* illustrates how one major non-Québec newspaper responded to the airport. The criticisms of the airport focused on the Trudeau government's relationship with Québec and pork barrel politics. The *Globe and Mail* critically argued in an editorial, that Mirabel was nothing more than equalization by stealth to Québec. The newspaper wrote that Québec was dependent on handouts from the federal government and despite Toronto handling more air traffic, the federal government was forcing airlines to land in Montréal.¹⁷ The paper also made comparisons with Pickering. Although the paper did report on the difference between the expropriations at Mirabel and Pickering, the *Globe and Mail* attacked the federal government for putting more effort into Québec's new airport. It argued that the federal government was subsidizing travel at Ste. Scholastique by diverting flights from Toronto and its potential new airport in Pickering. Transport Minister Jamieson lashed out at the *Globe and Mail* and said that both Mirabel and Pickering would be a similar size. The minister argued that Ottawa's large expropriation was just following what Queen's Park was doing in Ontario in protecting land around the Pickering Airport.¹⁸ While the paper did report on the activities on CIAC, it focussed less on how people were treated and more on the project's position in the federalist balancing act of the Trudeau government.¹⁹ In leading up to the opening of the airport, the newspaper published many articles about the cost over-runs and the arrogance of the federal government. The paper believed that the federal government had tunnel vision when it came to

¹⁷ Editorial, "Curious View of Priorities," *Globe and Mail*, August 13th 1970. Editorial, "A Turn to the Realities," *Globe and Mail*, August 29th 1970.

¹⁸ Richard Cleroux, "It was Pickering that set off the Mirabel row," *Globe and Mail*, January 11th 1974. Editorial, "A Tale of Two Airports Both Fact and Fiction," *Globe and Mail*, June 28th, 1971. N John Adams, "Jamieson calls Globe editorial asinine, says new airport matches Québec's," *Globe and Mail*, March 4th 1972.

¹⁹ The *Globe and Mail* reported on CIAC activities including the dummy of Prime Minister Trudeau being burned, the police presence at BANAIN and the settlement payments in Mirabel. Terrence Belford, "Trudeau is burned in effigy in protest over airport land," *Globe and Mail*, September 26th 1973. "Riot police eject farmers in Mirabel row," *Globe and Mail*, December 7th 1974. Willian Johnson, "Mirabel Settlements as fair as Pickering. Dubé tells Commons," *Globe and Mail*, March 12th 1974. LAC MG 32-B46 Volume 82 File 1.

Mirabel and refused to see the errors. It was apparent before Mirabel opened, that traffic projections were decreasing and that the airport would not operate at full capacity when opened. By the time it opened, Mirabel was already being called a costly white elephant.²⁰ The paper was extremely negative over how the federal government planned the Mirabel airport, and as costs increased, the *Globe and Mail* continued to print critical articles.

Québec-based newspapers may have supported the potential economic benefits that Mirabel provided, but they were generally sympathetic to the residents. Non-Québec papers, like the *Globe and Mail*, mostly saw the airport as pork barrel politics, and as the costs associated with the project increased, it became more difficult to defend Mirabel.²¹ The federal government was very aware of the press coverage over Mirabel. The responses of the newspaper over the federalist political issues lurking behind the airport, the comparisons with Pickering, and the cost over-runs affected how the federal government dealt with the airport. As we will see, press coverage was to play an important role in Mirabel's future.

Managing Mirabel

Many ministries were involved with the expropriation and planning of the airport. The main agency that existed under the MOT was the Bureau d'aménagement du nouvel aéroport international de Montréal (BANAIM), headed by Benôit Baribeau. Baribeau was a general manager for engineering at Québec Hydro, and considering the sensitivities around the project, it was important to have a French-Canadian leading the project. The Director of Programming for BANAIM was Pierre Levasseur, who was close to Trudeau and worked in the Prime Minister's

²⁰ Editorial, "Mistake after Mistake," *Globe and Mail*, September 23rd 1975. For traffic projections, Ken Romain, "Airport at Mirabel is expected to operate at less than full capacity into early 1980s," *Globe and Mail*, July 30th 1975. Editorial, "Requiem for an Airport," *Globe and Mail*, September 26th 1975.

²¹ Interview with Fernand Gauthier, April 14th 2016. Interview with Rita Lafond, April 1st 2016. Interview with André Bouvette, April 5th 2016.

Office (PMO). He played an important role in helping to manage the project but also kept the political aspects of Mirabel in check. Even the MOT acknowledged the political implications of Mirabel when Deputy Minister Stoner suggested a member of the PMO should be involved in planning.²² It is worth examining the mandate of BANAIM. The bureau was not only mandated to help build the airport and provide information about the different aspects of the project but also, and this is key, to administer the territory. BANAIM's main role was to organize the expropriated land, people and their resources. Although residents were expropriated, many were encouraged to stay on their land to and continue to farm.²³ The Department of Public Works (DPW) managed the expropriated properties, while the Department of Regional Economic Development (DREE) worked with the Québec government on land use planning and economic development.²⁴ The Québec government also created its own agencies to work with federal bodies and address provincial concerns for Mirabel. The Le Service d'Aménagement du Territoire de la Région Aéroportuaire (SATRA) worked on provincial issues relating to the expropriation, including the amalgamation of all the villages in the territory. The Québec government passed legislation to that effect, as Bill 60 became law in 1970 and all the municipalities were amalgamated into Sainte-Scholastique.²⁵ For the residents who had problems and issues, there

²² Feldman and Milch, 68. There was a real concern about making sure Mirabel for all intensive purposes a French-Canadian project. Also see Pierre Levasseur, "Memo to Prime Minister," April 23rd 1969, LAC MG O7 Volume 440 File 735.13. Pierre Levasseur, "Memorandum to Marc Lalonde," August 20th 1969, LAC MG 26- O7 Volume 440 File 735.13.

²³ BANAIM, "Fichier Actif D'Informations," 1969, LAC MG 32-B46 Volume 28 File 9. Suzanne Laurin argues that BANAIM also seemed to be protecting the federal lands from Québec and their nationalist or separatist intentions. Laurin, 134.

²⁴ Feldman and Milch 72-76.

²⁵ Edwards, *Breaking New Ground: Montréal-Mirabel International Airport, Mass Aeromobility, and Megaproject Development in 1960s and 1970s Canada*, 12. Feldman and Milch, 72-73. For provincial legislative history concerning Mirabel Ministère Des Affaires Municipales, "Le Territoire," 1973, BAnQ Québec E7 1994-10-010/ 59.

was a vast bureaucracy that was supposed to respond to their needs. This sprawling network of different agencies would prove to be sluggish at responding.²⁶

The federal government wanted to show that in its running of the airport zone it could manage local resources. This included investigating the needs of people, animals and plants. Transport Canada launched what was seen as a pioneering study that endeavored to determine the ecological balance of the territory.²⁷ It was conducted by five Québec universities that made up the Ecology of the Montréal International Airport (EZAIM). Funding was provided by the National Research Council of Canada and MOT. This multi-disciplinary group of geographers, social scientists and researchers met with the population to determine their needs and how the government could better address the population. In addition, part of the research involved what we would now call an environmental assessment of the Mirabel Airport, which was written by Pierre Dansereau. His team was asked to examine the natural ecosystem of the territory and discuss how the airport development would affect it.²⁸ None of these studies or consultations were required, but the MOT commissioned them as part of the building process.

Environmental arguments did not figure too prominently in the fight around Mirabel, in spite of the commissioned ecological study. For Pierre Dansereau, studying the Mirabel Airport provided him an opportunity to test his theses around ecosystems where all organic life was connected, and how natural resources can be used. For example, his team tracked the migration

²⁶ Edwards, *Breaking New Ground: Montréal-Mirabel International Airport, Mass Aeromobility, and Megaproject Development in 1960s and 1970s Canada*, 13.

²⁷ Edwards, *Breaking New Ground: Montréal-Mirabel International Airport, Mass Aeromobility, and Megaproject Development in 1960s and 1970s Canada*, 14. Laurin, 208. New Montréal Airport Project Office, *New Montréal Airport Project Information Dossier*, (Canada: Information Service, 1971), 17.

²⁸ Laurin, 208. Interview with André Bouvette, April 5th 2016. New Montréal Airport Project Office, *New Montréal Airport Project Information Dossier*, (Canada: Information Service, 1971), 18-19. Pierre Dansereau, *Construction of the New Montréal Airport and Its Impact on the Natural and Social Environment: Towards a New Definition of Ecology*, (Montréal: Bureau d'aménagement du nouvel aéroport international de Montréal, 1972), 1-8. Rita Lafond's Private Collection.

patterns of birds to see how the airport would affect the habitat of animals. The land utilization maps proved to be a useful resource to analyze how farmland was being used. Dansereau admitted that there were ways to making farming in the area more efficient and profitable.²⁹ However, Dansereau admitted that there were limitations to his assessment. It was conducted after the site was chosen and the runways were already being built. Although he was positive about the work that had been completed, he did say that at this point, his team's work could only limit the damage.³⁰ He became quite cynical about the entire process: he refused to attend the opening of Mirabel and spoke out against the destruction of prime habitat. The research conducted by the scientists was intended by its government sponsors to support the airport and the interests of BANAIM, not to make an objective statement about the environment. The EZAIM studies just became part of the rhetoric of progress that BANAIM and the federal government would use to promote the airport.³¹

Pickering v. Mirabel

Most authors and protestors point to 1973 as the time when CIAC was more fully mobilized and moved from fact-finding to aggressive protesting.³² André Bouvette's report on how the federal government treated the residents of Pickering versus its handling of Mirabel galvanized the community and became a turning point for the group. Bouvette heard that the people in Pickering were being paid more than farmers in Mirabel for their land. He traveled to Pickering, met with People or Planes (POP) representatives and returned to Québec. Bouvette

²⁹ Pierre Dansereau, *Towards a new Definition of Ecology: Construction of the new Montréal International Airport and its Impact on the Natural and Social Environment*, May 1971, 1-8. Rita Lafond's Private Collection. Farming is still the main occupation on the territory. Laurin 54, 64.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ New Montréal Airport Project Office, *New Montréal Airport Project Information Dossier*, (Canada: Information Service, 1971), 18-19 Laurin, 213-217.

³² Interview with Fernand Gauthier, April 14th 2016. Laurin, 202. Poulin, "Mirabel: Au nom de développement," 62. Feldman and Milch, 65. Raymond and Boileau, 76-77.

saw the farms that the federal government had expropriated in Pickering were no better than the ones in Mirabel. CIAC also saw how organized the protestors were in Pickering, and the tactics they were using to resist the federal government. The CIAC member returned to Québec and published a report comparing the expropriation in Pickering with the one in Mirabel. Bouvette's report revealed that the rules around expropriation were completely different in the two cases and this affected the type of compensation they received. Pickering residents on average received more for their land than the expropriated in Mirabel. For example, the initial value of a property according to Bouvette was \$40,000 in Pickering compared to \$18,000 in Mirabel.³³ The rules around renting in Pickering were much less arduous than in Mirabel. Residents in Pickering had also received additional payments for their property while Mirabel property owners were given nothing.³⁴ Although all these accusations are true, we must remember that Mirabel was covered under the pre-1970 *Expropriation Act* that not only provided less legal protections but also a much lower base of compensation. Nevertheless, the accusations that the government was mistreating the residents of Mirabel and giving Ontario farmers more money for their property put the federal government on the defensive.

The federal government moved from a superior position to having to now respond to the resident's claims. The minister wrote that the two cases were handled differently because Ste. Scholastique did not fall under the new rules of the *Expropriation Act*, 1970 as the expropriation took place before that time. Dubé claimed that at the time of expropriation the market value of Mirabel farms was a lot less than there Pickering counterparts. Although it is true that Pickering land owners did get breaks on interest and rent, the minister assured the public that many of

³³ André Bouvette, "Deux façons, pour exproprier," 1973, Rita Lafond's Private Collection.

³⁴ Ibid.

those same benefits had been retroactively given to Mirabel farmers.³⁵ Many of these problems had to do with the fact that Mirabel was a large expropriation and the federal government was not prepared to deal with so much land. The government did not have a proper barometer of what fair compensation was for farmers and their property.³⁶ In a recent interview, former cabinet minister Marc Lalonde recalled that the prices paid for property in Mirabel were fair, and that the federal government paid market value that was set by experts. He believed that the nationalists inflamed the idea of Mirabel being an example of Ottawa belittling Québec.³⁷

Many newspapers picked up on the comparisons between Pickering and Mirabel.³⁸ The revelations changed the narrative around Mirabel. Until that time, although papers were reporting on the treatment of the residents, the airport was reported on as a positive economic project to help Québec. The comparisons with Ontario drew Mirabel into nationalist debates about how Ottawa treated Québec. This resulted in the airport drawing more criticism.³⁹ At first the federal government stood its ground and defended the price differences paid for the land. In a famous interview with Radio Canada Transport Minister Jean Marchand compared Pickering and Ste. Scholastique as potatoes and oranges. The minister argued that the land was worth far more in

³⁵ Jean-Eudes Dubé, "Les expropriés de Mirabel n'ont pas souffert d'injustice," *Le Devoir*, November 26th 1973, SHGMI P053 S4 SS1 D64. Legally, the federal government was found at fault and that the government should have applied the *Expropriation Act* evenly to Mirabel, Pickering and Sea Island. "CIAC Press Release" June 27th 1975, SHGMI P053 S2 SS18 D2.

³⁶ I will not discuss the issues over compensation for farms and livestock. Giles Boileau, Jean-Paul Raymond, *La Mémoire de Mirabel*. Québec: Éditions du Méridien, 1988.

³⁷ Interview with The Honourable Marc Lalonde, April 6th 2016. "CIAC Press Release" June 27th 1975, SHGMI P053 S2 SS18 D2.

³⁸ Réjean Dupuis, "Le coût de l'expropriation: 12 fois plus élevé qu'à Sainte-Scholastique," *L'Echo du Nord*, February 14th 1973, Author's Private Collection. "Expropriation Costs Doubted by Minister," *Globe and Mail*, February 26th 1973. Dominique Payette, "Sainte-Scholastique veut la parité avec Pickering," *La Presse*, August 31st 1973, Rita Lafond's Private Collection. "Difference in land justified between Ste-Scho, Pickering," *The Lachute Watchman*, September 20th 1973, SHGMI P053 4 SS1 D62. "On cause toujours de Mirabel et Pickering à Ottawa," *L'Argenteuil*, October 31st 1973, Author's Private Collection.

³⁹ Poulin, "La Mobilisation Politique Des Expropriés de Mirabel," 94.

Pickering and much of the land in Ste. Scholastique was under-utilised and not worth as much.⁴⁰ The Ministry of Transport believed it had paid generous and excessive value for the property that was expropriated. However, an official acknowledged in a memorandum to the minister that inequality breeds discontent.⁴¹ Minister of Public Works Jean-Eudes Dubé wrote a personal letter in *Le Devoir* defending the actions of the federal government. He claimed that the citizens of Ste. Scholastique had not suffered an injustice or been mistreated.

In response to the federal government's defence of its approach to expropriation, CIAC organized a rent strike. They wanted to show the politicians that they were serious. After all the negative press that the federal government received, cabinet members decided to venture out to the territory to meet the residents. In November 1973, Transport Minister Jean Marchand and Public Works Minister Jean-Eudes Dubé went to meet with the residents at a local church. A staged event designed to regain support of the residents quickly turned hostile. CIAC members knew the government would use the church meeting to try and get some good press.⁴² Despite the church being locked in advance, CIAC members found a way inside. Instead of a meeting full of carefully selected partisan supporters, the ministers were faced with angry residents. CIAC set up a stand of potatoes and oranges to make their point clear to minister Marchand. At the meeting, the government announced that some concessions would be made to the residents. The ministers announced that residents would get \$3,000 extra in moving expenses as they did in Pickering and get an extra two years rent free. Those who were forced to move with less than

⁴⁰ Interview with Rita Lafond, April 1st 2016. Richard Cleroux, "It was Pickering that set off the Mirabel row," *Globe and Mail*, January 11th 1974. "Difference in land justified between Ste-Scho, Pickering," *The Lachute Watchman*, September 19th 1973, SHGMI P053 4 SS1 D62.

⁴¹ Ministry of Transport, "Memorandum to Jean Marchand," October 21st 1973, LAC MG 32-B46 Volume 81 File 9.

⁴² Harvey Shepherd, "Québec tenants planning rent strike against federal Government," *Globe and Mail*, February 14th 1973, Author's Private Collection.

ninety days notice would get an extra ten percent in compensation. The federal government would also pick up notary fees for buying a new property and a new mortgage. At the meeting Marchand and Dubé tried to reason with the residents. Marchand said that the expropriation and the compensation may be unfair, but it was certainly not illegal.⁴³

The residents didn't accept all the compensation increases. The main sticking point was the price paid per acre, \$200 in Ste. Scholastique versus over \$2,000 in Pickering, which had not changed. CIAC members called the promises a bunch of candies. The ministers also said that the benefits had been worked out with the Comité de Conciliation which was made up of land assessors and local MPs Francis Fox, Rolland Comtois and Maurice Dupras.⁴⁴ It is important to examine the work of the Comité de Conciliation to see how local MPs tried to help their local constituents and how they addressed CIAC's grievances. It will also show us another side of this debate as MP's communicated with ministers about the problems in their constituencies.

The Comité de Conciliation and the Influence of MPs

The Comité de Conciliation was appointed in September 1973 to investigate the problems of expropriation and to look at the prices of land. The federal government appointed Richard Lacharité as chairman and CIAC nominated land assessor J.P. Faguy and agronomist Albin Noël. The committee investigated land prices to ascertain whether the federal government paid a fair price.⁴⁵ Local MPs also worked with the committee to try and alleviate CIAC's concerns and let

⁴³ Luana Parker, "\$16 million more for Mirabel land called 'candies,' *The Gazette*, November 10th 1973, SHGMI P053 S4 SS1 D64. "Ste. Scholastique Residents Reject Proposed Benefits," *The Lachute Watchman*, November 14th 1973, SHGMI P053 S4 SS1 D64.

⁴⁴ Interview with Rita Lafond, April 1st 2016. "Ste. Scholastique Area Residents Reject Proposed Benefits," *The Lachute Watchman*, November 14th 1973, SHGMI P053 S4 SS1 D64. Luana Parker, "\$16 million more for Mirabel land called 'candies,' *The Gazette*, November 10th 1973, SHGMI P053 S4 SS1 D64. Jean V. Dufresne, "Mirabel: les indemnités spéciales offertes par Ottawa n'ont pas apaisé la 'colère verté,'" *Le Devoir*, November 10th 1973, Rita Lafond's Private Collection. Laurin, 202. Boileau and Raymond, 76-77. "Fox, Dupras et Comtois appuient 'certains griefs' des expropriés," *L'Echo du Nord*, November 7th 1973, Rita Lafond's Private Collection.

⁴⁵ "Mirabel group praises report that says land underpriced," *Globe and Mail*, June 14th 1974.

the federal government know about problems on the ground. As the MP for Argenteuil-Deux Montagnes, which was in the heart of the territory, Francis Fox played a crucial role as the intermediary between citizens and the federal government. In his memoir, Jean-Paul Raymond stressed that if it wasn't for the work of Fox, the federal government would not have created the Comité de Conciliation.⁴⁶

Shortly after being elected to Parliament, Fox alerted the federal government to some of the growing problems in Mirabel. In December 1972, Fox outlined to Jean Marchand some of the problem's residents were having. CIAC members told Fox that expropriation was uneven and there was no uniformity in the evaluation of land. Some residents were negotiated with quickly while others had to wait for years. It was difficult for farmers to work on their land when they did not know when they would be evicted.⁴⁷ Resident also felt that they were under pressure to pay rent to BANAIM despite there not being no clear rules on rent for farm lands across the territory. Fox acknowledged in his letter that most of the older residents would not qualify for the jobs that were going to be created. Finally, the MP cautioned Minister Marchand that CIAC was going to launch a public offensive against the federal government.⁴⁸ Marchand responded to Fox that BANAIM was cooperating with the Department of Public Works, which was responsible for expropriation, to make this a smooth transition. The minister wrote that there were jobs for locals but acknowledged that due to labour law, only qualified workers worked on construction sites. Months later, Marchand assured Jean-Paul Raymond that the government had looked into these

⁴⁶ Jean-Paul Raymond's memoir has an extensive section on the grievances around expropriation. Most of the problems have to do with how the cost of farming was calculating from the productivity of land to what animals were raised. Boileau and Raymond, 76-77. "Fox, Dupras et Comtois appuient "certains griefs" des expropriés," *L'Echo du Nord*, November 7th 1973, Rita Lafond's Private Collection. "Les deputes Fox, Comtois et Dupras cherchent une solution equitable," *L'Argenteuil*, October 31st 1973, Author's Private Collection.

⁴⁷ Francis Fox, "Letter to Jean Marchand," December 11th 1972, LAC MG 32-B46 Volume 81 File 5.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

complaints and that the airport worked in the best interests of the residents.⁴⁹ In a response, Raymond suggested that despite some movement on leases, plenty of problems remained. Farmers were unsure of their future on the land and residents wanted to know why there wasn't an economic relocation? Instead of getting jobs, Raymond wrote that many residents are ending up on social assistance. Residents were very frustrated with their prospects. The CIAC worked across party lines because the federal government was not responding to residents demands.⁵⁰

Part of the problem was that BANAIM did not have the experience to manage such a huge territory and MOT was not in the business of organizing citizens. They did not know how to respond to citizens who felt they were unfairly treated, whether the issue was the price of their land, or the employment transition from farming into another occupation. One farmer called being a day labourer humiliating and that a tractor was worth more than a man. All this citizen knew was farming, yet the ministry did not understand this.⁵¹ In a letter to Prime Minister Trudeau, Francis Fox suggested that the federal government should establish a crown corporation that could work with the province at managing the land. Fox believed that a crown corporation would be better at adapting to the realities of the population. The Prime Minister responded that these were interesting ideas but believed that people within MOT and MSUA were suited to solve some of these problems on the territory. In a memo to Jean Marchand, written after the church meeting where concessions were made to CIAC, Fox wrote that BANAIM has not done a good job at explaining government rationales around the location or

⁴⁹ Ibid. Jean Marchand, "Letter to Francis Fox," May 15th 1973, LAC MG 32-B46 Volume 81 File 5. Jean Marchand, "Letter to Jean Paul Raymond," March 5th 1973, LAC MG 32-B46 Volume 81 File 5. For commentary on the problems of rent and assessing property, see Boileau and Raymond.

⁵⁰ Jean-Paul Raymond, "Letter to Jean Marchand," April 4th 1973, LAC MG 32-B46 Volume 81 File 5. CIAC, "Rapport des Activites Prevues par le CIAC pour Julliet 1973 a Mai 1974," SHGMI P053 S1 D3.

⁵¹ Luana Parker, "The day Ste. Scho had its heart broken," *The Gazette*, March 27th 1974, SHGMI P053 S4 SS1 D68.

how expropriation took place.⁵² This disconnect can be seen as well among officials who were frustrated by the actions of CIAC. After cabinet approved over \$16 million in additional payments following the church meeting, Deputy Minister O.G. Stoner noted that payments were taken up slowly as CIAC told residents not to accept the money. There is a difference between what the interests were in the creation of the airport and what citizens who were expropriated wanted. An internal federal report said that some of the main issues concerning the expropriation were the qualities of justice and equity. Residents got some justice when the Comité de Conciliation determined that residents were underpaid for their property.⁵³ When the Comité visited the expropriated farm of Jean-Marc Cardinal they got the impression that he would likely have to leave farming. The federal government did not seem to understand that residents were attached to their land. When the federal government offered another 10% to all residents, CIAC rejected that increase too. The group called the concession a small victory, but the war was far from over.⁵⁴

Politics Over Mirabel

While the federal government was negotiating with residents and trying to maintain control over the territory, they faced other political challenges. Specifically, the federal government had to negotiate with its counterpart in Québec over transportation to the airport and land rights. In addition, as the federal government promoted Mirabel, airlines became more vocal about wanting to move their operations from Montréal to Toronto. By the time the airport

⁵² Prime Minister Trudeau, "Letter to Francis Fox," January 28th 1974, LAC MG 2D 07 Volume 440 File 735.13. Francis Fox, "Letter to Prime Minister Trudeau," November 23rd 1973, LAC MG 2D 07 Volume 440 File 735.13. Francis Fox, "Memorandum to Jean Marchand," December 11th 1973, LAC MG 32-B46 Volume 80 File 4.

⁵³ O.G. Stoner, "Memorandum to Jean Marchand," March 6th 1974, LAC MG 32-B46 Volume 80 File 7. "Mirabel Report," March 1974, LAC MG 32-B46 Volume 82 File 3. "Mirabel group praises report that says land underpriced," *Globe and Mail*, June 14th 1974.

⁵⁴ "Le CIAC dit "non" à l'indemnité de 10%" *L'Argenteuil*, July 2nd 1975, SHGMI P053 S4 SS1 D84. CIAC, "Communiquer De Presse," June 12th 1975, SHGMI P053 S2 SS18 D1. Ministry of Public Works, "Mirabel Today," June 1974, SHGMI P053 S2 SS18 D4.

opened, it was clear that there would be less traffic operating out of the airport, but the cost of the public works project continued to mount.

The federal government worked closely with the Québec provincial government on the development of Mirabel. It may have been a federal project, but the provincial government was going to make itself heard on jurisdictional issues. For example, there was a dispute between both levels of government on labour issues. The provincial government claimed its labour laws should apply to construction workers while the federal government believed since the airport zone was effectively federal territory, federal labour laws should apply.⁵⁵ The Bourassa government had staked a lot on the success of Mirabel. Premier Bourassa had said in 1970, during his first term in office, that the “l’implantation de cet aéroport ne manquera pas de constituer un stimulant économique important pour l’économie Québécoise, à condition évidemment que des mesures appropriées soient prises à l’égard de l’aménagement et du développement du territoire affecté.”⁵⁶ The airport fit in with Premier Bourassa’s vision that he had outlined in his 1970 electoral platform about creating jobs in Québec, and helping the province grow. However, despite the provincial government being supportive of the airport, it had to be careful not to look like it was conceding too much to the federal government. Internal letters also show that federal MPs were profoundly concerned about the role of Québec, and how the airport would be framed. Gerard Duquet, MP for Québec-East wrote to Jean Marchand about the impressions that local MPs had. They believed that MNA Jean-Paul L’Allier had too much influence on BANAIM, as the main spokesperson for the provincial government. Federal MPs

⁵⁵ Denis de Belleval and Pierre Levasseur, “Comité ministerial federal-provincial- Nouvel aéroport international de Montréal- Première reunion- le 2 octobre 1970, à Québec,” October 19th 1970, BAnQ Québec E32 1987-10-004/ 124 File 2430-6-01-15B.

⁵⁶ Premier Robert Bourassa, “Déclaration de Monsieur Robert Bourassa, Premier Ministre,” October 2nd 1970, BAnQ Québec E32 1987-10-004/ 124 File 2430-6-01-16.

felt they were being shut out of announcements and that the provincial government was getting too much credit. They warned that their seats were at risk in the next election if the minister did not act.⁵⁷ Varying political interests affected and slowed down the decision-making process around the airport.

One of the main practical questions bedevilling the project was how people were going to get to and from Dorval in Montréal. When Mirabel was proposed, BANAIM and the federal government originally envisioned a high-speed rail line to connect passengers from Mirabel to Dorval. However, as the costs associated with the airport increased and in light of the troubles that Canada's high speed Turbotrain was experiencing, the government delayed implementing any railway system until at least 1980. Political pressure to turn this express train into a regional transportation line would have delayed the decision-making process. In addition, the energy crisis in the 1970s added a lot of additional costs to air travel; as passenger projections decreased, the railway seemed extravagant. The quick link between Montréal and Mirabel never was built.⁵⁸ Instead the federal government worked with the provincial government on constructing a highway between Montréal and Mirabel. Building the highway was extremely

⁵⁷ Brault, 102-103. For Bourassa's intentions, see Gilles Lesage, "Bourassa écrit à Trudeau pour hâter les négociations concernant Mirabel," *La Presse*, May 16th 1973, BAnQ Québec E23 1990-11-001/2. Yvon Tremblay, "Letter to Jean-Paul L'Allier," December 24th 1970, BAnQ Québec E32 1987-10-004/ 124 File 2430-6-01-15. Gerard Duquet, "Letter to Jean-Paul Marchand," March 23rd 1971, LAC MG 32-B46 Volume 28 File 9.

⁵⁸ New Montréal Airport Project Office. *New Montréal Airport Project Information Dossier*. Canada: Information Service, 1971. Feldman and Milch, 71. Kendal Windeyer, "Mirabel transit, building schedules revised by crisis," *The Gazette*, November 24th 1973, BAnQ Québec E23 1990-11-001/2 File 224-68-1364. Richard Cleroux, "'Too late' for rapid transit, Mirabel will be hour's bus ride," *Globe and Mail*, February 27th 1974. Laurin, 150. Edwards, "Breaking New Ground: Montréal-Mirabel International Airport, Mass Aeromobility, and Megaproject Development in 1960s and 1970s Canada," 27. Editorial, "Montréal's Airport Really Costing," *The Gazette*, September 15th 1975, SHGMI P053 S4 SS1 D86. "Mirabel Nous Coute Bien Cher," *La Presse*, September 9th 1975, SHGMI P053 S4 SS1 D86. Norman Bégin, "Letter to Marcel Roy," August 19th 1974, LAC MG 32-B46 Volume 83 File 6. André Saumier "Memorandum to Transport Minister," November 12th 1974, LAC R 13-905-0-X E Volume 65 File 5. Jean Marchand, "Letter to Raymond Malloux," May 7th 1975, LAC MG 32-B46 Volume 81 File 2. André Gravelle, "Memorandum," November 26th 1973, BAnQ Québec E23 1990-11-001/2 File 224-68-1364. O.G. Stoner, "Memorandum to Jean Marchand," November 8th 1973, LAC MG-32 B46 Volume 83 File 6.

expensive and added to the criticisms that Mirabel's costs were growing out of control. In order to get a deal with Québec, the federal government took on most of the costs to build Autoroute 13 that would connect Montréal to Mirabel.⁵⁹ The lengthier commute between Montréal and Mirabel hurt the long-term prospects of the airport.

If you factor in the cost of building Autoroute 13, by 1974, in addition to labour and additional payments for land, the cost of Mirabel had doubled essentially from \$214 million in 1968, to over \$450 million. The promoters of the airport told the public that Mirabel would pay for itself. Benoit Baribeau, the head of BANAIM said the airport would bring a billion dollars into the Montréal area, as industry developed and people used all the services at the airport. Some of these estimates were dependent on Mirabel taking on a lot of cargo, and more importantly, airlines continuing to service Montréal airports over Toronto.⁶⁰ Yet airlines had other ideas about what runway they would use in Canada.

As Mirabel was being planned in the early 1970s, the major airlines were about to come into conflict with the Trudeau government over their landing rights. The federal government was going to pressure airlines to service Mirabel.⁶¹ By that time, it was becoming clear that Toronto was going to eclipse Montréal as the center of Canada for business, investment and air travel. As mentioned previously, federal officials were worried about the future of Québec if Montréal

⁵⁹ One thing that is interesting to note is Jean Marchand wanted the loan to the Government of Québec to come out of DREE and not MOT. Most likely he did not want the autoroute to be added to the costs of Mirabel. Jean Marchand, "Letter to John Turner," August 1973, LAC MG 32-B46 Volume 83 File 6. "le financement de la construction de l'Autoroute No 13, de l'Autoroute 2-20 à l'Autoroute 640, devant éventuellement relier Montréal au nouvel Aéroport International de Montréal, à Mirabel," January 30th 1974, BAnQ Quebec E5 1997-07-001/ 42 File 4130-21-80. Laurin, 148.

⁶⁰ Richard Cleroux, "Mirabel Planned as Moneymaker," *Globe and Mail*, January 12th 1974. Richard Cleroux, "Cost of Mirabel airport soars to \$275 million for the first phase," *Globe and Mail*, September 28th 1974.

⁶¹ "Cette assemblée réunitssait deux représentants de la firme Manalytics et les représentants des diverses compagnies aériennes," May 28th 1973, BAnQ E32 1987-10-004/ 192 File 2430-6-01-01.

declined.⁶² Mirabel had been planned in 1969 to take on all international flights in Eastern Canada except those to and from the US. It would also take on excess flights from Dorval Airport. Mirabel would have eclipsed Dorval in terms of traffic in five or six years. By 1973 it was already clear that Mirabel would not hit those record passenger growth targets as more airlines wanted to fly out of Malton Airport in Toronto.⁶³ Declining passenger numbers were already putting pressures on airlines to cut back.

There were also concerns from the carriers that it would cost more to use Mirabel as a cargo airport. Newspapers reported on whether the carriers were pressured by Ottawa to service Mirabel despite the additional costs the airlines would take on.⁶⁴ We know that Ottawa reassured the Québec government that it wanted Montréal to remain Canada's gateway city for international flights for arriving in Canada. Deputy Minister Stoner advised Marchand that the federal government was negotiating with different countries to keep their operations in Montréal to ensure some traffic for Mirabel.⁶⁵ Yet by the time airport opened, Mirabel was not getting the traffic projected. Leading up to the opening air travel did not increase as much as expected in 1974 and 1975.⁶⁶ The grand plans for the airport were held back as the fast link between Montréal and Mirabel was never built. Airlines were reluctant to support new airports in Montréal, when Toronto was becoming the gateway to Canada. Factors outside of MOT's

⁶² André Saumier, "Federal Structure for Development," June 1968, LAC MG O7 Volume 440 File 735.13.

⁶³ "Montréal moves ahead with its bonanza- The \$1 billion St. Scholastique airport," *Canadian Building*, May 1972, Author's Private Collection. Gary Garrison, "'Horrible Compromise' is smack on schedule," *Daily Commercial News and Building*, May 16th 1972, Author's Private Collection.

⁶⁴ "Cette assemblée réunissait deux représentants de la firme Manalytics et les représentants des diverses compagnies aériennes," May 28th 1973, BAnQ E32 1987-10-004/ 192 File 2430-6-01-01. Fred Creverley, "Questions About Mirabel," *Winnipeg Free Press*, November 13th 1974, SHGMI P053 S4 SS1 D76. Editorial, "Mistake After Mistake," *Globe and Mail*, September 23rd 1975.

⁶⁵ O.G. Stoner, "Memorandum to Jean Marchand," December 21 1972, LAC MG 32-B46 Volume 81 File 4.

⁶⁶ Privy Council Office, "Discussion Paper on Mirabel," November 14th 1977, LAC APB 3470-05 Box 13 Volume 3. Statistics Canada, *Aviation in Canada Historical and Statistical Perspectives on Civil Aviation*, (Canada: Ministry of Supply and Services Canada, 1986), 136.

control like the OPEC crisis and inflation made flying less affordable, and dramatically increased the costs of building Mirabel.⁶⁷

Conclusion

Mirabel opened with a large reception in October 1975. Lobster and champagne flowed as the federal government celebrated the opening of the airport.⁶⁸ However, within months of opening there were problems. The airport was already losing money, and reports on expensive contracts doused any optimism about the airport. Some companies continue to operate out of the industrial zone, but it resulted in far fewer jobs than the 100,000 promised in 1970.⁶⁹

Those who have written on the subject mostly point to the Trudeau's government's stubbornness in dealing with nationalists and separatists. Trudeau would never give in to the separatists who were saying that Mirabel was an affront to Québec.⁷⁰ By the time Mirabel opened, politicians across the political spectrum criticized Trudeau for how he handled the Mirabel Airport. Liberal MNA Jean-Paul L'Allier continued to be outspoken about Mirabel and had solidarity with the property owners who had had their farms expropriated. As suggested earlier, the link made between nationalist and separatist arguments, best represented by the writings of Lussier and Levesque, does show the opposition united against the Trudeau government. Levesque promised that a Parti Québécois government would address the injustices

⁶⁷ Peter C. Eglington, and Russell S. Uhler, "Potential Supply of Crude Oil and Natural Gas Reserves in the Alberta Basin," Economic Council of Canada, (Ministry of Supply and Services Canada, 1986), 18. Stewart 34-35.

⁶⁸ Richard Cleroux, "All the lobster, imported champagne they could handle," *Globe and Mail*. October 3rd 1975. LAC RG 12 Volume 3948 File Part 1.

⁶⁹ For companies currently operating out of the industrial zone, see Laurin, 278. "RCMP probes contract kickbacks at Mirabel," *Globe and Mail*, October 28th 1975. "Champagne flows at the new airport opening," *Vancouver Sun*, October 4th 1975, LAC RG 12 Volume 3948 File Part 1.

⁷⁰ Laurin, 202. Poulin, "Mirabel: Au nom de développement," 285. Feldman and Milch, 230.

of the Trudeau government and furthermore, would recover the agricultural lands.⁷¹ Fernand Gauthier said that Mirabel was Trudeau's big dream about the future of airports. It was a technocratic dream of regional economic development, that would bring jobs and prosperity to what was seen as a depressed region.⁷²

Former cabinet minister Marc Lalonde echoes these sentiments. Lalonde said it was difficult dealing with Québec in the 1970s. The atmosphere was very tense and anything the federal government did was attacked. He recalled that after the FLQ Crisis, it was important for the federal government to build confidence in Québec.⁷³ This left the federal government with few options. Cancelling the airport would have likely been exploited by Québec nationalists to show the federal government giving up on Québec. The provincial Liberals had also tied themselves to the success of Mirabel. They needed the promise of jobs to help with their chances of re-election. Mirabel may just be another example of patronage in Canadian politics.⁷⁴ Mirabel was also associated with federal regional development and urban planning, aspects of modernizing Canada that the government had been promoting. There was a lot at stake. Despite the cost over-runs, criticisms from across party lines and even from some federal Liberals, and despite the CIAC continually putting pressure on the federal government, there was little chance that Trudeau would cancel the airport. It simply had to be built.

Although the Mirabel Airport was constructed in 1975, the airport did not go as planned. What seemed like a public work project that would benefit Québec and provide jobs, became a symbol of government arrogance. The residents of the expropriated territory fought against the

⁷¹ "L'Allier reste solidaire des expropriés de Mirabel," *Le Droit*, October 4th 1975, Rita Lafond's Private Collection. René Lévesque et Robert Lussier, "Les Québécois de Mirabel doivent récupérer leurs terres," *L'Argenteuil*, April 16th 1975, SHGMI P053 S4 SS1 D81.

⁷² Interview with Fernand Gauthier, April 14th 2016. Edwards, "Breaking New Ground: Montréal-Mirabel International Airport, Mass Aeromobility, and Megaproject Development in 1960s and 1970s Canada," 20.

⁷³ Interview with The Honourable Marc Lalonde, April 6th 2016.

⁷⁴ Simpson, 342-344.

federal government and did change the narrative. Mirabel was seen as unfair, costly and a project that did not consider the human factor. The focus of the residents and the development of the protest group also impacted the decision to proceed with the airport. First, unlike in Pickering and Sea Island where resistance was organized quickly before any shovels were in the ground, CIAC leaders took roughly three years before they became a potent force. By the time the CIAC became more aggressive and its activities were noticed in 1972-1973, construction was already underway. Second, it is crucial to recall that CIAC was not against the idea of a new airport or the benefits that would come from it. The members were mostly farmers, and what they wanted more than anything else was to be able to survive as farmers. They wanted to own land and be productive. The airport was more about the destruction of their community.⁷⁵

Although there was no formal inquiry or public hearings held, the federal government did have an informal environmental assessment through EZAIM. Thanks to the efforts of CIAC, the federal government eventually met with residents, and made compensation concessions.

Although the federal government was under no obligation under the *Expropriation Act* to hold hearings, they did create a Comité de Conciliation, formed of Liberal MPs, that suggested changes. The concessions that the residents got from the federal government show that some consultation took place in the development of the airport and speaks to the dialogue between citizens and the state. From the point of view of protesting a government's disruptive schemes, the lesson of Mirabel is to start early and secure wide support if possible. CIAC had no way to make its case before the airport was being built. However, we also see that the group had a lot of success in getting the federal government to make some changes. Although the airport was

⁷⁵ Interview with Rita Lafond, April 1st 2016. Laurin, *L'Échiquier de Mirabel*.

opened, Mirabel was mired in controversy. It would take a change in the federal government for the residents to get the justice they felt they deserved.

The opening of the airport in October 1975 was not the end of the story. Mirabel lived on as residents continued to fight to have their land returned. The provincial and federal government were stuck with an airport that was losing money daily.⁷⁶ It exposes some of the difficulties in planning large scale public works projects, or more accurately in pressing ahead with ill-planned projects for various political reasons. Governments can have grand designs, but the people on the ground will see and experience things differently.

⁷⁶ Laurin, 14.

Part 2: Pickering, Ontario: “On Their Knees”

Chapter 4: We Bin Robbed

As Prime Minister Trudeau cut the ribbon to open the new federal airport in Mirabel, north of Montréal, he taunted Toronto for forcing the hand of politicians to cancel the Pickering Airport. He stated that “Torontonians will be down here on their knees,” as they marvel at Montréal’s new airport while lamenting the fact that Malton Airport would get no relief.¹ Only two weeks earlier, members of People or Planes (POP) celebrated with champagne and cheers as the federal government cancelled the construction of the Pickering Airport after three years of protest and resistance.² The battle over the construction of the Pickering Airport in the 1970s was one of many examples of citizen-led resistance in the 1960s and 1970s that directly challenged the power of the state and experts to make decisions around where and how we live.

The campaign against the Pickering Airport is a prime example of the urban activism that took place in the late 1960s and early 1970s. During this time-period, citizens challenged the expertise of bureaucrats and politicians over the development of large-scale public works projects that were designed to benefit citizens in some way.³ Citizens became more vocal about participating in the political process beyond sending a letter or calling their MP. Citizen groups were formed to publish data, mold public opinion and fight against government decisions.⁴ In Pickering, POP formed to challenge the federal and provincial government throughout the entire

¹ Malton Airport is now referred to as the Pearson Airport. Editorial, “Trudeau’s taunt makes a point,” *Toronto Star*, October 7th 1975, Author’s Private Collection.

² “POP Goes the Airport,” *Toronto Star*, September 26th 1975, CTASC.

³ Examples include expressways and hydro projects. Danielle Robinson, ““The Streets Belong to the People” Expressway Disputes in Canada, C. 1960-75.” (PhD Dissertation, McMaster University, 2012), 21-69. for a look at opposition to expressways being built in cities. For hydro, Tina Loo, “People in the Way: Modernity, Environment, and Society on the Arrow Lakes,” *BC Studies*, No 142/143, (Summer/Autumn 2004), 161-196.

⁴ This is most pronounced in the 1960s where Canadians started to challenge their governments on a variety of social issues. Doug Owsam, *Born at the Right Time: A History of the Baby-Boom Generation*, (Canada: University of Toronto Press, 1996), 159. Bryan Palmer, *Canada’s 1960s: The Ironies of Identity in a Rebellious Era*, (Canada: University of Toronto Press, 2009), 22-23.

process of developing the new airport. Politicians and bureaucrats became very frustrated by these new challenges to their authority. Although the provincial government would eventually end its support for the airport in September 1975, effectively killing the project, the federal government still has not completely given up on the airport project. The process of the Pickering Airport weighed heavily on federal officials as they tried to plan the Sea Island Airport.

Literature Review

Scholars have studied the impact of the Pickering Airport on government decision making and the influence of protest groups. The literature written about the Pickering Airport focussed on the protest side and very little has been said about the mechanisms the federal government used to try and solve this issue, mainly through public hearings and a public inquiry. In addition, much of the literature was written at a time when it was becoming more in vogue to question the role of the state in Canada. The case of the Pickering Airport is much more dynamic than simply another case of citizen-led activism against a government mega project. By not looking at the mechanisms of state-sponsored forums or the newspaper coverage at the time, we lose sight of how the federal government did respond to citizen activism.

The Pickering case represents a good example of citizen activism and how protest groups can make a difference in government decision making. Tommy Thompson, one of the original POP protestors, completed his Masters degree at York University in 1994. His thesis was entitled “*Workings of a Protest/Pressure Group in Attempting to Thwart a Major Project of a Senior Level of Government*” which covered the planning of the airport up to the cancellation in 1975. Thompson has given us the best summary of how POP approached the issue and how they constructed their arguments.⁵ Relying on POP documents, interviews conducted with politicians,

⁵ Ibid, 103.

government reports and some newspaper coverage at the time, Thompson argued how POP successfully got politicians to change their mind.⁶ In addition, since Thompson conducted some interviews with provincial politicians, he documented that POP impacted the decision of provincial politicians to cancel the airport.⁷ His study gave us a better understanding of POP and its methods. Thompson provides the best coverage of the conflict over Pickering from the protestor's side.

In 1973, barely a year into the protest, Sandra Budden and Joseph Ernst wrote *The Movable Airport: The Politics of Government Planning*. Ernst was a member of the citizen group that had formed to oppose building the provincial airport in Orangeville. In addition, Budden was involved in the Pickering controversy and wrote about government decision making.⁸ The study, although written before the conflict ended, touched upon a number of points about planning airports. The authors argued that the plans behind the development of the federal airport were based more on politics than proper planning.⁹ Their study was divided into two sections. Budden first discussed the process behind the development of the Pickering Airport; the story continues with Ernst who discussed the resistance that formed against the plans to develop the airport in Orangeville. The authors claimed the data used to justify creating the Pickering Airport was not questioned. Although they contend that an expansion of Malton Airport would have been the better choice, due to resistance from locals who complained about noise, the government decided to build another airport.¹⁰ Despite POP arguing that the data was flawed, the federal government

⁶ Victor Thompson, "Workings of a Protest/Pressure Group in Attempting to Thwart a Major Project of a Senior Level of Government," (Masters Thesis. York University, 1994), 5.

⁷ Ibid, 210.

⁸ Sandra Budden and Joseph Ernst, *The Moveable Airport The Politics of Government Planning*, (Toronto: A.M. Hakkert Ltd, 1973), x.

⁹ Ibid, 159.

¹⁰ Interview with The Honourable Jim Fleming. June 23rd 2016. Also see a letter to Toronto MP Alastair Gillespie from an Etobicoke Councillor on expanding Pickering. Lois Griffin, "Letter to Alastair Gillespie," January 16th 1973, LAC MG-32-B46 Volume 85 File 10. Malton is now known as Pearson Airport. Budden and Ernst, xi.

would not re-evaluate the decision. In addition, although the provincial government was keen on regional planning, there seemed to be a lack of communication between localities and the other levels of government. The federal and provincial governments never communicated with municipalities about the want or a need for an airport. Nor were citizens informed, despite the fact that then Premier Davis campaigned on citizen participation.¹¹ The authors concluded that the airport was a political decision and that an airport in Pickering was not necessary.¹²

Ernst was supposed to provide the citizen's perspective since he campaigned to make sure the airport was not located in Orangeville -- one of the original locations where the province proposed building the airport.¹³ The book does not give us a lot of information about the members of this protest group and what their strategies were beyond meeting with government.¹⁴ Since this is a perspective from the top, most of the chapters dealing with the citizen's perspective are written as a confrontation between government officials and a few lead protestors. Finally, although there is a section on the press, it is too short and only analyzed local papers.¹⁵ A regional, provincial and national perspective would help us understand the airport conflict better, especially as Pickering became the location for the airport. In the study's conclusion the authors discussed the need for more open politics and letting citizens be involved in decision making.¹⁶ However, it is difficult to gauge in the book just who these people are and what they desire beyond not having an airport in Orangeville. State planning is also an issue; bureaucrats ignore citizens and do not look at the repercussions of their decision beyond the direct benefits.¹⁷

¹¹ Budden and Ernst, 13.

¹² Ibid, 167.

¹³ Ibid, xii.

¹⁴ Ibid, 33.

¹⁵ Ibid, 75.

¹⁶ Ibid, 163.

¹⁷ Ibid.

In his 1979 *Paper Juggernaut: Big Government Gone Bad*, Walter Stewart provided a much more detailed account of the protests against the development of the Pickering Airport. He contended that the decision to build it was arrogant and wrong on every level. Stewart claimed the decision-making process in Canada had become centered on bureaucrats who told cabinet ministers what to do. He asserts that bureaucrats are empire builders and have an incentive to commit new resources to projects to expand their influence. It is far easier to hide mistakes than speak publicly about the state of a project.¹⁸ Although Stewart did not name the state in his book, he implied that the relationship between citizen and state had failed.¹⁹ All the mechanisms that seemingly connected citizens to the state such as the courts, politicians, public hearings failed to take into account the concerns of the public at large. The result was that planners and consultants mishandled this mega project and wasted millions of taxpayer dollars with no results.²⁰ This book was written in the 1970s at a time when governments around the world were being criticized for indulgent spending as well as arrogance in making policy.²¹ Stewart examined all the planning documents throughout multiple chapters to explain how the entire airport planning process is a disaster. He conducted a number of interviews with former bureaucrats and consultants.²² POP emerged as residents who organized to protest the airport. Stewart documented how a few people came together very quickly and from all walks of life. They had a common goal which was to stop the Pickering Airport. They organized around the basis of a

¹⁸ Walter Stewart, *Paper Juggernaut Big Government Gone Mad*, (Canada: McClelland and Stewart Limited, 1979), 12-14.

¹⁹ It shouldn't be surprising that twenty years later the author revisited the subject as we see the impacts of neoliberal thought on big government. Walter Stewart, *Dismantling the State: Downsizing to Disaster* (Toronto: Stoddart Publishing CO. Limited, 1998), 14.

²⁰ Ibid, 14.

²¹ For an excellent breakdown of how the Canadian state has changed in the last forty years in terms of the size of government and people's opinion of the state, see Donald J. Savoie, *Breaking the Bargain Public Servants, Ministers and Parliament* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003), 3.

²² Stewart, 49.

pamphlet titled the *Householder's Guide to Community Defence Against Bureaucratic Aggression* written by Antony Jay.²³ POP formed different committees and started to research the airport, create technical arguments and attract publicity through various stunts.²⁴ Stewart provides readers with a good picture of the protest group. The members came from many different backgrounds and occupations. He did discuss their strategies and organization briefly but then moved on to public hearings.²⁵ The voice of the protestors is mostly contained in quotes at the beginning of each chapter. Some are from POP members. The problem is that without interviews with POP members and the analysis of the media, it is difficult to know what impact POP had on decision makers. Stewart concluded by suggesting that the problem in Canada is that citizens do not have access to information. The author argues that if citizens had an easier way to access public information then Canadians could criticize government decisions before they make the wrong one.²⁶

A few years after the decision to cancel the Pickering Airport, Elliot J. Feldman and Jerome Milch wrote *The Politics of Canadian Airport Development*. The authors did a public policy analysis and examined the airports being proposed for Pickering, Montréal and Vancouver. They focused on federalism and how the nuances of the Canadian system are demonstrated in these case studies.²⁷ For the authors, although the federal government has power over transportation policy, we see the people in the provinces respond in similar ways by forming protest groups but with different results. The authors argued that the airport development process drew out explicit lessons about federalism. Federal politicians paid

²³ Ibid, 86.

²⁴ Ibid, 94.

²⁵ Ibid, 81.

²⁶ Ibid, 182.

²⁷ Feldman and Milch, xi.

attention to short-term objections over long term policy planning.²⁸ The authors wrote that they conducted one-hundred and twenty interviews in total and drew on a variety of different sources.²⁹ Their work was divided into the cases of Mirabel, Vancouver and Pickering. Further analysis was then given to the issues of citizen participation in airport development, conflict between the Ministry of Transport and other departments and intergovernmental relations. The authors reflected that the federal government needed to improve how it interacted with different levels of government and citizens when developing these kinds of public works projects. They claimed that opening up the decision-making process to interested parties would create more harmonious conditions for these projects.³⁰ For our purposes this study does explore POP's role within the Pickering Airport conflict. Their analysis on POP is weak on a number of grounds. The authors conclude in their chapter on Pickering that MOT plans were defeated by technical arguments. POP proved that "upper-middle class professionals can influence major government decisions outside the corridors of power."³¹ The authors do not give enough credit to how POP shaped public opinion with the data they produced and their public relations stunts. Through the use of street theater the group appealed directly to the public at large.³² POP not only produced technical arguments against the airport but they also challenged the expertise of MOT. In terms of interviews with members of POP only an interview with Clark Muirhead was noted in the footnotes for the chapter dealing with Pickering. He was not the only member of POP and yet in the author's notes only two POP members were interviewed for the whole book.³³ In their analysis for all three airports the authors look at lessons for Canadian federalism. Although the

²⁸ Ibid, 231.

²⁹ Ibid, xvi.

³⁰ Ibid, 230-231.

³¹ Ibid, 107.

³² For more information on street theater, see Craig Heron and Steve Penfold, *The Workers' Festival: A History of Labour Day in Canada*, (Canada: University of Toronto Press, 2005), 14.

³³ The other member was the chairman of POP Charles Godfrey. Feldman and Milch, 239.

book made arguments about how the federal government interacts with citizens their conclusions on the impact of protest groups is troubling. The authors believe that the protestors did not directly impact federal authorities. Only when the provinces were opposed to the airport project, at least in Pickering, the project was cancelled.³⁴ The relationship between the provincial and federal government in the creation of the Pickering Airport is certainly part of this story but the authors do not give enough credit to the protestors who did impact the decision of the provincial government to not support the airport.

Plans for Pickering

The federal government, having considered but rejected the possibility of expanding the existing Malton airport, had been planning and considered many other locations for a second airport long before it announced its plan for Pickering in 1972.³⁵ The Ontario government took a major role in airport planning because the location could affect its regional development initiatives, such as its plan to create the City of Cedarwood east of Toronto.³⁶ Ontario was booming in the 1960s and the economy was growing at a consistently strong rate. With steady economic growth, the province started to study the forces of urban sprawl that was random and concentrated in certain areas.³⁷ The provincial government which had been solidly Tory since the end of The Second World War, was very concerned about urban sprawl and the infrastructure issues it was creating.

³⁴ Ibid, 216.

³⁵ Budden and Ernst 19.

³⁶ New Toronto International Airport Pickering The Role of Ontario. Ministry of Transportation. 1971-1975. LAC Volume 30 File 3.

³⁷ Cullingworth, 296.

Between 1941 and 1971 metropolitan Toronto alone grew from 909,928 in 1941 to 2,086,017 by 1971 and was expanded to grow even more rapidly into the 1980s.³⁸ The province tried to address some of the problems of urban sprawl by creating regional governments and supporting transit projects such as the Spadina Expressway to help ease congestion.³⁹ The planned Seaton community, to be built south of the new Pickering Airport, which was eventually to have a population of 150,000, also fit into new federal policy priorities.⁴⁰ However, not everyone supported these state-led mega projects and regional plans. In Toronto the election of Mayor David Crombie (1972-1978) signalled the beginning of a short period of reform for the City of Toronto. Mayor Crombie challenged developers and the sprawl associated with the city. His leadership gave room for people to question how we live in our cities and how the state moves citizens to suit its needs.⁴¹ In Ontario, this questioning included the campaign to stop the Spadina Expressway, which culminated in the cancellation of the expressway by Premier Bill Davis in 1971.⁴² Citizens also vigorously fought against Premier Davis's plans to consolidate local governments into regional governments. These were controversial and contributed to a period of low popularity for the Progressive Conservatives in Ontario. Some journalists even

³⁸ Cullingworth, 297-300. Robinson, "'The Streets Belong to the People' Expressway Disputes in Canada, C. 1960-75." 36. John Sewell, *The Shape of the Suburbs: Understanding Toronto's Sprawl*, (Canada: University of Toronto Press, 2009), 43.

³⁹ Ibid, 298. Danielle Robinson, "'The Streets Belong to the People' Expressway Disputes in Canada, C. 1960-75." (PhD Dissertation, McMaster University, 2012), 21-69.

⁴⁰ Pat McNenly, "\$2billion airport plan to create city of 150,000," *Toronto Star*, March 3rd 1972, CTASC. Andrew G. Kirk, *Counterculture Green: The Whole Earth Catalog and American Environmentalism*, (United States: University of Kansas Press, 2007), 23.

⁴¹ Jon Caulfield, *The Tiny Perfect Mayor*, (Toronto: James Lorimer & Company, Publishers, 1974), 54.

⁴² Danielle Robinson, "'The Streets Belong to the People' Expressway Disputes in Canada, C. 1960-75." (PhD Dissertation, McMaster University, 2012), 21-69. Ian Milligan, "This Board Has a Duty to Intervene: Challenging the Spadina Expressway through the Ontario Municipal Board, 1963-1971," *Urban History Review*, (Volume 39. No. 2. Spring 2011), 25-39. White, 274.

speculated that the high modernist visions of Premier Davis would be the end of the successful Big Blue Machine in Ontario.⁴³

The MOT had studied the capacity of airports in the early 1960s and made a number of estimations of increases in passenger volume. Their forecasts called for an increase in passenger volumes from 15 million in 1980 to 29.4 million by 1990.⁴⁴ These statistics were quoted frequently by politicians to argue why this airport was needed. During the Airport Inquiry Commission (AIC), Judge Hugh Gibson used the forecasts to refute claims by citizens that a second airport was not needed.⁴⁵ The estimate was based on the huge increases in passenger volume during the 1960s as air travel became more affordable and jet airplanes were introduced.⁴⁶ Malton Airport had already been enlarged twice before this period but this was seen as insufficient to cover the anticipated increases in passenger traffic.⁴⁷ Malton Airport served the City of Toronto and Metropolitan area. Toronto was challenging Montréal's status as the financial and cultural capital of Canada. By the 1970s it was clear that Toronto was overtaking Montréal as the most influential city, a fact not lost on airport planners and policy makers.⁴⁸

⁴³ Cullingworth, 331. "End of a Dynasty or Just a Case of the Staggers," *Globe and Mail*, May 25th 1973, CTASC. "Davis Faces Criticism," *Toronto Star*, April 21st 1973, CTASC. "PC Stalwarts Fear Bill Davis is Going too Far Too Fast," *Toronto Star*, May 19th 1973, CTASC.

⁴⁴ This statistic is the most important stat and argument on why airport expansion was needed in Canada. The projection of future growth was repeated in the development of the Pickering Airport, Mirabel in Québec and Sea Island in British Columbia. Progress and growth were the political benchmarks of the day. For Pickering, Ministry of Transport, "Memorandum to Cabinet," January 28th 1975, LAC RG19 Volume 6269 File 4220 P 595-3. For Sea Island, O.G. Stoner, "Memorandum to the Minister," February 28th 1973, LAC MG 32-B46 Volume 89 File 14. For Mirabel's justification based on growth statistics, Ministry of Transport, *Montreal International Airport Technical Information*, October 7th 1968, BAnQ Québec E7 1994-10-010/60.

⁴⁵ Government of Canada, *Report of the Airport Inquiry Commission*, (Ottawa: Information Canada, 1974), 49.

⁴⁶ Thompson, 7.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Robinson, 34. Much of the newspaper coverage on Mirabel in English Canada presented the airport as propping up a city that was no longer the financial capital of Canada despite the federal government directing investment towards Montreal. Editorial "Mistake After Mistake," *Globe and Mail*, September 23rd 1975, CTASC.

The federal government commissioned a study on the future of Malton Airport in the mid 1960s. Parkin and Associates investigated the capacity at Malton Airport and called for major expansions to terminals, runways and ground facilities.⁴⁹ When the federal government released details about this expansion, the policy faced substantial resistance in the Malton area. Local MPs like Jim Fleming who represented the riding of York West were aggressively lobbied by constituents who could not handle the excessive noise coming from Malton.⁵⁰ Malton-area residents sent letters to the Prime Minister's Office through a group called New Airport Now (NAN) to show their support for a second airport.⁵¹ By 1968 the federal government abandoned plans to expand Malton Airport. If the federal government was not going to expand the existing facilities at Malton, then a new airport would be needed to handle future capacity increases.

In 1968 both levels of government started to engage in a preliminary search to find a suitable site for the airport. Pickering (Figure 3) was never the first choice. Pickering was dismissed early on in 1968 but was recommended as the site for the airport in 1971.⁵² The four sites that were considered in 1968 were: Lake Simcoe, Lake Scugog, Guelph and Orangeville. (Figure 2) All the sites had drawbacks and even the most preferred site at Guelph would have conflicted with Malton flight paths and regional developments plans.⁵³

⁴⁹ Thompson, 7-8. Feldman and Milch, 82-83.

⁵⁰ This was made quite clear to me in an interview with The Honourable Jim Fleming. His constituents who lived under the Malton flight paths did not want more airport noise. They pushed all local MPs in the area to support the Pickering expansion. Interview with The Honourable Jim Fleming, June 23rd 2016. John Bickley, "Letter to Jean Marchand," July 19th 1975, LAC MG32-B46 Volume 88 File 5. Lois Griffin, "Letter to Alastair Gillespie," January 16th 1973, LAC MG-32-B46 Volume 85 File 10.

⁵¹ Miriam Mittermaier, "Letter to Prime Minister Trudeau," December 19th 1974, LAC MG 32-B46 Volume 87 File 5.

⁵² Thompson, 12.

⁵³ There was a lot of controversy over why Pickering was chosen as the site. For the federal perspective, see Government of Canada, "Federal-Provincial Joint Announcement of Site Selection," March 2nd 1972, CTA Fonds 220 Series 11 Box 103158 File 9. To this day the protestors do not believe the federal government was being honest. Interview with Dr. Charles Godfrey. May 29th 2013.

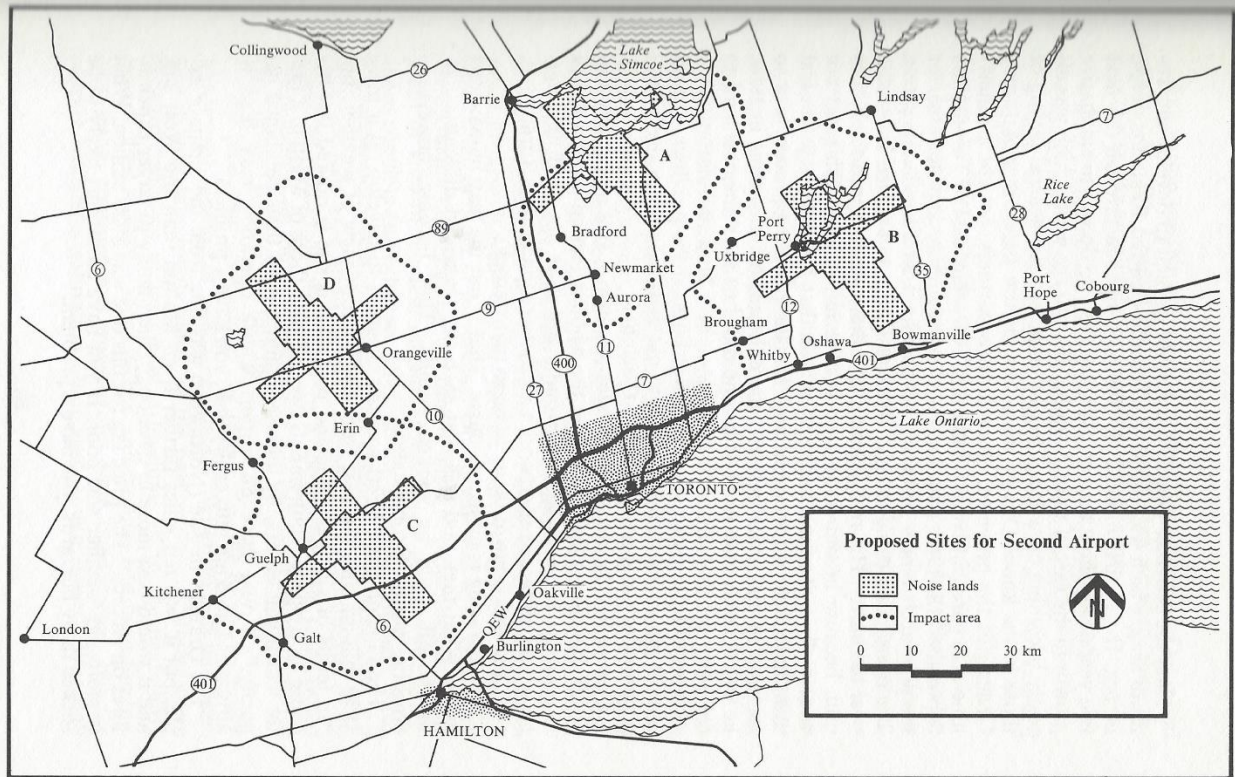


Figure 2: The proposed sites for the second airport in the Greater Toronto Area. (Stewart, 45)

In early 1971 the federal and provincial governments almost agreed on Orangeville as the site for the new airport, but local opposition quickly ended that idea. Local politicians in Dufferin County supported the airport coming to the area. The airport would create jobs in the area and with a low population there would not be much of a noise problem.⁵⁴ Residents felt blindsided that there was no consultation on whether the people in the area would even want an airport. A citizen's committee quickly formed and challenged the local government over not consulting with residents or examining whether an airport would even be good for the community. The committee submitted extensive evidence on weather conditions in the area to

⁵⁴ Budden and Ernst 18-23, 92-94. Thompson, 15.

show the provincial government why the area was not suitable. The controversy over the potential Orangeville site seemed to end consideration of Dufferin County as a potential site.⁵⁵

The federal and provincial governments continued to consult with each other to try and find a site. Yet no agreement could be reached. The two levels of government were at a standstill and no decisions were being made.⁵⁶ Officials went back to work and decided to change their approach. They would build two smaller airports on sites that were rejected previously: Beverly in the west and Pickering in the east. The problem was that the federal and provincial governments kept changing their minds about a site.⁵⁷ Compared to Pickering, Beverly was evaluated as a better site. It had open space and a large population center (Hamilton) close by. However, there were concerns about losses to the natural environment, and potential damage to the Conservation Areas.⁵⁸ In the end the federal Cabinet approved the Pickering site only. The issues that originally led to Pickering being dropped as a potential site, such as the loss of high-quality farmland and difficulty in expanding runways, were ignored or now were seen as minor disruptions. The airport had to go somewhere, and it seemed Pickering had the least negative qualities.⁵⁹ Several hours before the official announcement, surrounding municipalities were informed of the airport location. The municipalities which were affected by the airport, including Pickering, made a lot of noise after the announcement of the airport location. But as creatures of the provinces they did not have a say officially on the final decision.⁶⁰ On March 2nd 1972,

⁵⁵ Budden and Ernst, 48-52, 72. Stewart, 68.

⁵⁶ Feldman and Milch, 82-84.

⁵⁷ Stewart, 72-75.

⁵⁸ R.J. McCormack, "Memorandum on Pickering," April 15th 1972, LAC RG 139 Volume 830 File 591-4-10.

⁵⁹ Stewart, 72. R.J. McCormack, "Memorandum on Pickering," April 15th 1972, LAC RG 139 Volume 830 File 591-4-10.

⁶⁰ Budden and Ernst, 99.

Transport Minister Jamieson and his Provincial counterpart Darcy McKeough announced the Pickering Airport alongside the development of a new city called Cedarwood.⁶¹

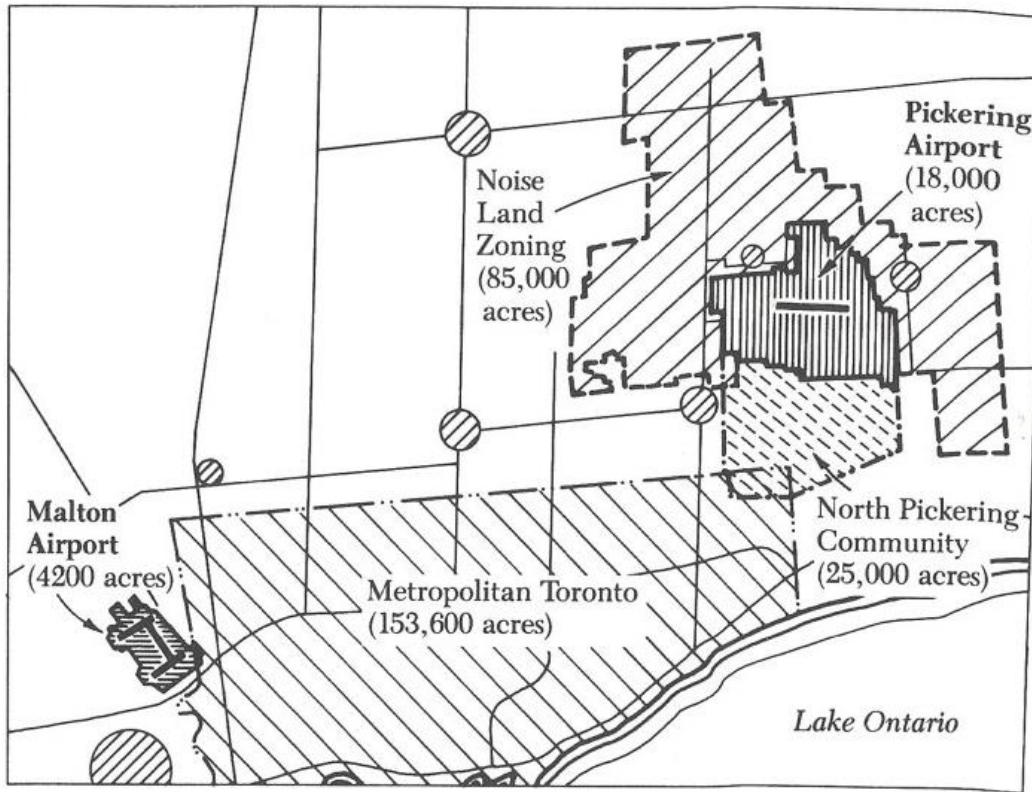


Figure 3: Pickering Airport Lands (Feldman and Milch, 90)

Meet the Protestors: Formation of POP and Strategies

POP was formed on March 2nd 1972, the same day that the Pickering Airport was announced. Its goal was to stop the development. Bill Lishman, one of its early members, described how a reporter from the *Globe and Mail* came to visit him a few days before the announcement and told him about the Pickering airport plans. Lishman was so incensed that the reporter photographed him holding an old First World War rifle with a headline “Lishman ready

⁶¹ Stewart, 80.

to go to war.” The photo stunt galvanized the people in the area and would foreshadow how POP worked with the media in the future.⁶²

Concerned citizens immediately met after the announcement at Melody Farm the night of March 2nd, 1972.⁶³ They decided to form an organization to help express their opposition to the airport. As chair throughout the campaign Dr. Charles Godfrey became the public face of POP. Godfrey had experience in this kind of organization; he and another future POP protester, Lorne Almack, helped defeat proposals by the Ontario government to develop an “instant city” in North Pickering in 1971. The provincial bureaucrats and politicians imposed their idea on the citizens and believed that their planned city was superior. However, protests against Century City ended the planned development.⁶⁴ This experience would serve Godfrey and Almack well in the fight against the Pickering Airport.⁶⁵

Godfrey was an urbanite and well-known Toronto doctor, who had a mix of both urban and rural roots which helped him understand this conflict and led to a more united protest group.⁶⁶ Dr. Godfrey had a number of political and media connections. He was a strong Liberal before the Pickering Airport conflict and was friends with influential members of the party, including Cabinet Minister Barney Danson, who would become a lone voice of dissent in Cabinet. He also knew David Lewis, the federal leader of the NDP, and would run successfully for the provincial NDP under his son Stephen Lewis in 1975 after leaving the Liberals.⁶⁷ Godfrey had good contacts with the *Toronto Star*, who most likely helped with POP getting a lot of media

⁶² Interview with Bill Lishman, May 22nd 2013. See also *The Last Stand*. Directed by Peter Shatalow. 2005. Mississauga: McNabb Connolly. 2006. DVD.

⁶³ Rowan, 22.

⁶⁴ Interview with Charles Godfrey, May 29th 2013. John Scott, “Century City plan rejected by Uxrbidge,” *Globe and Mail*, June 29th 1971.

⁶⁵ Interview with Tommy Thompson, February 28th 2013.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

recognition, despite going against the *Star's* editorial line.⁶⁸ Furthermore, his ability to communicate a clear message and his leadership skills would serve him well in this resistance and eventually in his provincial election win in 1975.⁶⁹ The media liked Godfrey, because he knew how to communicate a clear message, and because he seemed less self interested than other protesters, since his property was not threatened by expropriation.⁷⁰

Before describing the other members of POP, it is important to put its members within historical context. Many members were between thirty and fifty years old. Some had served during the Second World War and therefore had that generation's positive relationship to the state, quite different than the student activists of the 1960s. For those citizens who had served during the war, such as Tommy Thompson or Dr. Godfrey, the principle of the state taking private property must have seemed like the ultimate offense against their dignity. Expropriation violates one of the sacred trusts of the liberal state which is private property.⁷¹ The wartime experience made Thompson and Godfrey different from more elderly residents who lived in the area, who did not take exception to the expropriation, accepted the official compensation, and moved on.⁷²

POP comprised people from many different occupations, farmers, engineers, urban planners, housewives as well as corporate executives, doctors and lawyers. Although farm families and ex-urbanites had different motives and occupations, they set potential differences aside and rallied against the airport.⁷³ This was a point that most of the protestors emphasized in

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ "Godfrey Wins Durham West," *Pickering Bay News*, September 24th 1975, CTASC.

⁷⁰ Interview with Charles Godfrey, May 29th 2013. "Godfrey Wins Durham West," *Pickering Bay News*, September 24th 1975, CTASC.

⁷¹ Ian McKay, "The Liberal Order Framework: A Prospectus for a Reconnaissance of Canadian History," *Canadian Historical Review*, (Vol 81, No. 4, December 2000), 3-4.

⁷² Interview with Tommy Thompson, February 28th 2013.

⁷³ Thompson, 33.

their interviews. They were working with people with whom they may not have interacted had the federal government not announced its intention to proceed with the Pickering Airport. Many lifelong friendships were created out of this struggle. The artistic committee was made up of younger people such as Bill Lishman, a sculptor by trade who made a living partly through doing wacky stunts to attract media attention and Mike Robertson who was a world champion Flat Kite flyer. Both were young, energetic and were good at coming up with crazy ideas to attract attention.⁷⁴ They worked with people like Lorne Almack who was seen as a “staunch Conservative” and was a consultant and Brian Buckles an insurance executive.⁷⁵ Both Almack and Buckles served on the technical committee. They both were well educated and understood the analytical models that people in government created. The two members were well suited at taking apart the federal government’s case for the need for a second airport.⁷⁶

There was some tension between the “hippie types” like Bill Lishman and Mike Robertson who coordinated the stunts that garnered POP so much media attention and the traditionalists who wanted to solve this issue through backroom deals.⁷⁷ This tension was escalated by the fact that POP was trying to create an image of an average group of citizens who were resisting the airport. Being seen as a group of “hippies” was not an image that POP wanted to put forward.⁷⁸ So the group was aware of how it should manage its image in the media and which members would get publicity.

Women played a significant role in POP, although few were involved in the backroom political dealings. Most were housewives, although there were exceptions, such as Anne

⁷⁴ Interview with Bill Lishman, May 22nd 2013.

⁷⁵ Interview with Charles Godfrey, May 29th 2013. Stewart, 96.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Interview with Bill Lishman, May 22nd 2013.

⁷⁸ For more information on how hippies were personified, see Marcel Martel, ““They smell bad, have diseases, and are lazy’: RCMP Officers Reporting on Hippies in the Late Sixties,” *Canadian Historical Review*, (Vol. 90, 2, 2009), 215-245.

Wanstall, who was an editor of the food section at the *Toronto Star*. Perhaps predictably, they - kept the phone lines running, and wrote countless letters to the press and to politicians. Yet, they. also aggressively pursued the press, and organized some of the most media-worthy public events, including the Bulldozer Tea Party or the Last Stand at Ernie Carruthers' house.⁷⁹ As Pat Horne explained, the tea party was a "... PR thing to show how middle class and upper class people who wore high heels and nylons not just hippie people who were dead against the issue... So we put on our Sunday [best] go to church clothes and stood in front of the bulldozers and had our tea party. Someone showed us how to disengage the bulldozer."⁸⁰

These women did not fit neatly into the re-emerging feminist movement.⁸¹ They often played on their roles as mothers and housewives to personalize the story and gain publicity for the group. It is difficult to pinpoint where the women of POP would fit in relation to the re-emerging feminist movement, or the varying political tendencies within the organized women's liberation movement. What we do know is that the women of POP took very public roles in the protest and as we will see later when we analyze the press, some members of POP were criticized for this.⁸² Some of the arguments made by the female protestors would today be classified as falling within maternal feminism. The women of POP often emphasized how the Pickering Airport would affect the local children, and they used their roles as mothers to gain publicity for the group.⁸³ Some of the letters to the editor also emphasized the connection between nature and children. This would provide a more personal touch to their resistance and

⁷⁹ Editorial, "A Stupid Kind of Caper," *Markham Economist and Sun*, May 29th 1975, CTASC. Editorial, "Taking a (final) stand," *Ajax-Pickering News Advertiser*, September 25th 1975, CTASC.

⁸⁰ Interview with Pat Horne, February 12th 2013.

⁸¹ Nancy Adamson, Linda Briskin and Margaret McPhail, *Feminists Organizing for Change: The Contemporary Women's Movement in Canada*, (Canada: Oxford University Press, 1988), 34.

⁸² Rowan, 27.

⁸³ Nancy Adamson, Linda Briskin and Margaret McPhail, *Feminists Organizing for Change: The Contemporary Women's Movement in Canada*, (Canada: Oxford University Press, 1988), 34.

would help galvanize public support.⁸⁴ The videos taken of some of the more symbolic stunts of POP show mothers bringing their children to the protests. The women of POP helped elevate the reputation of the group as it was important to disassociate POP from being a group of land loving hippies but respectable property owners. Horne later recalled that as women, they meant business.⁸⁵ The women of POP aggressively pursued the press and constantly wrote to politicians to get their attention. They were seen as annoying, yet their persistence is shown in the newspaper coverage, and in hundreds of newspaper stories written about the protest group, and notes written by irritated bureaucrats.⁸⁶

Make Them Sweat: POP's Model of Activism

POP had a specific model of resistance that took form with inspiration from a few sources. At the time, the only citizen group that had won a battle against a major government project was the Stop the Spadina Expressway group.⁸⁷ The leader of POP, Charles Godfrey, acknowledged that their group followed in its footsteps. They also had the same legal contact, namely Bill McMurtry, the brother of future Ontario Progressive Conservative Roy McMurtry.⁸⁸ Their major guide was a booklet written by Antony Jay called *The Householder's Guide to Community Defence Against Bureaucratic Aggression*.⁸⁹ The main topics that Jay's articles discussed included having a legal team, developing an emotional response by providing stories to which citizens could relate, using the media, attacking expertise and countering government propaganda. These were all tactics that POP used in their campaign.⁹⁰

⁸⁴ Letter to the Editor, "They're Coming Mommy," *Markham Economist and Sun*, April 20th 1974, CTASC.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ J. M. Davey, "Letter to Anne Wanstall," February 23rd 1973, LAC MG 32-B46 Volume 89 File 3.

⁸⁷ John Sewell, *The Shape of the Suburbs: Understanding Toronto's Sprawl*, (Canada: University of Toronto Press, 2009), 68.

⁸⁸ Interview with Dr. Charles Godfrey, May 29th 2013.

⁸⁹ Thompson, 32. Stewart, 86.

⁹⁰ Antony Jay, "How to Stop Them," *Sunday Times: Magazine Supplement*, January 23rd 1972, CTASC.

POP protested against the airport for a number of different reasons. Some residents in the area were going to have their homes expropriated to make way for the airport. For some protestors who had lived in the area for generations, it was inexcusable that the government was going to take their home.⁹¹ For others who had escaped the urban sprawl and the ‘noise’ of the cities, it was disheartening that even in Pickering the desire to develop land could not be stopped. Much of the leadership of POP was formerly from the City of Toronto and had no desire to move again to escape the urban sprawl.⁹² Then there were those who were concerned about all the farmland that would be paved over with concrete and steel. Pickering contained some of the best farmland in Ontario and people thought that would be a devastating loss for their children and the City of Toronto. This formed the crux of how many POP members saw nature.⁹³ The group framed its protest in a very specific way. They deliberately made sure the debate was not framed around property loss. Although many letters to the editor expressed concern and anger about the loss of property, this was not the main argument of POP. If the debate was just about property then the image of POP as greedy landowners would have stuck and they would not have received as much public or political support.⁹⁴ The group instead advanced two distinct arguments against the plan: the airport was not needed and, if it was warranted, it should not be built on prime farmland.⁹⁵ POP kept up these arguments throughout the campaign and emphasized them during their encounters with the press. They conducted research to prove both cases and emphasized their preferred uses for the land.

⁹¹ I conducted eight interviews with POP members for my research. 4 members of POP had the property they owned or were living on expropriated for the federal airport. Two members were tied down in the provincial expropriation. Only Dr. Godfrey and Pat Horne did not have to face expropriation. Charles Godfrey and Hector Massey, *People or Planes*, (Toronto: Copp Clark Publishing, 1972), 7.

⁹² Godfrey and Massey, 7.

⁹³ Ibid, 84.

⁹⁴ Letter to the Editor, Isabel Thompson, “Our Concern is not Money but homes: Suburbanite,” *Toronto Star*, October 16th, 1973, CTASC.

⁹⁵ Interview with Lorne Almack, May 23rd 2013.

The legal team played an important role for the organization. Clark Muirhead headed the legal team and worked with POP in order to develop not only legal arguments but also to make the most effective argument against the airport. This can be seen in his public statements including his testimony at the public hearings in 1972 which provided the group their first opportunity to challenge the federal government's data. Muirhead's experience in both politics and aeronautical engineering enabled him to discuss the politics surrounding how the site had been chosen.⁹⁶ The legal team was also involved in the *Airport Inquiry Commission* where they turned to the courts, submitting an application for prohibition on the grounds that one of the commissioners, Murray V. Jones, was biased in law.⁹⁷ This application was dismissed by the Federal Court of Appeal but it did not alleviate concerns by some parties that the Inquiry was fixed.⁹⁸

POP activists understood that to successfully mobilize public opinion, they would need to tap into the deep emotional attachment that so many felt toward "their land" as "their home." Although the Pickering Airport was a local issue, it was also a regional issue for all the surrounding communities that were going to be impacted by the airport including Markham, Stouffville and Oshawa. It was a provincial and national issue not only because both levels of government were involved in the decision, but additionally, for communities across Canada. Pickering became a test case for how towns were treated in these public works decisions. The women of POP wrote touching letters to the daily newspapers and politicians everyday trying to get POPs message across. Letters about children losing their trees to airplanes or people wanting

⁹⁶ Government of Canada. *Report of J.W. Swackhamer*, (Ottawa: Information Canada, 1974), 84-85.

⁹⁷ Government of Canada, *Report of The Airport Inquiry Commission*, (Ottawa: Information Canada, 1974), 12-13.

⁹⁸ Editorial, "Reluctant Inquiry," *Globe and Mail*, December 24th 1973, CTASC. Editorial, "POP Has a Point on Cute Inquiry," *Guelph Mercury*, February 28th 1974, CTASC.

to remain in their homes directly attempted to mobilize/tap into an emotional attachment to land.⁹⁹ Brenda Davies, who worked as a nurse, wrote a poem and presented it as evidence at the AIC. It summarized many of POPs approaches to the airport struggle. In the documentary *The Last Stand* about the resistance, directed by Peter Shatalow, someone sings the poem in the background.¹⁰⁰ Analyzing just one stanza can tell us a lot about POP:

Q for the Questions we'll try to ignore,
 R for the Rape of the land they adore,
 S is the suburb where Metro can sprawl,
 T is for Trees – who cares which way they fall¹⁰¹

The poem speaks to the fact that POP believed that someone made the decision to expropriate their homes and did not consider the consequences for the families, the environment and the community. Further, there may have been an environmental chord being struck here, as the anti-pollution movement was finding its footing.¹⁰²

POP knew having the media on side was important.¹⁰³ Luckily the group had a reporter in its ranks. Anne Wanstall wrote for the food section of the *Toronto Star* and was part of the publicity cell of POP. She understood how the media worked and how the resistance should use reporters to get their story across. The artist committee's use of shows and stunts put POP in the newspaper more often than not. Stunts such as a Mother Nature funeral where POP members dressed in black gowns and walked towards Queen's Park lamenting the Death of Nature, Mike

⁹⁹ Letter to the Editor, "There Coming Mommy," *Markham Economist and Sun*, April 20th 1972, CTASC. Letter to the Editor. "Our Concern is not money but homes: Suburbanite," *Toronto Star*, October 16th 1973, CTASC.

¹⁰⁰ For full text of the poem, see: Bob Spence, "Yes they can Laugh," *Oshawa Times*, April 13th 1974, CTASC.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² Many of the arguments that POP made about land at the time we now associate with the environmental movement. The public would become more receptive to ideas about farmland, producing local food and stopping urban sprawl as time passed.

¹⁰³ Godfrey and Massey, 48.

Robertson's hang gliding over Parliament on the eve of a big airport announcement, and the mock hanging of Prime Minister Trudeau and Premier Davis were all reported in the news.¹⁰⁴ These capers along with public relations strategies to get citizens on their side through events such as earth day festivals, local food initiatives in Toronto and walking tours of the area, showed people the landscape and what it produced. Overall, as an analysis of the media coverage will show, POP effectively shaped the narrative surrounding the airport issue.

Looking back over forty years later, the protestors shared some interesting responses to questions about their media appeal and the stunts. POP's brand of political activism took the approach of political theatre that employed spectacle. There is a long tradition of street theatre in Canada such as workers celebrating Labour Day. These stunts appeal on a personal level to citizens.¹⁰⁵ The work of the creative committee was seen as vital to keeping POP in the spotlight, especially during the summers of 1972-1974 when the legislature rose.¹⁰⁶ Bill Lishman organized the Claremont Fusiliers during the summer. They dressed in military garb and carried fake rifles. The group stood on guard at Transport Canada offices to stop people from trespassing on expropriated property. Here we see POP invoking the idea of a citizen militia that was protecting citizens from the enemy, in this case Transport Canada.¹⁰⁷

Many of the stunts were organized to galvanize public support or to remove the spotlight from the government. One of the most infamous moments in the campaign was the hang gliding

¹⁰⁴ For the Mother Nature eulogy, *Globe and Mail*. June 16th, 1972, 5 CTASC. For the fake public hanging, "Airport foes hang Trudeau, Davis- in effigy," *Toronto Star*. June 18th, 1972, A10. CTASC. For the hang gliding stunt, Bruce West, "High Flying Protest," *Globe and Mail*, January 31st 1973, CTASC.

¹⁰⁵ Craig Heron and Steve Penfold, *The Workers' Festival: A History of Labour Day in Canada*, (Canada: University of Toronto Press, 2005), xv.

¹⁰⁶ The exception of course would be the provincial election in September 1975 when political parties were campaigning in the summer.

¹⁰⁷ James Wood, *Militia Myths: Ideas of the Canadian Citizen Soldier, 1896-1921*, (Canada: UBC Press, 2010), 11. Interview with Bill Lishman, May 22nd 2013.

over Parliament. It is hard to believe after watching the tape someone recorded forty years ago that Mike Robertson got away with this.¹⁰⁸ As a world champion kite flyer only someone with that much daring and skill could attempt such a feat. Mike Robertson was able to fly the day the federal government was going to make a big announcement about the airport. POP achieved more coverage than Transport Minister Marchand on the evening news.¹⁰⁹ Street theatre can be simple but very engaging and colourful. The mock funeral organized by POP resembled a parade. The members dressed in homemade black robes and designed fake coffins and tombstones.¹¹⁰ Bill Lishman described how important it was to have powerful imagery to attract public attention. In the funeral march POP not only successfully communicated their displeasure with how the government treated citizens, but also presented its views on land.¹¹¹ Some of these events include the vegetable rally occurred when POP set up a farmer's market near City Hall in Toronto and gave out vegetables that farmers grew in Pickering. The Earth Day festival attracted 30,000 people to Pickering where POP held concerts and raised money.¹¹² However, POP was criticized for some of their more outlandish stunts which some newspapers considered dangerous. The group conducted a mock hanging where members dressed in black garb and pushed a turnip cart with the lifelike effigies of Premier Davis and Prime Minister Trudeau. POP claimed it was the last public hanging in Canada. The effect was very realistic with a wooden scaffold and several protestors dressed in period clothing. One female protestor dressed as Madame Defarge knitting as the hanging commenced.¹¹³ Several newspapers criticized the group

¹⁰⁸ *The Last Stand*. Directed by Peter Shatalow. 2005. Mississauga: McNabb Connolly. 2006. DVD.

¹⁰⁹ Interview with Mike Robertson, May 21st 2013.

¹¹⁰ *Toronto Star*, June 20th 1972. CTASC.

¹¹¹ Interview with Bill Lishman, May 22nd 2013.

¹¹² "POP Holds Earth Days," *Markham Economist and Sun*, September 14th, 1972. CTASC.

¹¹³ Madame Defarge is a fictional character in Charles Dickens *A Tale of Two Cities* who knits during the French Revolution. Interview with Pat Horne, February 12th 2013.

for this stunt.¹¹⁴ When I asked if POP ever went too far some members of the group brought up the issue of the mock hanging as the only example. However, many POP members disagreed and said that no one was hurt nor did they break any laws. The mock hanging was a statement about how the group felt towards government. The members were angry with how the government was treating them and the mock hanging was an act of civil disobedience. Most POP members look back at that moment proudly.¹¹⁵

It was not the last time POP protests would be covered in the press. On September 23, 1975, three women occupied the house of Ernie Carruthers in “The Last Stand” to protest him losing his home. Anne Howes, Brenda Davies and Frances Moore occupied the house until the airport was cancelled three days later. Many newspapers covered the stunt and editorial reaction was mixed. The *Ajax-Pickering News Advertiser* supported the three women and POP who defied the government to the very end.¹¹⁶ The *Toronto Star* was very critical of the occupation of the house for defying the rule of law and Canadian democracy.¹¹⁷ The women wanted to protect the home of Mr. Carruthers, one of the last farmers who remained on his property, and in doing so earned substantial media coverage. The group’s stunts were clever and at times quite comical. They always did something new and there was always fresh material for reporters. POP gave the media what they wanted, and the result was substantial coverage from the press, helping their ideas to gain traction.

Finally, the group’s technical committee attacked the data produced by Transport Canada and conducted research to prove that the airport was not needed. POP members participated in

¹¹⁴ Letter to the Editor, “Mock Hanging Called Frightening,” *Ajax-Pickering News Advertiser*, September 5th 1973, CTASC. Editorial “Mock Hanging Unacceptable Act,” *Toronto Star*, June 27th 1973, CTASC.

¹¹⁵ Of the eight people interviewed four thought the mock hanging was acceptable.

¹¹⁶ Editorial, “Taking a Final Stand,” *Ajax-Pickering News Advertiser*, September 25th 1975, CTASC.

¹¹⁷ Editorial, “Peaceful Protests Have Limits Too,” *Toronto Star*, September 16th 1975, CTASC.

government studies in order to get its point across.¹¹⁸ Lorne Almack's testimony at the public hearings spoke to the planning decisions made by both levels of government.¹¹⁹ As a professional engineer and management consultant he was very familiar with the bureaucratic jargon used to describe the airport. His testimony focussed on the estimates of passenger growth made by Transport Canada. He suggested that the 1960s was an exceptional period and that the projected growth would not be reached. Therefore, there was no need for a second airport.¹²⁰ Secondly, the group focussed on why Pickering was not the best the site for an airport. In testimony at public hearings the technical committee brought up that Beverly was the more favoured airport site than Pickering. In addition, Lorne Almack claimed that a provincial environmental impact study was shallow. For example, Pickering's wildlife was seen as contributing little to wild life production compared to other sites.¹²¹ By putting forward two distinct arguments, that the airport was not needed and that the project should not be located in Pickering, the group was able to avoid being labeled as just greedy landowners. POP used these strategies to form a successful narrative that the airport was not needed and that the negative effects on the people and the environment were more harmful than regional benefits.

For three years the group resisted all government efforts to build the Pickering Airport. By looking at press coverage of the airport and to state sponsored methods of inquiry such as public hearings and commissions, we can see how the state responded to the public and how the protestors handled opportunities for public consultation.

¹¹⁸ Godfrey and Massey, 50.

¹¹⁹ Government of Canada. *Report of J.W. Swackhamer*, (Ottawa: Information Canada, 1974), 40.

¹²⁰ Ibid, 41-42.

¹²¹ Interview with Brian Buckles, February 7th 2013. Thompson, 112-122.

Chapter 5: The Last Stand

The Pickering Airport is worth examining as the only federal airport project cancelled in the 1970s. This case allows us to examine how the state relates to citizens when they are active, engaged and involved in the policy process. By looking through commentary before, during, and after the most public confrontations we can understand the tensions that exist between citizens and experts. This chapter will explore press coverage of POP and two public consultations where protestors had a chance to voice their concerns. Under the new *Expropriation* Act, the federal government was obligated to hold public hearings. In 1972, the Swackhamer Hearings were held to hear testimony from concerned citizens and groups over the Pickering Airport.¹ Following continued controversy over the Pickering airport the federal government created a public inquiry to investigate the issues and recommend on whether the planned airport would proceed or not. The *Airport Inquiry Commission* (AIC) was established in 1974 with Judge Gibson as its head commissioner and the inquiry reported in early 1975.² In both of these instances protestors and the state commented on each other's concerns and it is clear from the historical documents, newspaper coverage and interviews that there was very little room for compromise on either side.

Focussing on two state-sponsored forums can tell us how much legitimacy is gained from these public fact-finding missions. In addition, we can explore how state sponsored inquiries influence the decisions made about public policy. This chapter will examine why state-sponsored public forums failed to satisfy the public and the bureaucracy. Ultimately the decision to build or scrap the Pickering Airport was based on a purely political decision and not by the

¹ Government of Canada. *Report of J.W. Swackhamer*, (Ottawa: Information Canada, 1974), 1-158.

² The AIC is also known as the Gibson Report. Government of Canada, *Report of The Airport Inquiry Commission*, (Ottawa: Information Canada, 1974), 1-256.

results of these public forums. The political forces in Ontario and Ottawa and the policy questions around regional growth and urban sprawl contributed more to the defeat of the airport than the airing of public grievances. What is concerning is that both the protestors and the bureaucrats arguing for or against the airport believe that this process had little merit. Compromise is at the heart of how our political system works yet in this instance neither side was willing to budge over the Pickering Airport.

I will first analyze the issues that the press were reporting at the time and their perceptions of People or Planes (POP) and the government. Next, I will examine the Swackhamer Hearings and AIC and focus on what these processes tell us about the relations between citizens and the state. Finally, I will conclude by looking at the decision to cancel the Pickering Airport and what this tells us about the development of public works in Canada.

Whose Story is It Anyway: POP and the Press

The press played a crucial role in the debate over the Pickering Airport. The press was used to spread the message of POP, not only to stop the airport but also to support their claims of legitimacy. This section aims to show how important the press was to the group's strategies but also highlight the political issues around the airport that previous authors had not thoroughly examined. The more that POP was reported on, the more the public would start to associate POP with the airport and perhaps eventually their ideals as well.

POP made it a deliberate strategy to work with the media and have their side of the debate covered not only in local newspapers but in regional and national papers as well. I will look at where the various newspapers stood on the issue of the Pickering Airport and discuss their coverage of POP. First, I will examine the policy issues associated with the Pickering Airport including how the papers evaluated its economic and environmental impact. Next, I will

discuss how the newspapers portrayed the protestors and their social activism. I will also comment on how the media reported on the protestors with regards to their gender. This section will also examine papers, both local and regional. Throughout the three-year debate various papers covered the Pickering Airport issue. Editorial support changed as events unfolded and POP became a recurring story throughout the period. The airport at first presented many economic benefits for the surrounding communities.

Economic Factors

Pickering Airport was presented by the federal government as good for the economy and as an investment in Canada's future. Transport Minister Jamieson repeated this point throughout the conflict.³ The various newspapers that covered the Pickering Airport did comment on the economic benefits especially if they would benefit their locality or not. The *Pickering Bay News* was at first supportive of the airport because of the economic benefits it would provide for the City of Pickering and the surrounding areas. The earliest editorial claimed the mix of industrial and commercial development that would come with the airport and Cedarwood would reduce the tax burden on the average citizen in the region.⁴ Development was seen as a natural process, so that there was no stopping the reshaping of Pickering. However, the *Pickering Bay News* started to doubt the economic benefits of the airport as the protests continued. In an editorial towards the end of the conflict, the *News* lamented the amount of development going on in the community including both the airport and Cedarwood projects.⁵ Markham was close to the airport but was not gaining spinoff jobs or industries from its construction. Some properties were being expropriated close to the York-Durham line that divided Markham and Pickering. The *Markham*

³ "Jamieson foresees 8% return on billion spent on new airport," *Toronto Star*, June 15th 1972, CTASC.

⁴ Editorial, "Opinions Change With Time," *Pickering Bay News*, March 22nd 1972, CTASC.

⁵ Editorial, "Too Much," *Pickering Bay News*, June 12th 1974, CTASC.

Economist and Sun did not discuss the economic benefits except in relation to land. The *Oshawa Times* was entirely in support of the airport because of the direct economic benefits for the City of Oshawa. The Mayor of Oshawa at the time, James H. Potticary, even wrote an editorial supporting the airport.⁶ The editorial staff were always leaning towards the airport especially after the results of the public inquiry when it seemed like the airport was finally going to be built.⁷

The *Toronto Star* reported frequently on the airport issue and the actions of POP. As one of the most widely read papers in the province, its stance on the issue cannot be ignored. Throughout the airport conflict the paper supported Robert Nixon's Liberals in both the 1971 and 1975 provincial elections. In both provincial election editorials, the paper mentioned planning decisions around Spadina and regional governments as reasons not to support the provincial Tories. Planning decisions provincially during the 1970s were major political issues. However, the paper for the first time in fifty years switched from the federal Liberals to the provincial Tories and endorsed Robert Stanfield in both the 1972 and 1974 election.⁸ The *Toronto Star* had a large interest in this story because the fate of the Pickering Airport was going to impact the City of Toronto directly. The Pickering proposal was largely in response to perceived congestion at Malton Airport so its development would have certainly affected Toronto. Toronto would benefit handsomely from the project as the paper clearly stated in several editorials. The editorial staff supported the airport since the first announcement in March 1972 and continued to defend

⁶ James H. Potticary, "A New Downtown; An Exciting Future," *Oshawa Times*, April 14th 1973, CTASC.

⁷ Editorial, "Fair Sensible Rules for Airport Inquiry," *Oshawa Times*, February 29th 1974, CTASC.

⁸ Editorial, "Power to the city," *Toronto Star*, October 19th 1971. Editorial, "For a strong new government," *Toronto Star*, September 16th 1975. Editorial, "Liberals have forfeited our support," *Toronto Star*, October 19th 1972. Editorial, "Inflation is the issue that counts," *Toronto Star*, July 6th 1974.

the idea even when the airport was cancelled in 1975.⁹ The paper quoted MOT statistics in one of its first editorials, which argued that passenger volume was going to increase and that Toronto needed a second airport in the area.¹⁰ The paper frequently relied on economic arguments to support its view of the airport including the MOT statistics about passenger volume, the jobs created through construction of the airport and noise levels. It concluded that the benefits far outweighed the complaints of a few citizens.¹¹ Additionally, it suggested that POP had to respond to criticisms about the group holding on to their land for financial benefits. As the protest dragged on land prices increased and many newspapers reported on this fact.¹² POP members and supporters wrote to the *Toronto Star* stating that this fight was about preserving their land and the community rather than financial benefits.¹³ POP had to make sure that they were not represented in the press as wealthy landowners who benefitted from the increases in property value.

For three years the *Globe and Mail* faithfully covered the tactics of POP and the arguments both for and against. The paper was against the airport and critical of the government from the first announcement. The *Globe* endorsed the provincial Tories in both the 1971 and 1975 provincial elections. The paper did support Trudeau in the 1972 federal election but switched to Stanfield and the Tories in the 1974 election over the inflation issue.¹⁴ The editorial team portrayed the entire exercise of building airports in Pickering and Montréal as a waste of

⁹ Editorial, "Who is conning us over Pickering," *Toronto Star*, September 26th 1975, CTASC.

¹⁰ Editorial, "A convincing case for a second airport," *Toronto Star*, April 29th 1972, CTASC.

¹¹ Editorial, "Pickering Airport Still the Answer," *Toronto Star*, May 1st 1974, CTASC.

¹² Even a paper in Saskatchewan picked up on the higher land prices. "Landowners to get More," *Star-Phoenix*, August 14th 1973, CTASC.

¹³ Letter to the Editor. "Our Concern is not money but homes: Suburbanite," *Toronto Star*, October 16th 1973, CTASC.

¹⁴ Editorial, "In tough times, strength," *Globe and Mail*, October 16th 1971. Editorial, "Making a choice," *Globe and Mail*, September 17th 1975. Editorial, "Election arithmetic," *Globe and Mail*, October 19th 1972. Editorial, "A need for change," *Globe and Mail*, July 6th 1974.

tax dollars for subsidizing facilities that were not needed.¹⁵ Most of the editorials against the airport were not about POP; however the paper made similar arguments to the group about sprawl. Many newspapers commented on the economic benefits of the airport either for or against. As mentioned previously the newspapers seemed to report on the financial incentives to build the Pickering Airport especially if it would have a positive effect on their community. In a time period where the economic conditions in Canada were steadily declining as inflation and unemployment took their toll, federal stimulus through any public works would have had a big impact on a community facing hard times. Community papers also covered environmental issues that were connected to the airport.

Environmental Issues

The Pickering Airport conflict developed at a time period that we now associate with the early environmental movement. As the conflict progressed, more newspapers started to report on issues relating to urban sprawl, farming and conservation. For example, the *Pickering Bay News* reported that the Cedarwood project incorporated environmental considerations such as protecting areas from development and building up the local fauna and trees.¹⁶ Yet already by 1973 this same paper was starting to question the lack of citizen involvement in decisions regarding their local community especially when it involved urban planning. There seemed to be a real struggle during this time period about how to develop a city properly. *The Pickering Bay News* by 1975 seemed frustrated by the way the different levels of government approached urban planning. Change came quickly as Pickering grew in the 1970s through state intervention, whether it was the construction of Highway 401 or the airport. The paper believed that the

¹⁵ Editorial, "We Bin Robbed," *Globe and Mail*, March 3rd 1972, CTASC.

¹⁶ "Environment is Key Factor in Community Planning," *Pickering Bay News*, November 8th 1972, CTASC.

residents should accept the fate that the quiet old Pickering was gone forever.¹⁷ The *Markham Economist and Sun* published an article in 1972 where the Federation of Ontario Naturalists (FON) reported that only one out of four candidates returned surveys that asked questions about environmental issues. They concluded that politicians were simply not interested in the environment.¹⁸ Early in the conflict the *Markham Economist and Sun* encouraged local politicians to be more proactive and engaged in environmental issues that affected their local communities. The editorial staff wanted citizens to stand up for their communities.¹⁹ However, it is important to point out that although the *Markham Economist and Sun* was against development and disagreed with both the Pickering Airport and Cedarwood, it was also strongly opposed to expropriation. In one editorial in response to the *Toronto Star* the *Markham Economist and Sun* attacked other papers for ignoring the ecological factors of building the airport and Cedarwood. In the same editorial, the paper also chided the *Toronto Star* for not considering the effect expropriation had on residents. It was that same expropriated property that would become the Pickering Airport and Cedarwood. There is a clear trend during the 1970s of residents being concerned about how public works projects will affect their quality of life.²⁰

The Globe and Mail featured a series of articles about urban sprawl and development issues, including by the commissioners of the *Pickering Impact Study* that studied the airport for the City of Toronto and James Lorimer, a Professor at U of T who specialized in citizen advocacy.²¹ Another featured article in 1975 by Graham Fraser raised concerns about whether

¹⁷ Editorial, "Battleground," *Pickering Bay News*, September 17th 1975, CTASC.

¹⁸ "Environment Ignored as Election Issue," *Markham Economist and Sun*, October 26th 1972, CTASC.

¹⁹ Editorial, "Time for a Stand," *Markham Economist and Sun*, April 6th 1973, CTASC.

²⁰ Editorial, "Environment Who Cares," *Markham Economist and Sun*, May 4th 1973, CTASC.

²¹ Jack Diamond and Barton Myers, "A Service Plan That increases Suburban Sprawl," *Globe and Mail*, December 9th 1974, CTASC. James Lorimer, "Big City Tentacles Reaching out for two small Towns," *Globe and Mail*, April 26th 1974, CTASC.

the Cedarwood project was just urban sprawl in disguise.²² This was a topic that was more frequently featured in the newspaper as the protests continued. Although the *Globe and Mail's* editorials did not necessarily focus on the environmental issues but more on the financial mismanagement, their steadily negative emphasis about the airport surely did not help the government's case. These articles may have raised awareness about environmental issues that were affecting communities, especially when the province of Ontario was creating regional development plans. There were political implications for the province and the federal government, and the airport with this coverage certainly did not hurt POP's cause.

POP, The Press and Protesting

It is important to acknowledge that when newspapers reported on the activities of POP, at times the papers took a gendered approach. The women of POP heavily participated in the stunts that were covered by the press. They were prominent in publicity for the organization and were featured in the newspaper coverage. A number of POP's stunts were not received well, especially the ones that were possibly dangerous. One article by reporter Don Atanasoff of the *Markham Economist and Sun* attacked Dr. Charles Godfrey's wife who was heavily involved in the publicity committee. The "queen in rusty armour" was even compared to Hitler. The tag line of the article says more than enough. "Lady leaves much to be desired."²³ I am sure many of the POP protestors were as intense as Margaret Godfrey, yet her gender is the focus of the title. Although tactics such as sitting in front of bulldozers were never followed through and were most likely used for publicity, the focus on Margaret Godfrey is striking.²⁴ By coming out into the public realm and protesting, these women were entering this male-dominated space. As

²² Graham Fraser, "Dream-town or Just Sprawl?" *Globe and Mail*, March 25th 1975, CTASC.

²³ Don Atanasoff, "Lady leaves much to be desired," *Markham Economist and Sun*, July 18th 1973, CTASC.

²⁴ Editorial, "A Stupid Kind of Caper," *Markham Economist and Sun*, May 29th 1975, CTASC.

mentioned previously many of the female members of POP were housewives and they drew on a tradition of maternal feminism.²⁵ As housewives they used different methods of protesting than the men. They brought their children to some of the stunts such as the bulldozer tea party and in letters to the editor the female protestors would mention how the airport was causing distress to their families.²⁶

The *Stouffville Tribute* also wrote about the bulldozer sit-in. Like the *Markham Economist and Sun*, sitting in front of bulldozers was not looked upon very well. It is dangerous but again the language used is quite telling. The women who were planning the sit-in were called “childish and foolish.”²⁷ One has to wonder if the paper was more against the idea that women were planning to do this than the stunt itself. The coverage was very sensational with references to violence and anarchy.²⁸ Although the newspapers did criticize some of the group’s stunts, gender was never discussed in the context of the stunts conducted by men such as the hang gliding over Parliament or the mock hanging. This was one of POP’s most outlandish stunts but the focus once again was on the women of POP. The editorial staff attacked the group’s professionalism by targeting the activities of the female protestors. POP was active during the 1970s when women were becoming more active in the public realm.

Many newspapers covered the activities of POP and the debate over the Pickering Airport.²⁹ The *Toronto Star* and the *Globe and Mail* produced the most articles on the subject

²⁵ Julie Guard, “Canada’s Radical Consumer Movement,” in *Sisters or Strangers? Immigrant, Ethnic, and Racialized Women in Canadian History*, ed. Marlene Epp, Franca Iacovetta and Frances Swyripa, (Canada: University of Toronto Press, 2005), 163.

²⁶ You can see children in the footage of the bulldozer tea party. *The Last Stand*. Directed by Peter Shatalow. 2005. Mississauga: McNabb Connolly. 2006. DVD. Letter to the Editor, “They’re Coming Mommy,” *Markham Economist and Sun*, April 20th 1974, CTASC.

²⁷ Editorial, “Childish, Foolish Threat,” *Stouffville Tribute*, September 25th 1975, CTASC.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Total articles found for each paper between March 1972 and October 1975: *Toronto Star*: 260, *Globe and Mail*: 170 *Markham Economist and Sun*: 50 *Pickering Bay News*: 35, *Oshawa Times*: 33, *Ajax-Pickering News Advertiser*: 21, *Stouffville Tribune*: 12.

while many other local and regional papers published articles as well. There was a variety of perceptions of POP and its stunts. *The Pickering Bay News* reported heavily on the airport issue between the years 1972-1975. Their first editorial appeared on March 22nd, 1972 and was against the protestors for only starting to resist when development was right on their doorstep. Development had been going on for years in Pickering and yet they had stood idly by. The editorial staff could not support a group with such “narrow interests.”³⁰ Later in the year another editorial appeared in the paper chastising middle class protestors, who with money and knowledge could take the government's attention away from an issue. Although the paper was more concerned about what happens when the wealthy start forming protest groups, it seemed that the editorial staff were not entirely supportive of efforts such as POP.³¹ However, the opinion of *Pickering Bay News* started to change as the issue dragged on for another two years. It was against the government taking so long to make the airport decision final. Yet, the paper also started discussing the merits of people's participation or citizen democracy in an editorial around the same period in 1973. POP was the group holding up the airport issue by protesting and discussing the arguments against development.³² In 1974 the paper wrote positive editorials on civic action and the relationship between the state and citizens. However, this does not include protest tactics that some people thought to be extreme or inappropriate. The other local paper for Pickering, the *Ajax-Pickering News Advertiser*, criticized POP for the mock hanging. The paper called it a frightful affair. A POP letter to the editor in response said that they were respectful

³⁰ Editorial, “Opinions Change With Time,” *Pickering Bay News*, March 22nd 1972, CTASC.

³¹ Editorial, “Protesting Now the ‘In’ Thing,” *Pickering Bay News*, November 8th 1972, CTASC.

³² Editorial, “That Airport,” *Pickering Bay News*, October 17th 1973, CTASC. Editorial, “People Participation” *Pickering Bay News*, September 8th 1973, CTASC.

people only doing what was necessary against “dictator like actions.”³³ Yet the paper praised the women of POP who occupied Ernie Carruther’s house in 1975, calling them visionary. The paper claimed that POP was inspirational for showing that people can stand up to government, and for the wide variety of members it attracted.³⁴ The Pickering papers seemed in general to support the arguments of POP, if not always their tactics. *The Pickering Bay News* at first seemed reluctant to support protest groups like POP. The indecision caused by government and the merits of POP’s argument seemed to at the very least make POP in the eyes of the editorial staff more than just a narrow interest group.³⁵ *The Markham Economist and Sun* was entirely supportive of POP and consistently against the airport. Early on the paper supported the civic action against the airport and the cruelty of expropriation. They had very positive coverage of POP’s events such as the vegetable rally and Earth Day festival and were sympathetic to residents who were losing their homes.³⁶ However, there were a few times that the *Markham Economist and Sun* did not support the social activism of POP. POP sometimes organized stunts just to attract the press and public attention. In the case of the air balloon barrage and blocking the bulldozers POP failed to follow through. The balloon barrage was to take place on Lorne Almack’s property, but it never occurred. The papers took the balloon barrage seriously which after Mr. Almack reflected on it, he found the press quite gullible.³⁷ There were also plans to have women sit in front of bulldozers to protest the destruction of homes. In a “Stupid Kind of Caper” the editorial staff of the *Markham Economist and Sun* blasted POP and its “radical members” for the proposed

³³ Letter to the Editor, “Mock Hanging Called Frightening,” *Ajax-Pickering News Advertiser*, September 5th 1973, CTASC.

³⁴ Editorial, “Taking a (final) stand,” *Ajax-Pickering News Advertiser*, September 25th 1975, CTASC.

³⁵ Editorial, “It Can Be Done,” *Pickering Bay News*, September 18th 1974, CTASC.

³⁶ Ken Myron, “POP stages Effective Rally,” *Markham Economist and Sun*, October 1973, 12. CTASC.

³⁷ Interview with Lorne Almack, May 23rd 2013.

dangerous air balloon and laying in front of bulldozers protest strategies. Although these tactics were never followed through and were most likely used for publicity, the focus on Margaret Godfrey is striking.³⁸ She was the face of the publicity committee. Bill Crothers of POP fired back in a Letter to the Editor dismissing the character assassination against Margaret. Godfrey and defending the right to protest against the government.³⁹ Some of the tactics of POP were not reported on positively.

The *Toronto Star* reported frequently on the airport issue and the actions of POP. From the newspaper records it does look like the *Toronto Star* provided fair coverage to POP despite being in favour of the airport throughout the campaign. The *Toronto Star* covered many of the POP publicity stunts as well as its statements against the airport. There were articles on the Earth Day festival, sitting in front of bulldozers, the Mother Nature funeral, the mock hanging and local food drives.⁴⁰ It was critical of POP for their civil disobedience especially in regard to the bulldozer pledge. The editorial even hinted at the group threatening Canadian democracy by going against a democratically-determined plan.⁴¹ But many editorials expressed frustration with both the provincial and federal governments. Ontario's provincial government had made big plans in the early 1970s about regional development and to build up the province. However, the province was cutting back on the amount of land that would be developed for Cedarwood.⁴² The federal government was also criticized for the lack of a transportation policy and for taking its

³⁸ Editorial, "A Stupid Kind of Caper," *Markham Economist and Sun*, May 29th 1975, CTASC.

³⁹ Letter to the Editor, "P.O.P. – A Organization of Ordinary People," *Markham Economist and Sun*, June 26th 1975, CTASC.

⁴⁰ "Earth Days' protest over airport site attracts 30,000," *Toronto Star*, September 18th 1972, 3, CTASC. Editorial, "Pickering Protest Goes too Far," *Toronto Star*, August 5th 1975, CTASC. "Mother Nature," *Toronto Star*, June 20th 1972, 10, CTASC. "Airport foes hang Trudeau, Davis- in effigy," *Toronto Star*, June 18, 1972, A10, CTASC. Anne Wanstall, "The good food to be sampled in Pickering," *Toronto Star*, May 12th 1972, 101, CTASC.

⁴¹ Editorial, "Pickering Protest Goes too Far," *Toronto Star*, August 5th 1975, CTASC.

⁴² Editorial, "Don't Cut Back on Pickering Plans," *Toronto Star*, October 23rd 1973, CTASC.

time on developing the Pickering Airport.⁴³ The paper was extremely critical of both the provincial and federal government for cancelling the project. A final editorial appeared after the cancellation and was not supportive of the idea that a small protest group was able to change the minds of two governments.⁴⁴

Most of the editorials in the *Globe and Mail* were against the airport but were not necessarily about POP. In 1974 and 1975 a series of editorials released by the *Globe and Mail* stressed the value of land, farming and local food initiatives *Globe and Mail* reporter Thomas Coleman examined whether cities could handle two major airports. Chicago had built a second major airport because they predicted a large increase in passenger volume. However, the second airport had not been used to full capacity. Coleman concluded that airlines and consumers preferred one airport.⁴⁵ The paper did, however, cover many of POP's stunts and regularly featured them in columns. Some of the large publicity stunts, including the hang gliding over Parliament and providing produce for Torontonians were featured in the paper.⁴⁶

A review of newspaper coverage suggests that POP accomplished its objective of using the media to spread its message against the Pickering Airport. The majority of local papers covered POP extensively and provided generous amounts of editorial support. Though some newspapers were for the airport or reluctant to support POP it seems the group had a positive impact. The *Toronto Star* always supported the idea of the Pickering Airport but printed many letters from the protestors.⁴⁷ In addition, with Mayor Crombie supporting POP and polls showing

⁴³ Editorial, "Why the Mess in Transport," *Toronto Star*, March 25th 1974, CTASC.

⁴⁴ Editorial, "Who is Conning Us Over Pickering?" September 26th 1975, CTASC.

⁴⁵ Thomas Coleman, "Second Airport Chicago Found it Did not Work," *Globe and Mail*, June 10th 1972, CTASC. Coleman also testified at the Swackhamer Hearings. Swackhamer, 96.

⁴⁶ Bruce West, "High Flying Protest," *Globe and Mail*, January 31st 1973, CTASC.

⁴⁷ Letter to the Editor, L. D. Almack, *Toronto Star*, May 11th 1974, CTASC.

the majority of Torontonians were against the airport, perhaps the *Toronto Star* was swimming against the tide.⁴⁸ The national papers did cover the POP and the Pickering Airport issue. The *Globe and Mail* never supported the Pickering Airport and other regional and national papers picked up on the story. There were times when POP came under criticism especially for some of their more colourful stunts such as the fake public hanging. Today it would seem common place to have catchy slogans and metaphors, but back in the early 1970s it was still a new way to look at how citizens interact with the state especially when it comes to land.

Hearings and Inquiry

The federal *Expropriation Act*, 1970 made it legally possible for the federal government to expropriate land from citizens and hold it in reserve for the Pickering Airport. Expropriation is justified by the state in the name of public interest.⁴⁹ The changes to the *Expropriation Act* made it possible for citizens to contest expropriation and that the federal government was required to hold public hearings to listen to their concerns.⁵⁰ Unlike in the case of the Mirabel Airport, the Pickering residents did have the opportunity to voice their concerns and opposition in a public forum. These concerns mainly came from the protestors of POP.

The real fight between POP and state officials took place during the public hearings and inter-governmental meetings during which both sides presented their arguments on why the airport should or should not be built. Adam Ashforth examines how public inquiries may be viewed as sites of state legitimization. They are called to investigate a problem and report a

⁴⁸ Polls show the majority of citizens in the Metro area are against the Pickering Airport. William Kilbourn and Douglas Turner "What the Public Thinks," *Globe and Mail*, March 25th 1975, CTASC.

⁴⁹ Interestingly when I asked politicians about whether expropriation was an abuse of the state's power they disagreed yet citizens who protested against airport development strongly believed in the opposite. Interview with The Honourable Jim Fleming, June 23rd 2016. Interview with The Honourable Marc Lalonde, April 6th 2016.

⁵⁰ Government of Canada, "The Expropriation Act," 1970. LAC Volume 30, File 5. Feldman and Milch, 96.

solution to the government, but they also are used to support the legitimacy of the state.⁵¹ It gives citizens a venue to voice their concerns about public policy. Local MPs consistently argued that hearings should be held into Pickering in order to alleviate concerns.⁵²

In 1972 the federal government held the Swackhamer Hearing as pursuant to their obligations under the *Expropriation Act*. The legislation stipulated that the hearings consider the complaints and objections to the Pickering Airport. It was not meant to be a review of public policy, nor were Ministry of Transport officials obligated to attend. Although the hearing was supposed to only examine the expropriation and report a summary of the objections, the hearing officer J.W. Swackhamer allowed a wide range of evidence to be presented including the case against the Pickering Airport.⁵³ POP members described the hearing process as pleasant and Mr. Swackhamer a fair judge of the case. He emphasized in his report, released in 1974, many of the arguments that POP had.⁵⁴ Lorne Almack and Brian Buckles, two members of POP, testified at the hearing. Almack stressed that first Malton could be expanded and that Transport Canada's estimates for passenger growth were unreasonable and would not come to pass.⁵⁵ By analyzing the federal documents Almack also concluded that Pickering was never chosen as one of the original sites. Transport Canada directly contradicted reports which suggested that with technological advances Malton would be more accessible and be able to serve a larger population.⁵⁶ Almack criticized the reports of the MOT's consultant, Philip Beinhaker, for

⁵¹ Adam Ashforth, "Reckoning Schemes of Legitimation: On Commissions of Inquiry as Power/ Knowledge Forms," *Journal of Historical Sociology*, (Vol 3, No. 1, March 1990), 17.

⁵² Norm Cafik, MP for Pickering, was seen as a weak advocate for the people of Pickering. Letters like this show he did try to advocate for their concerns. Don Jamieson, "Letter to Barney Danson," September 1st 1972, LAC MG-32-B46 Volume 87 File 1. Feldman and Milch, 96.

⁵³ Government of Canada, "The Expropriation Act," 1970. LAC Volume 30, File 5. Feldman and Milch, 96.

⁵⁴ Stewart, 103-105. Thompson, 103.

⁵⁵ Government of Canada. *Report of J.W. Swackhamer*, (Ottawa: Information Canada, 1974), 41-42.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

assuming, rather than providing evidence, that Malton could not support expansion and therefore a new airport had to be built. The government, he contended, made its decision based on these assumptions instead of facts.⁵⁷ He also claimed that Transport Canada was so concerned with social disruption if Malton were expanded, that they never considered how the people would be affected in Pickering.⁵⁸ When Buckles spoke at the hearing he reiterated many of Almack's criticisms but also focused on the large financial cost of the Pickering Airport. If Malton was reconfigured to accommodate more passenger traffic it would cost less than building a new airport. The multi-airport system was designed for user convenience, which Buckles claimed was a poor excuse to build a new airport. Moreover, three airports would have needed to take advantage of that model, not two.⁵⁹ There were other experts who worked with POP and testified. Kenneth Fallis, a resident who also worked for the Ontario Department of Agriculture, did not believe that anyone had consulted with his department. He discussed the produce that came from the land and was highly critical of the environmental assessment conducted by the province for ignoring wildlife and the amount of farming conducted on the land.⁶⁰ He was not the only person who testified that the province did a poor environmental assessment.⁶¹

In his final report, J.W. Swackhamer summarized the strong objections to the airport, including the planning procedure involved in choosing Pickering as the final site.⁶² However, the MOT rejected these claims and said all the necessary steps and studies had been taken to ensure

⁵⁷ Ibid, 45-50.

⁵⁸ Ibid, 60. If you read Transport Canada files there is very little mentioned about how expropriation affects the residents beyond debating the value of their properties.

⁵⁹ Ibid, 103.

⁶⁰ Thompson, 112-113.

⁶¹ Ibid, 116.

⁶² Ibid, 35.

the best site was chosen.⁶³ They rebutted most of the claims presented in the hearing. In terms of urban sprawl, the MOT countered by citing the province's Toronto-Centered Region Plan as evidence that the province had carefully planned this policy.⁶⁴ Transport Canada stressed that before the airport could begin construction, the public would be involved in determining the timing and type of airport to be built.⁶⁵ These discussions on the environmental impacts of the airport were limited. They acknowledged the quality of the farmland in the region but suggested that it eventually would be displaced by urban sprawl anyway.⁶⁶ They did not acknowledge, as POP consistently argued, that the airport and Cedarwood encouraged urban sprawl.

When MOT officials discussed the results of the public hearings with politicians, they denounced the hearings as nothing more than a staging ground for protestors to repeat their grievances.⁶⁷ In one analysis the MOT claimed that two thirds of the people expropriated did not object; the principle objections were raised by too few people to be worth considering.⁶⁸ The bureaucrats saw the hearings as the end not the beginning of the public discussion. In one telling letter to Transport Minister Marchand from Deputy Minister O. G. Stoner, he wrote that although POP members wanted further discussion "[POP] had every opportunity to submit their views."⁶⁹ If there were additional hearings, POP would have more opportunities to submit their views and possibly sway public support.⁷⁰

⁶³ "Statement by Transport Minister Jean Marchand on The Site Selection For a Second Toronto-Centered Region International Airport," Transport Canada: January 30th 1973.

⁶⁴ "Response to Synopsis Report of the Hearing Officer New Toronto Airport," Transport Canada: 1973.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Ibid

⁶⁷ O. G. Stoner, "Memorandum to Jean Marchand," January 22nd 1973, LAC MG 32-B46 Volume 85 File 11.

⁶⁸ W. H. Huck, "Memorandum to Jean Marchand," December 11th 1972, LAC MG 32-B46 Volume 89 File 3.

⁶⁹ O. G. Stoner, "Memorandum to Jean Marchand," January 22nd 1973, LAC MG 32-B46 Volume 85 File 11.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

In examining correspondence between the protestors and government officials one can clearly see that the bureaucracy struggled to deal with the public. In one lengthy series of correspondence between POP member Anne Wanstall and J. M. Davey, Special Advisor to the Prime Minister, the bureaucrat called Ms. Wanstall's comments not very helpful to the exercise.⁷¹ Another official explained that it would be pointless to respond to a letter from POP member Brenda Davies, as she would never change her mind.⁷² The hearings did not change the government or protestor's views, although it did result in increase compensation for expropriated land owners.⁷³ Due to continued controversy over the airport, the federal government called for a public inquiry in January 1973 to give citizens a chance to participate and to investigate the need for a new air facility.⁷⁴ The inquiry that soon followed only hardened everyone's viewpoints.

Before the public inquiry began in 1974, MOT officials were already planning out the process to support their own interests. In a memorandum to the Transport Minister Marchand, Deputy Minister O. G. Stoner explained why it was important for the government to control this process. Stoner argued that funding citizen groups might help legitimize the process although he admitted he would hate to fund POP.⁷⁵ Before the results of the Inquiry were even publicly announced the MOT was already lobbying the government to build the Pickering Airport.⁷⁶ The location of the public inquiry was debated, with Jim Davey of the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) admitting that it would be difficult to control the process from Toronto compared to Ottawa. He suggested Toronto ministers should be on hand to make sure the Inquiry was handled

⁷¹ J. M. Davey, "Letter to Anne Wanstall," February 23rd 1973, LAC MG 32-B46 Volume 89 File 3.

⁷² L. W. F. Beasleigh, "Letter to Brenda Davies," July 10th 1973, LAC MG 32-B46 Volume 86 File 5.

⁷³ J. E. Dube, "Letter to Barney Danson," March 30th 1973, LAC MG 32-B46 Volume 89 File 3.

⁷⁴ Feldman and Milch, 98. Stewart, 116.

⁷⁵ O. G. Stoner, "Memorandum to Jean Marchand," April 25th 1973, LAC MG 32-B46 Volume 86 File 3.

⁷⁶ Ministry of Transport, "Memorandum to Cabinet," January 28th 1975, LAC RG 19 Volume 6269 File 4220 P 595-3

politically for the government.⁷⁷ Davey also suggested that it was important that the Minister be sensitive to the needs of public servants and to protect them from excessive questioning. Public servants may be more reluctant to advise ministers if they have to undergo public examinations.⁷⁸ It seems that the PMO was well aware that the public service was not accustomed to citizens questioning their authority.

The Airport Inquiry Commission (AIC) was held in 1974 to appease the protestors and the general public about the Pickering Airport. The three commissioners were Judge Hugh Gibson of the Federal Court of Canada, professional urban planner Murray V. Jones and University of Waterloo President Dr. Howard Petch.⁷⁹ This inquiry was not only intended to serve as legitimization of the state but also as a symbolic dialogue between the state and the public. POP complained bitterly about the terms of reference established by the federal government, which Marchand had tabled. These gave the commissioners the power to determine which evidence would be considered. Commissioners would only call witnesses they felt were necessary. Finally, the commissioners were supposed to be primarily interested in new evidence and would not consider old facts.⁸⁰ However they reconsidered the terms of reference and POP was able to present evidence, although the group believed it was a pointless exercise.⁸¹

The commissioners certainly were busy during 1974 holding numerous public hearings, receiving oral and written evidence and writing a six-hundred page plus report. They first had to deal with an application for prohibition of the Inquiry on the grounds that one of the

⁷⁷ Jim Davey, "Memorandum to Jean Marchand," June 20th 1973, LAC MG 32-B46 Volume 86 File 5.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Thompson, 130. Feldman and Milch, 98-99.

⁸⁰ Ibid, 129-131.

⁸¹ Interview with Lorne Almack, May 23 2013.

commissioners, Murray V. Jones, was biased in law.⁸² This application was dismissed by the Federal Court of Appeal but it did not alleviate concerns by some parties that the Inquiry was fixed.⁸³ It is likely that the strategy pursued by both government members and state officials was to be as inclusive as possible, no doubt in the hopes of shaping, or at least nudging, public opinion in support of the proposed airport.

POP made an extensive presentation to the AIC. The group was able to draw data from the *Pickering Impact Study* produced by the City of Toronto in 1974. The Institute of Environmental Management looked at how Toronto would be impacted by the airport, how this would have affected growth in the area and the regional implications. The *Pickering Impact Study* concluded that the airport would only further spur urban sprawl and lead to a thinning of jobs over a wider area. It recommended that the province encourage growth over a wider geographic area instead of specific regional centers.⁸⁴ The jobs created by the airport project would be mostly low-paying and those workers would not be able to afford living in the North Pickering community.⁸⁵ The report also debated the accuracy of the federal Ministry of Transport statistics for air travel and claimed that due to inflation air travel would only get more expensive and less people would be able to afford this service. Additionally, they argued that terminal facilities at Malton could accommodate future passenger increases, something that the federal government denied.⁸⁶ The *Pickering Impact Study* made many of the arguments and observations that POP used previously. They used their own data to justify not building the airport and this

⁸² Government of Canada, *Report of The Airport Inquiry Commission*, (Ottawa: Information Canada, 1974), 12-13.

⁸³ Editorial, "Reluctant Inquiry," *Globe and Mail*, December 24th 1973, CTASC. Editorial, "POP Has a Point on Cute Inquiry," *Guelph Mercury*, February 28th 1974, CTASC.

⁸⁴ City of Toronto, *Pickering Impact Study Vol. 1-2*, (Toronto: Institute of Environmental Research, Inc, 1974), 245.

⁸⁵ *Ibid*, 246.

⁸⁶ *Ibid*, 251.

study presents us with the image of unstoppable urban sprawl. The airport would only be the first step. Citizens were concerned about sprawl at the time especially as the provincial government kept pushing forward its plans for regional development, including creating regional governments.⁸⁷

The *Impact Study* informed POP's presentation to the AIC; the City of Toronto went even further and paid POP's legal fees so that they could make a presentation at the inquiry.⁸⁸ POP's technical committee gave evidence for two days. Citing eighty-two pages of evidence, POP attacked the federal government's data, including the report on the selection of Pickering as a site and the evidence that Malton could not handle additional capacity. Both reports had been compiled by Philip Beinhaker. The federal government's previously commissioned reports emphasized the economic consequences of expanding Malton, they also pointed out that acquiring the land for the Pickering airport was nothing short of a financial black hole.⁸⁹ One of the more important issues that was debated was the Ministry of Transport's assumption that passenger levels would increase every year for the next thirty years. The need for a second airport was based on those increases.⁹⁰ The evidence presented by the group did not sway the commissioner's decision. As mentioned previously they recommended the immediate development of the Pickering Airport.⁹¹

The final report was quite telling. The sub-chapter on environmental aspects was a meager eight pages out of 257 pages. First the report claimed that less than fifty percent of the

⁸⁷ Graham Fraser, "Dream town or just sprawl," *Globe and Mail*, March 25th 1975, CTASC.

⁸⁸ "City Joins POP in Battle Against Pickering Airport," April 16th 1975, CTASC.

⁸⁹ Throughout the period many articles examined the rising cost of expropriation. When the government also went back and sold some of the expropriated land that only increased the cost. Thompson, 105.

⁹⁰ Thompson, 110.

⁹¹ "POP Angered over Airport Result," *Pickering Bay News*, February 3rd 1975, CTASC.

prime agricultural land was being used at the time and that crops could still be produced elsewhere within the region.⁹² The three commissioners made a very telling statement on sprawl. Urbanization was already spreading rapidly in what would be known as the GTA. It was only a matter of time before it spread to Pickering. The report does cite statistics that occupational farming was decreasing in the area.⁹³ The commissioners commented favourably on how the airport would provide employment opportunities and combined with Cedarwood would help with regional development.⁹⁴ The most telling chapter would prove to be the one focused on the role of the proposed Pickering Airport. These brief five pages explained how Toronto needed a second airport to relieve Malton of increased passenger traffic.⁹⁵ The report called for more consultation when studying and planning airports. The commissioners believed the best way to solve these pressing problems is to acquaint the public with all the facts so that they can see the urgency of the problem.⁹⁶ The report provided a legal and technical argument as to why the Pickering airport should be developed.⁹⁷ Their conclusion drew on those old yet recurring Ministry of Transport statistics about airport traffic and how expanding Malton would be expensive and [politically] difficult.⁹⁸

The Politics of Pickering

On paper the government ought to have been happy with the inquiry's result, yet politicians in Ottawa and Queen's Park were on edge. In March 1975, a public opinion poll taken after the inquiry reported showed that a majority of people in the Metro Toronto area did not

⁹² Government of Canada, *Report of The Airport Inquiry Commission*, (Ottawa: Information Canada, 1974). *Report of The Airport Inquiry Commission*, 155.

⁹³ Ibid, 158.

⁹⁴ Ibid, 165.

⁹⁵ Ibid, 213.

⁹⁶ Ibid, 239.

⁹⁷ Ibid, 3.

⁹⁸ Government of Canada, *Report of The Airport Inquiry Commission*, (Ottawa: Information Canada, 1974), 251.

support the construction of Pickering airport. Metro wide, only 34 % supported its construction, although 37.3% of those surveyed in the Malton area supported its construction, undoubtedly fearing that the alternative was the expansion of their airport. [54% of people did not agree with the airport, while in the Malton impact area where that airport would certainly be expanded if Pickering was not, only 37.3% of citizens surveyed agreed with the Pickering Airport.]⁹⁹ Most politicians reading these results would conclude that the Inquiry failed to turn the tide of opposition to the airport. POP at the time and looking back complained not only about the lack of neutrality of the Inquiry but also the terms of reference. Even though the members knew it was a “farce” and that the result was going to be what they expected, they still presented evidence at the Inquiry.¹⁰⁰ The press wrote many negative editorials about the public inquiry as a sham and a front for the airport developers.¹⁰¹ By 1975 there was increased reporting on environmental issues and urban sprawl. Everyone from Toronto City Council to the Science Council of Canada were weighing in.¹⁰² The narrative was changing. Progress might mean growth but perhaps that was not always good or necessary. An editorial from the *Pickering Bay News* summed up the result nicely. Although there are clear battle lines over the airport the paper questions and asserted that there are people that don’t live in the airport area that are affected- meaning the people of Canada.¹⁰³ Looking over the results of the airport, it is difficult to know whose interests are being served when both protestors and the bureaucrats refuse to compromise.

⁹⁹ William Kilbourn and Douglas Turner, “What the Public thinks,” *Globe and Mail*, March 25th 1975, CTASC.

¹⁰⁰ Interview with Dr. Charles Godfrey, May 29th 2013.

¹⁰¹ There were a lot of editorials written about the public inquiry. Many questioned the legitimacy of this project. Editorial, “When Minds Close Inquiry Futile,” *Globe and Mail*, April 4th 1974, CTASC. Editorial, “POP has a Point on Cute Inquiry,” *Guelph Mercury*, February 28th 1974, CTASC. Editorial, “It’s Called ‘Blindman’s Bluff,’” *Stouffville Tribute*, June 28th 1973, CTASC. Editorial, “Is this the Democratic Way,” July 19th 1972, *Pickering Bay News*, CTASC.

¹⁰² The Science Council of Canada reported that Canada is losing the best agricultural land and specifically mentioned the land set aside for the Pickering Airport. Clive Baxter, “Science Council backs potatoes, not planes,” *Toronto Star*, July 26th 1975, CTASC.

¹⁰³ Editorial, “Fooling Around,” *Pickering Bay News*, August 6th 1975. CTASC.

Perhaps a smaller airport could have been built that impacted farm lands less, or the protestors could have worked with the federal government to mitigate environmental effects. However, neither side was willing to entertain other options.

Throughout the debate, POP knew the importance of fostering political relations and keeping the airport issue on the radar of politicians. Protestor Lorne Almack related one story when in May 1972 MP Barney Dawson and MPP Don Deacon drove some POP members to Ottawa after they saw the Spring Festival that Gord Wilson organized, where more than 30,000 people showed up in Pickering.¹⁰⁴ Pickering MP Norm Cafik fumbled the airport issue. He conducted a survey showing that a little over fifty percent supported the construction of the airport.¹⁰⁵ Although Cafik did by all efforts try to help residents get better prices for their property, he evidently stuck with his party despite opposition in his own riding. He was criticized by some residents for not defending their interests while some newspapers including the *Stouffville Tribute* defended his position.¹⁰⁶ However, by 1975 after the results of the AIC, he completely supported the airport.¹⁰⁷ The provincial Environment Minister William Newman, the Progressive Conservative representative for Ontario South, which included Pickering, was against the airport.¹⁰⁸ Debates within Cabinet did not stop the Davis government from pushing forward with their regional development plans.

¹⁰⁴ Interview with Lorne Almack, May 23rd 2016. "North Pickering Spring Festival," *Markham Economist and Sun*, May 4th 1972, CTASC.

¹⁰⁵ Two polls taken in 1972 show a slim majority of support for the airport in Pickering and a minority of support in the Metro area. John Rolfe, "52% favor airport in survey by MP; 3-level study urged," *Globe and Mail*, April 1974, CTASC. Peter Regenstreif, "Majority Oppose Airport Area Survey Indicates," *Toronto Star*, April 1st 1972, CTASC.

¹⁰⁶ Editorial, "Criticism not Justified," *Stouffville Tribute*, March 22th 1973, CTASC.

¹⁰⁷ "Go Airport Cafik Said," *Ajax-Pickering News Advertiser*, February 19th 1975, CTASC.

¹⁰⁸ Bill Newman, "Report From the Legislature," *Pickering Post*, February 27th 1975, CTASC.

Yet as the issue dragged on the airport became a more contentious issue. The federal and provincial government lost credibility in the eyes of the media.¹⁰⁹ In 1972 when the government(s) charged that members of POP were greedy landowners, the provincial government was getting criticized when provincial Attorney General Dalton Bales, who had been very involved in the airport decision, resigned due to conflict of interests because he owned property that may have benefitted from government land use decisions.¹¹⁰ Even the *Toronto Star* that had been supportive of the airport criticized the provincial government on this issue.¹¹¹ This was extremely embarrassing for the provincial government as Bales was very close to Premier Davis. Liberal MPP Don Deacon representing North York was consistently against the airport. His columns which were published in the *Vaughn News* were very critical of the government in terms of how they treated the residents and he questioned the statistics about passenger growth.¹¹² The provincial Liberal Party, which was traditionally close to the federal Liberals, broke with their federal partners over the airport issue.¹¹³ Perhaps the best of ally of POP turned out to be the provincial NDP. They had not been against the airport at the start., but after¹¹⁴ conducting, their own research they eventually came down on the side of POP. Stephen Lewis, the leader, was opposed to the destruction of farmland.¹¹⁵ In most cases the MP or MPP followed their party and supported their government's decisions about the airport. The opposition parties did provide important support to POP and held the provincial and federal government's accountable to this contentious issue.

¹⁰⁹ Editorial, "Pickering: Counting Costs or Winging It?" *Globe and Mail*, October 3rd 1974, CTASC.

¹¹⁰ Editorial, "The Air Still Needs to be Cleared," *Globe and Mail*, September 29th 1972, CTASC.

¹¹¹ Editorial, "The Onus is Now on Premier Davis," *Toronto Star*, September 1st 1972, CTASC.

¹¹² Don Deacon, "Don Deacon Says," *Vaughn News*, February 7th 1973, CTASC.

¹¹³ "Nixon Calls Pickering Plan Costly Disaster," *Toronto Star*, September 5th 1973, CTASC.

¹¹⁴ "Lewis Says Land Expropriation Plan Contempt of Public," *Toronto Star*, January 11th 1974, CTASC.

¹¹⁵ "Lewis Cites Study Best Farmland Chosen for Airport," *Toronto Star*, October 13th 1973, CTASC.

Before the provincial election in 1975, support for the airport was waning within the Ontario government. In a letter written to Transport Minister Marchand in July 1975, provincial Minister of Transportation and Communication John Rhodes wrote that the province wanted to delay funding for the airport and focus on other priority areas. Internal letters within the PMO indicated that the Liberals saw this delay as an election ploy. The press also commented on Davis's non-committal response to the airport as a re-election ploy. The PMO advised Prime Minister Trudeau that if the province backed out of the airport, the federal government would have to take on the full financial burden of the project. The additional financial costs would make the airport less viable and that the government would have to seriously consider shelving the project.¹¹⁶

The 1975 Ontario provincial election determined the future of the Pickering Airport. During the election, the opposition parties focused on social housing, regional development and government arrogance, the latter partly connected to the government's modernist planning and restructuring of local governments. For the first time since 1945, the Progressive Conservative Party failed to win a majority. A mere two weeks later, the provincial government dealt the Pickering Airport a fatal blow, by withdrawing its support for the project.¹¹⁷

POP wanted to elect a member of their organization into the Legislative Assembly. The provincial Conservatives and Liberals were not interested in having one run as a candidate, but the provincial NDP welcomed the idea.¹¹⁸ Dr. Godfrey used POP as his campaign team and they

¹¹⁶ John Rhodes "Letter to Jean Marchand," July 10th 1975, LAC MG 26 O7 Volume 436 File 735.13. Michael Pitfield, "Memorandum to Prime Minister Trudeau," July 14th 1975, LAC MG 26 O7 Volume 436 File 735.13. "Ontario Airport Moved Called Election Ploy," *Toronto Star*, July 14th 1975, CTASC. Michael Pitfield, "Memorandum to Prime Minister Trudeau," July 15th 1975, LAC MG 26 O7 Volume 436 File 735.13.

¹¹⁷ Editorial, "The Campaign," *Pickering Post*, August 25th 1975, CTASC.

¹¹⁸ Interview with Dr. Charles Godfrey, May 29th 2013.

succeeded in the September 1975 provincial election in getting him elected to the House.¹¹⁹ Just as importantly, he and POP had made connections with all political parties and had spent a lot of time talking to the provincial government. They had kept the issues in the public eye for three years and their experts had talked to the Davis government on many occasions about the issues surrounding the Pickering Airport. Bill McMurtry, who helped POP, had many contacts in the government and apparently talked to Bill Davis.¹²⁰ Premier Davis admitted in an interview that the reason that the province stopped supporting the airport was that funding the necessary infrastructure would be expensive. The economy which had been booming in the 1960s had slowed down considerably in the 1970s.¹²¹ The minority government resulting from the provincial election and the election of Dr. Godfrey had sealed the deal.¹²² The timing was right for POP. With Godfrey in the provincial NDP caucus and with both opposition parties opposing the Pickering Airport, Premier Davis had very little maneuvering room. The provincial government announced on September 25th, 1975 that it would oppose the airport and refused to build any services such as roads or sewer lines to support the project. Transport Minister Marchand said it would be almost impossible to develop the airport without provincial cooperation. The federal government did not fight the province over their decision. The Liberals probably did not want another federal provincial fight on their hands. In addition, the federal Liberals saw an opportunity to exit the controversy and place any blame on congestion at Malton

¹¹⁹ "POP Goes the Airport," *Toronto Star*, September 26th 1975, CTASC.

¹¹⁹ Interview with Dr. Charles Godfrey, May 29th 2013.

¹²⁰ Ibid.

¹²¹ Interview with Tommy Thompson. February 28th 2013. Jean Marchand, "Letter to Premier Davis," June 12th 1975, LAC MG 26 O7 Volume 436 File 735.13.

¹²² Cullingworth, 332.

on the province. After the Cabinet meeting, Marchand said “the people of Toronto will not now receive the service they deserve. Toronto will be 10 years behind Montréal.”¹²³

Conclusion

Throughout the airport controversy, the state and citizens constructed data for their own use. The state used the public inquiry to help convince the general public that building the airport in Pickering was the right thing to do. Even though Transport Canada brought in sixteen noise experts from Texas to help them argue their case, not everyone was satisfied.¹²⁴ POP built up its credibility in a number of different ways. The research they conducted was well received by the City of Toronto and eventually the province. They were active in making sure that they did not have the image of greedy landowners. In addition, POP deconstructed MOT arguments and their credibility over the airport by bringing in their own experts. Dr. Godfrey said “the main thing is do not be wrong[,] be right.”¹²⁵ POP took that to heart. They made sure they were right and called out the government experts at every opportunity. By the time the federal government realized what was going on it was too late as the province had already been convinced that the airport was a bad deal for everyone involved. The Pickering Airport was cancelled on September 26th, 1975. This was a political decision by the federal government following a lack of support from the province of Ontario.¹²⁶ The bureaucracy did not know how to deal with a public who was more assertive and questioning their authority. Not many groups had stood up to the government previously when there was a major proposition for land use.¹²⁷ POP was able to

¹²³ Hugh Winsor, “Metro loser, Marchand says in confirming airport shelving,” *Globe and Mail*, September 26th 1975, CTASC. Robert Williamson, “Battle is likely with Ottawa,” *Globe and Mail*, September 25th 1975, CTASC. Peter Lloyd, “Pickering airport ‘almost impossible’ Marchand admits,” *Toronto Star*, September 25th 1975, CTASC. Stewart, 150-151. Feldman and Milch, 106. T.K. Shoyana, “Memorandum to Jean Marchand,” July 15th 1975, LAC RG 19 Volume 6269 File 4220 P 595-3.

¹²⁴ Interview with Lorne Almack, May 23rd 2013.

¹²⁵ Interview with Dr. Charles Godfrey, May 2nd 2013.

¹²⁶ “POP Goes the Airport,” *Toronto Star*, September 26th 1975, CTASC.

¹²⁷ Interview with Dr. Charles Godfrey, May 29th 2013.

attract key allies and make use of the political system that was available. If the federal government would not listen, then the province might. POP could not get to that point without all the effort from the members over the three-year struggle. Citizen groups had become very distrustful of the state and in particular experts and bureaucrats who claimed to know what was in their best interest. The public hearings and inquiries failed to satisfy citizens or bureaucrats. If anything, these public consultations only inflamed tensions between the protestors and civil servants. Although the federal government was unsuccessful at building the Pickering Airport, politicians and bureaucrats would apply lessons from Pickering to future projects. After all, how much worse could it get if you opened the policy process to everyone?

Part 3: Sea Island, British Columbia: “Under Further Consideration.”

Chapter 6: Facts to Fit the Decision(s)¹

Almost one year following the cancellation of the Pickering airport, the federal government announced that a decision on another airport project had been postponed. On August 12th, 1976 Transport Minister Otto Lang announced that a decision on the expansion of the Sea Island airport runway in Vancouver would be delayed until 1978. He claimed that the two year delay would allow for additional studies on a shorter runway and a consultative committee would be struck with federal, provincial and municipal representatives to ensure a proper discussion.² Lang’s decision came after the final report issued by the Airport Planning Committee (APC), which was formed by the federal government in 1973.³ The APC represented a new way of planning airports that brought all interested parties, including citizen groups and civil servants, to the same table. After the public relations disasters involved in planning the Mirabel and Pickering airports, the APC promised to be a more equitable way of planning that would lead to better and more informed decisions.

In 1978, the only government decision was to engage in a round of further consultations. It would take more than a decade, September 1991, before a federal panel finally approved the Sea Island runway expansion.⁴ An editorial released shortly after the decision in August of 1976 summarized the views of local residents who had been living in the shadow of the airport for several decades. For them, the decision to delay meant the further decay of houses in the

¹ Editorial, “Airport Facts to Fit the Decision,” *The Province*, March 9th 1973, VPL Pacific Press Clippings Vancouver International Airport Runways.

² Press Release. “Transport Minister Otto Lang Announced Postponement in Construction of Additional Runway at Vancouver Airport.” August 12th 1976. LAC RG 12 Volume 3951 File Part 1.

³ Ministry of Transport, “Airport Planning Committee Terms of Reference,” April 16th 1973, LAC RG 127 Volume 238 File Part 4.

⁴ Glenn Bohn “Federal Panel Gives Nod to Third Runway,” *Vancouver Sun*, September 13th 1991, A10.

expropriation zone and the displacement of citizens who believed that the runway expansion was in vain.⁵ Residents in the Cora Brown and Burkeville subdivisions had lived in the shadow of expropriation since the 1950s and yet the runway was not opened until 1992.⁶ The decision to delay shows that the APC was unable to solve the ideological divide that exists between citizens and public servants. If anything, the APC exacerbated those tensions and further demonstrates that the planning model used by governments in the 1970s failed to resolve the differences between citizens and the state.

The Sea Island Airport debate was quite distinct from the cases examined previously. Sea Island involved the expansion of an existing airport, not the construction of an entirely new one, as in the case of Pickering and Mirabel. The expansion ultimately involved the expropriation of just 300 acres out of the 4000 acres on the island that the Department of Transport already owned, compared to the estimated 18,000 acres expropriated for Pickering and 89,000 for Mirabel.⁷ Despite these differences, many of the same themes appear in the Sea Island controversy. In all three a citizen group was formed by former residents who were expropriated to make room for a large public works project. In this case the Sea Island Ratepayers Association (SIRA) had originated in 1951 as a community group served to protect and defend the residents' interests.⁸ As in Ontario and Québec, features of a distinctive political culture came into play. The politics of British Columbia shaped the decision-making process. Opponents of the airport decision also drew upon wider societal concerns, although instead of focusing on issues of suburban sprawl and growth they now emphasized the destruction of natural habitats. The

⁵ Interview with Eunice Robinson, January 20th 2016.

⁶ Editorial, "New runway welcome," *Vancouver Sun*, June 26th 1992, A12.

⁷ For Sea Island and Pickering estimates, History of Expropriation on Sea Island. LAC MG 26 07 Volume 435 File 735.13 For Mirabel expropriation estimates Montreal Mirabel, *Développement Québec*, (Volume 2, No 8, August 1975). SHGMI P053 S4 SS2 D03.

⁸ Constitution of SIRA. February 20th 1951. CRA 8422 Series 6 File 1.

institutional context remained important but featured new actors: the Ministry of State for Urban Affairs (MSUA) and the Department of the Environment (DOE) both created in 1971. MSUA's role was to examine urban issues from a federal perspective and help with the planning process. The Ministry in some ways was to be a neutral arbiter between municipalities, the provinces and various federal departments.⁹ The Sea Island Airport became a perfect test case for MSUA to try and mitigate conflict and create the best conditions for urban planning. DOE would play a crucial role in providing cover for the government by supplying environmental assessments and adding some legitimacy to the runway expansion.

What makes the Sea Island case most distinctive from the other controversies was the type and format of consultation that took place. In Mirabel the federal government demonstrated the traditional top down authority driven approach where there was little to no consultation. Local residents were not consulted and there was little to no avenues for residents to express their displeasure beyond the traditional means of exacting political pressure on their representatives. In Pickering residents did have the opportunity to have their views heard through public hearings and eventually a public inquiry. Residents were not involved in the planning process and public servants still had total control over what information was presented, but certainly residents had more options in reaching out to the public than their fellow citizens in Mirabel. While there was a public hearing in Sea Island, the establishment of a formal planning institution in which residents and the general public could participate, the APC, represented a distinct change in the consultative process.

The work of the APC has not been thoroughly examined by other scholars writing on the Sea Island controversy. In *The Politics of Canadian Airport*, Elliot J. Feldman and Jerome Milch

⁹ Feldman and Milch, 126.

criticize the treatment of residents and how the state handled the development of the Sea Island runway expansion. They concluded that the federal government was not sensitive to local needs and that Ottawa contributed very little to British Columbia. The authors characterized the APC as incoherent and contended that the MOT was not willing to work with citizens or other departments.¹⁰ They ignored the ways in which the federal government did try to respond to local needs, and how they considered the political climate of British Columbia in the decision-making process. In addition, although the authors acknowledged the inter-departmental conflicts that were created over the Sea Island controversy, the records of the APC reveal more about those dynamics.¹¹ Considering that this was the first time that the federal government was using a multi-department approach to examine airport policy, there was naturally going to be tension between the MOT and other departments. However, it is worth examining how departments worked together and how a broader range of policy factors affected airport development. Simply dismissing these conflicts as bureaucratic rivalries misses the point of the APC.¹² The APC was a committee that formed with representatives from relevant departments and citizen groups ranging from the Sea Island Rate Payers Association, The Sierra Club, BC Wildlife Federation and the Richmond Anti-Pollution Association.¹³ The members of this committee met numerous times between June 1973 and February 1976.¹⁴ By examining the process of the APC we can understand how government consultation worked when citizens and public servants are working together as equal forces.

¹⁰ Ibid, 132, 162-166.

¹¹ Ibid, 126.

¹² Ibid, 186.

¹³ Community Forum Membership List. *Community Forum*. October 22nd 1974. LAC RG 127 Volume 238 File Part 1.

¹⁴ Airport Planning Committee Meeting. *Airport Planning Committee*. June 6th 1973. LAC RG 127 Volume 238 File Part 1. Airport Planning Committee Meeting. *Airport Planning Committee*. June 6th 1973. LAC RG 127 Volume 238 File Part 7.

Bret Edwards has looked at the conflict of the Sea Island Airport, focusing specifically on the issue of noise, as residents in Vancouver were anxious about the federal noise proposals. The anti-noise activists were part of the alliance of environmental groups that challenged the federal government's growth imperative that underlined airport expansion.¹⁵ As airports expanded and airlines created bigger and more powerful jets, residents complained about the loss of their quality of life in the 1960s. Edwards highlights how the Community Forum, made up of many different interest groups, brought up noise complaints during the consultation process over the runway. The author concludes by saying that debates over noise show the clash between a vision of progress and specific residential concerns.¹⁶

The Sea Island Airport may have opened a new chapter in how government consulted with citizens but the messy process and less than satisfying final results shows that open public consultation that may look good in theory may not succeed in reality.

The History of Sea Island

The history of Sea Island was defined by the airport and the threat of expropriation. The Sea Island Airport began as a municipal airport owned by the city of Vancouver and, as seen in Figure 5, served the lower mainland.¹⁷ During the Second World War the airport became a military base operated by the Department of National Defense, which undertook extensive improvements. This included housing and training thousands of pilots. In addition, the Boeing Airplane Company built a large plant on the south side of the airport.¹⁸ After the war, the airport was returned to Vancouver.¹⁹ There was a growing community on the island. By the time the

¹⁵ Edwards, 107. Bret Edwards, "Aeromobile Sprawl Mass Air Travel and its Socio-Environmental Impact in 1970s Canada," *Studies in Contemporary History*, (Heft 3, 2017).

¹⁶ Ibid, 109-112.

¹⁷ McGrath, 244.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid. Also see Feldman and Milch 110.

land on the island was expropriated in the early 1970s there was between 600 and 700 residents. Ironically, two subdivisions that eventually would be expropriated for the runway expansion, Cora Brown and Macdonald, were the product of an earlier government initiative, the Veteran's Land Act.²⁰ The program provided half acre lots for soldiers to engage in part time farming which proved very popular.²¹ Former resident Eunice Robinson later recalled and emphasized that most residents who were expropriated had lived on their allotments from the subdivisions' beginnings.²² For many residents, Sea Island was the only home they knew. Families moved to the island and started families thinking they would live long productive lives there. A strong community formed on the island based on local bonds, despite the presence of the Sea Island Airport.²³

²⁰ For population numbers Sea Island Ratepayers Association, "Sea Island British Columbia and the Department of Transport Land Acquisition," CRA 8423 Series 8 File 2. Feldman and Milch, 110. See also Richard Harris and Tricia Shulist, "Canada's Reluctant Housing Program: The Veteran's Land Act," *The Canadian Historical Review*, (Volume 82, No. 2, June 2001), 253.

²¹ Ibid, 265.

²² Interview with Eunice Robinson, January 20th 2016.

²³ Ibid.

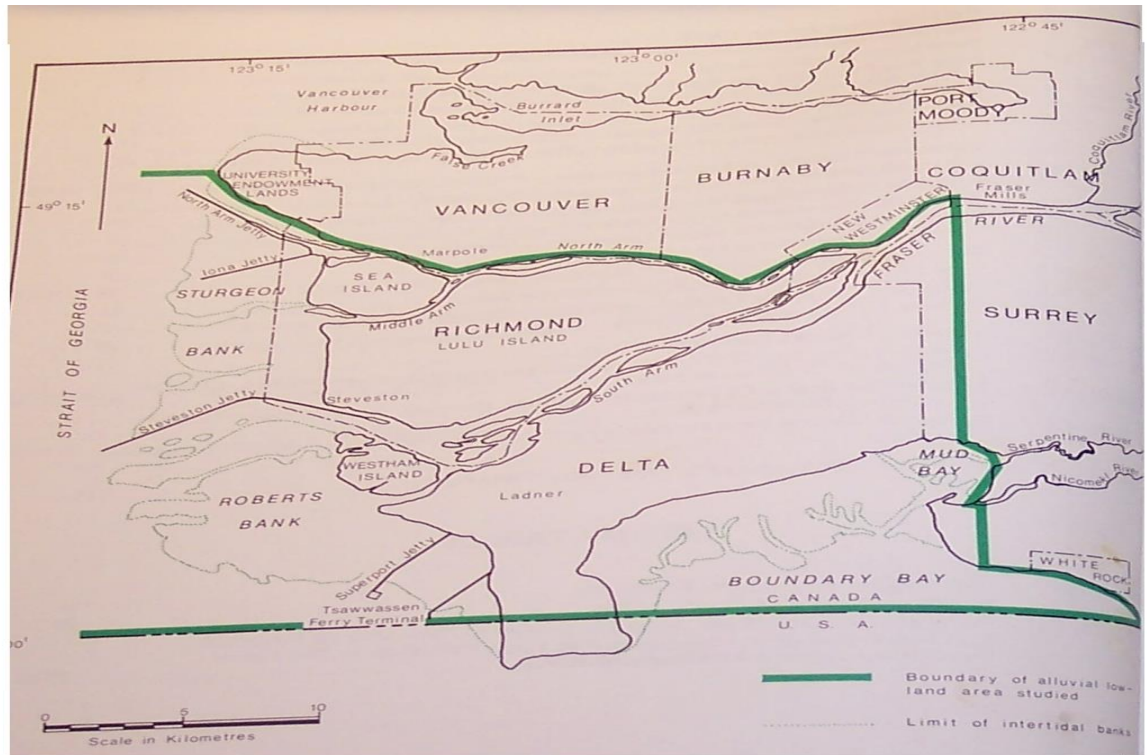


Figure 4: Map of Lower Mainland British Columbia. The green line represents shows where the boundaries of where the new airport land was studied. Sea Island is located centre left on the map, on the west coast near Sturgeon Bank, between Vancouver and Richmond (Lulu Island). Ecological Subcommittee, *An Environmental Impact Assessment of the Vancouver International Airport Expansion Proposals*, Airport Planning Committee, (Vancouver: Environment Canada, 1976), 1.

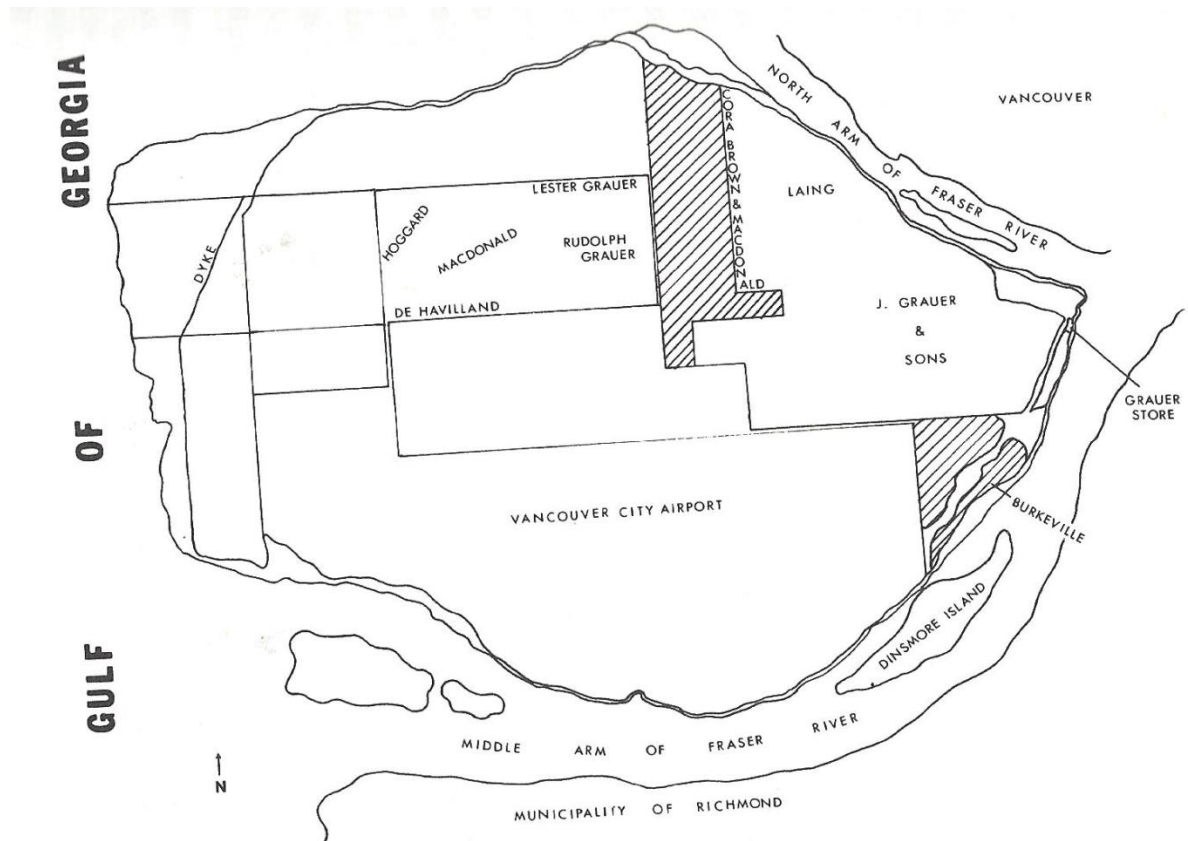


Figure 5: Map of Sea Island 1954. (Feldman and Milch, 111).

Although the federal government did not completely control the Sea Island Airport until 1962, already in the 1950s the MOT started to expropriate nearby land for future expansion.²⁴ In the late 1950s there was municipal approval for a subdivision that would become the MacDonald residential subdivision.²⁵ As residential development increased on Sea Island, manufacturing companies looking for space at a reasonable cost saw opportunities there too. De Havilland and Webb and Knapp bought large swaths of land on the island. MOT had an incentive to own more land, in order to prevent future residential and industrial development. Land acquisition was haphazard as some land was expropriated while other pieces of land were bought when their

²⁴ McGrath, 245. Feldman and Milch 112.

²⁵ History of Expropriation on Sea Island," LAC MG 26 07 Volume 435 File 735.13.

owners voluntarily put them on the market.²⁶ Special considerations seemed to be made for Senator Arthur Laing, a long time Liberal Cabinet Minister and important political figure in British Columbia and A. E. “Dal” Grauer, president of B.C. Electric. Their properties were not expropriated immediately; it seems they were given special consideration due to their connections with the federal Liberal Party.²⁷ This haphazard use of expropriation on Sea Island was confirmed in *Grauer v The Queen*, a case that started in 1959 and concluded in 1986 over Grauer property that can be seen in Figure 6.²⁸ The case centered on whether the Crown was in the right to expropriate land but not use it for its intended purpose.²⁹ Lionel Chevrier, who was Transport Minister from 1945 to 1954, admitted that at the time he relied on his Deputy Minister for all matters of expropriation. Chevrier testified that he had little knowledge of specific expropriations beyond the Orders-in-Council that were submitted by the Deputy Minister for him to sign.³⁰ This speaks to the close relationship at the time between politicians and public servants. The minister indicated that he had little knowledge of specific expropriations at Sea Island though if they were in his own constituency he would been very aware of the actions taken.³¹ Deputy Minister John Russel Baldwin who served in Transport from 1954 to 1968 testified that as early as 1950 there was trouble at the Vancouver Airport and a need to expand

²⁶ Feldman and Milch, 113.

²⁷ Ibid. “History of Expropriation on Sea Island,” LAC MG 26 07 Volume 435 File 735.13.

²⁸ *Grauer v Her Majesty The Queen*, 1986 FC [1986], CRA 8548 Series 4 File 21.

²⁹ Retrospectively, not all the land was used for the future runway expansion on Sea Island which was subsequently why the federal government lost the *Grauer* case. *Grauer v Her Majesty The Queen*, 1986 FC [1986], CRA 8548 Series 4 File 21. CRA 8548 Series 4 File 19.

³⁰ Ibid, CRA 8548 Series 4 File 18.

³¹ Ibid.

it.³² There were plans to expropriate the entire Sea Island for the airport but the department ran into trouble with Veteran Affairs, who were developing housing for veterans on the land.³³

In 1967 Transport Minister Jack Pickersgill announced that all of Sea Island was destined to become an airport. Most land had already been purchased through voluntary sales but a few VLA subdivisions like Burkeville remained.³⁴ The prolonged threat of expropriation had severe effects on the population and property values in the area. As President William Schaeffer of SIRA wrote, seven years under the threat of expropriation created a number of social problems.³⁵ The residents wanted a clear answer on whether they would be expropriated or not and what would that timeframe be. With the passing of the *Expropriation Act* in 1970, residents expected some protection under the law and fought to preserve their property.³⁶

Formation of SIRA

The Sea Island Ratepayers Association (SIRA) played an important role in the debate over the airport. Although the controversy involved a much larger group of activist organizations beyond just local residents directly affected by expropriation, SIRA's protests against expropriation did affect the debate. Local residents provided the emotional connection to citizens reading about the debate and for politicians whose votes depended on happy constituents. In addition, the stories reported on by the local papers put a face to how state policy directly affected citizens. Unlike in Pickering or Mirabel, the base for the protest group at Sea Island already existed prior to the 1970s. SIRA was formed in the 1950s as a way for local residents to

³² Ibid, CRA 8548 Series 4 File 19.

³³ Ibid. For insight on the conflict in Vancouver on post war housing needs Jill Wade, *Houses for All The Struggle for Social Housing in Vancouver, 1919-1950*, (Canada: UBC Press, 1994), 143-146.

³⁴ Feldman and Milch, 116-117. Edwards, *A Bumpy Landing: Airports and the Making of Jet Age Canada*, 92-93.

³⁵ William Schaeffer, "Seven Years of Flim Flam," LAC MG 32-B46 Volume 89 File 14.

³⁶ Ibid, 118.

advocate for and serve their community, and provided some limited services funded through community members' dues.³⁷ By 1968, these services included providing financial incentives for teachers serving the community, renting the community hall, and advocating for government services for the community.³⁸ In 1968 SIRA polled Sea Island residents on runway expansion, to find their stance on expropriation. The results showed that residents were split in the communities of Burkeville and Cora Brown, but most were against expropriation.³⁹ In 1968, SIRA residents hired Charles Johnstone as counsel, and he soon became the public face for the residents. Johnstone sent letters chastising the government and issued press releases about the state of negotiations.⁴⁰ By hiring a lawyer like Johnstone, SIRA sought to be recognized by the state as a legitimate organization, offering a serious and viable voice to community concerns. With his appointment, SIRA moved from being a community group to an activist organization.

In order to get attention from the government over the Sea Island expropriations, SIRA engaged in a number of activities to become a stronger political movement. The group started to raise more funds, in order to engage in a number of political projects and fight the state.⁴¹ It hired experts to produce their own data and challenge the conclusions of MOT, organized media stunts and attention-grabbing events and tried to identify more supporters for its cause.⁴² SIRA cajoled and embarrassed the government on one hand while, on the other hand, keeping channels open with any state official who could be useful. In one telling incident SIRA members picketed when

³⁷ Constitution of SIRA. February 20th 1951. CRA 8422 Series 6 File 1.

³⁸ SIRA Minutes, June 24th 1968. CRA 8423 Series 8 File 2.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ SIRA Minutes, May 28th 1969. CRA 8423 Series 8 File 2.

⁴¹ SIRA Minutes, February 25th 1971. CRA 8423 Series 8 File 2.

⁴² SIRA Minutes, May 28th 1970, CRA 8423 Series 8 File 2. One such stunt was an Art Show with painting about the airport expansion. John Cosway, *Richmond Review*, August 14th 1969, 4, CRA.

Prime Minister Trudeau flew to Vancouver.⁴³ Yet SIRA continually met with Tom Goode, who had been elected as the Liberal MP for Burnaby-Richmond in 1968. Goode continually tried to reassure residents about their situation and offered to be a conduit for questions about expropriation that would be asked to the Transport Minister.⁴⁴ At one meeting, Goode promised to look into the new expropriation legislation and said he would return with Transport Minister Paul Hellyer to discuss changes to the payment formula.⁴⁵ Yet despite working with their local MP, SIRA was not afraid to embarrass the government. SIRA refused to meet with Goode after expropriation was expedited after 1972.⁴⁶ As an editorial in the *Richmond Review* put it, Goode had been sold out by his own government as the expropriation was expedited. It should be no surprise that the citizens of Richmond voted Goode out of office in the 1972 election and elected John Reynolds, a Progressive Conservative, who would be more critical of the government.⁴⁷

The hearings under the *Expropriation Act* were held in 1973, chaired by Vancouver lawyer Isidor Wolfe. SIRA participated in them.⁴⁸ Like People or Planes (POP) SIRA asked for funds to prepare a technical study to present at the hearings.⁴⁹ The City of Richmond supported SIRA in its quest to obtain federal funding to help produce a proper study, but admitted that it had very little power to stop the federal government.⁵⁰ The Wolfe hearings commenced in early

⁴³ "Airport Protest Group Calls Trudeau Arrogant," *Richmond Review*, September 1972, Eunice Robinson's Private Collection.

⁴⁴ SIRA Minutes, October 21st 1968, CRA 8423 Series 8 File 2.

⁴⁵ SIRA Minutes, January 20th 1969, CRA 8423 Series 8 File 2.

⁴⁶ "Expropriation Deal Hits Brick Wall," *Richmond Review*, August 4th 1972, VPL Special Collections Sea Island, BC.

⁴⁷ John Reynolds represented Burnaby-Richmond-Delta from 1972 to 1977 as a Progressive Conservative.

"Reynolds Motion on Runway Fails," January 19th 1973, *The Province*, LAC MG 32-B46 Volume 90 File 4.

⁴⁸ Feldman and Milch, 122.

⁴⁹ "40,000 Asked for Studies," *The Province*, October 11th 1972, VPL Newspaper Clippings Collection Sea Island Ratepayer Association.

⁵⁰ For City of Richmond backing SIRA "Protests Backed," *Vancouver Sun*, October 11th 1972, VPL Newspaper Clippings Collection Sea Island Ratepayer Association. For power of a local city Editorial, "The Mayor's a Realist," *Richmond Review*, November 22nd 1972, CRA.

1973 despite criticism from some groups. Environmentalists expressed concern that environmental factors were not being taken into consideration during the expropriation hearings. Environment Minister and BC Liberal Jack Davis responded that such concerns would be covered in the risk assessment report but were separate from whether or not expropriation was fair or not.⁵¹ SIRA participated in the hearings and was very critical of the government on a number of fronts. Charles Johnstone, representing the residents, blasted MOT officials for its land acquisition policies and for holding citizens in contempt. He also called for an adjournment of the proceedings because environmental issues were not being considered.

Among those who supported the call for an adjournment were PC MP for Vancouver South John Fraser, NDP MLA for Fraser Valley Harold Steves, the BC Environmental Council and Vancouver Alderman Mike Harcourt.⁵² Wolfe defended the process, emphasizing that the objections over the lack of an environmental assessment had been made loud and clear, and would be included in his final report to the minister.⁵³ Yet there was a sense that Ottawa did not care about the hearings and did not feel compelled to justify its reasons for the expropriation; MOT officials did not make any presentations nor were all official documents related to the runway expansion released.⁵⁴ Privately, MOT officials responded to the final report submitted by Isidor Wolfe by assuring the government that the objections based on the expropriation and the environment had been met based on the need for this expansion. They admitted, however, that the effects of the proposed development on urban and natural environments should be studied

⁵¹ "Government Bid to Cut Debate Feared," *The Province*, 1973, LAC MG 32-B46 Volume 90 File 4.

⁵² "Hearings over Govt Blasted," January 19th 1973, *Richmond Review*, CRA 85410 Series 8 File 4. For failure to adjourn "Protestors Fail in Bid to Adjourn," *Richmond Review*, January 24th 1973, Harold Steves Private Collection.

⁵³ "New Hearing Officer Same old Problems," *Richmond Review*, January 31st 1973, CRA.

⁵⁴ Editorial, "How not to build a Airport," *The Province*, February 15th 1973, LAC MG 32-B46 Volume 90 File 4. Bill Bachop, "Why Ottawa has Shunned Airport Hearings," *Vancouver Sun*, February 16th 1973, VPL Pacific Press Clippings Vancouver International Airport Noise. Editorial, "All up in the Air," *Vancouver Sun*, February 16th 1973, VPL Pacific Press Clippings Vancouver International Airport Runways.

further.⁵⁵ MOT paid attention to environmental groups that were raising concerns about the airport and seemed to indicate that they were willing to examine concerns that they previously dismissed. In a letter dated just a few days before the official MOT response, Deputy Minister O.G. Stoner was already assuring Transport Minister Marchand that any environmental impacts would be minimal compared to the alternative – the creation of a new airport on the Vancouver mainland.⁵⁶ Significantly, in their official response, MOT officials acknowledged that, although other levels of government were aware of the proposal to expand the runway at the airport, there should be a more proactive approach to working with municipalities.⁵⁷ The federal government responded to the Wolfe Report by not undertaking construction for a period of one year and agreeing to conduct further studies on how the development would effect the urban and natural environment. These concerns would eventually lead to the establishment of the APC.⁵⁸

The Sea Island Controversy and the Press

The newspapers in British Columbia played an important role in publicizing the poor treatment of the Sea Island residents, giving a platform for locals to speak out and criticize the burgeoning Canadian state. The local, regional and national papers provide important context on what issues were reported on, how the protest group was framed and how the government responded to criticism. The federal government did not directly engage in a verbal sparring match with the local press in British Columbia as it did in Québec, but there was enough of a debate that the local press helps us understand how the Sea Island case progressed as it did. We can explore how the press responded to SIRA, how the federal government was viewed in British

⁵⁵ MOT “Response to Public Hearings,” March 1973, LAC MG 32-B46 Volume 90 File 5.

⁵⁶ O.G. Stoner, “Letter to Transport Minister Jean Marchand,” February 28th 1973, LAC MG 32-B46 Volume 89 File 14.

⁵⁷ MOT “Response to Public Hearings,” March 1973, LAC MG 32-B46 Volume 90 File 5.

⁵⁸ Ministry of Public Works, “Status of Expropriation,” March 29th 1973, LAC MG32-B46 Volume 89 File 8. “Draft of Press Release,” March 2nd 1973, LAC MG 32-B46 Volume 89 File 8.

Columbia at the time and what policy issue played out during the expropriation debates. The main papers that examined were the *Richmond Review* and the provincial papers *The Vancouver Sun* and *The Province*. *The Globe and Mail* provided some coverage but, perhaps due to the small size of the expropriation, the Sea Island runway debate did not get nearly as much coverage as Pickering or Mirabel. As the final expropriation notices for Sea Island residents were sent out in the early 1970s, local papers like the *Richmond Review* and the *Vancouver Sun* reported frequently on the conditions that local residents lived in and on the activities of their community organization, SIRA.

Some press coverage continued to tout the benefits of the runway expansion. The Sea Island Airport was one of the biggest employers in the City of Richmond and large sums were flowing in and out of the area through the airport.⁵⁹ Moreover, the project represented a substantial federal government investment in the economy British Columbia. Newspaper readers learned that the project represented an investment of nearly \$11.8 million in federal funding, a significant proportion of an estimated \$50 million dollars to be spent on federal transport projects in BC between 1967 and 1977.⁶⁰

While the federal government continued to make economic arguments to justify the expansion of the Sea Island Airport, the local press reported heavily on environmental issues that were sweeping Metro Vancouver and British Columbia as a whole. The creation of the federal Department of the Environment in 1971 helped make the environment a more pronounced policy issue in Canadian politics. Although on paper the federal government may have looked more

⁵⁹ "Airport Plays Major Role in Economy," *The Province*, April 18th 1974, VPL Pacific Press Clippings Vancouver International Airport.

⁶⁰ "Sea Island Heads Estimates for BC," *Vancouver Sun*, February 19th 1975, VPL Pacific Press Clippings Vancouver International Airport. "Ottawa Allows 13 Million for Vancouver's Airport," *The Province*, February 19th 1976, VPL Pacific Press Clippings Vancouver International Airport.

progressive on addressing environmental concerns, the press emphasized how federal public servants were lagging behind the public on the importance of protecting the environment.

The Sea Island Airport is the only airport initiative studied in this dissertation where a full environmental assessment was ordered. In early 1973 it was reported that Environment Minister Jack Davis ordered an environmental assessment of the runway expansion.⁶¹ Davis was responding to a public outcry and attacks in the House of Commons by the Opposition, all of which were well covered in the press.⁶² As Canada's first Minister of the Environment, Davis was sensitive to press reports that he was more interested in extracting Canada's natural resources than protecting them.⁶³ By providing a rigorous environmental assessment Minister Davis sought to assure the public that the environment would be considered when planning Sea Island.⁶⁴ Despite his announcement, the local press continued to criticize the government on the issue, warning the federal government not to go back on its word, and not to proceed without the accompanying environmental studies.⁶⁵ Some newspapers gave voice to those who questioned the limitless growth that many provincial governments and the federal government espoused in the 1970s. The *Richmond Review* wrote in favour of a no-growth economy, in which the state would direct itself towards preserving not wasting resources.⁶⁶

The press was extremely critical of many of the stances of the Trudeau government, as its tendency to be dismissive of criticism led to a perception of arrogance. The Trudeau government

⁶¹ Rick McGrath, "Cabinet Ministers Pledge Runway Ecostudy First," *Richmond Review*, February 23rd 1973, CRA.

⁶² "Government bid to Cut Debate Feared," *The Province*, 1973, LAC MG32-B46 Volume 90 File 4.

John Reynolds, the MP for Burnaby-Richmond-Delta, where the Sea Island Airport was located, was particularly critical of Minister Davis. "Jack Davis Accused of Shirking Environment and Fisheries," *Vancouver Sun*, February 16th 1973, VPL Pacific Press Clippings Vancouver International Airport Expansion.

⁶³ Editorial, "Davis in Muddy Water," *Richmond Review*, September 27th 1972, CRA.

⁶⁴ "Davis Pushes Impact 'Blueprint,'" *Victoria Times*, September 19th 1973, Author's Private Collection.

⁶⁵ Editorial, "Airport Expansion Must Wait," *The Province*, May 12th 1975, VPL Pacific Press Clippings Vancouver Airport Expansion

⁶⁶ Editorial, "A Plea Heard for no Growth," *Richmond Review*, 1973, Harold Steves Private Collection.

was under frequent attack for its lack of empathy for Canadian citizens.⁶⁷ This became especially apparent in large expropriation cases where citizens' land was taken. Editorials in British Columbia's newspapers were extremely critical of how the federal government handled the Sea Island expropriations. *The Richmond Review* wrote frequently in columns about the perceived arrogance of Trudeau and his government, for example in 1972 when the Prime Minister refused to meet with protestors, and in 1973 when Transport Minister Jean Marchand refused to come to BC and finally solve the lingering questions of expropriation. The *Review* criticized the government for supporting expediency over fairness.⁶⁸ In its criticism of the government, the newspaper concluded that since central planning was necessary in a large community, citizen involvement in the planning process was now essential.⁶⁹ Other newspapers such as the *Vancouver Sun* and *The Province* echoed the themes in the *Richmond Review*, when they began to cover the airport expropriations near the end of the conflict.⁷⁰ They, too, presented the federal government as arrogant and out of touch with its citizens. The shifting views of the Trudeau government can be seen in how The *Vancouver Sun*, which supported the Trudeau Liberals in the 1972 federal election, switched to Stanfield Conservatives in the 1974 election, due to the Liberals not tackling inflation crisis.⁷¹ The federal government's inability to address the concerns of local residents made it a frequent target of negative editorials in British Columbia over the Sea Island expropriations.

⁶⁷ The lack of empathy for the everyman effected by expropriation was something reflected on by former residents. Interview with Eunice Robinson, January 20th 2016.

⁶⁸ Editorial, "Odious Decision," *Richmond Review*, February 9th 1973, CRA.

⁶⁹ Editorial, "Who sets Priorities," *Richmond Review*, June 6th 1973, CRA.

⁷⁰ Editorial, "Haunted Houses," *Richmond Review*, August 8th 1976, VPL Pacific Press Clippings International Airport. Editorial, "How not to Build a Better Airport," *Vancouver Sun*, February 15th 1975, VPL Pacific Press Clippings International Airport.

⁷¹ Editorial, "National Integrity is the Real Issue," *Vancouver Sun*, October 28th 1972. Editorial, "The Choice is Clear," *Vancouver Sun*, July 6th, 1974,

As early as the late 1960s, well before the expropriation process intensified, the local press was covering activities of SIRA and their statements of claim against the federal government.⁷² Like their fellow citizen groups, SIRA engaged in protest tactics and stunts to get the media's attention and keep the public eye on Sea Island. They made art shows and built an ultra-modern home on expropriated land. This shows how SIRA attracted the media to promote their cause.⁷³ Such tactics did not always work. At one point, one editorial for the *Richmond Review* suggested that battle for the sake of battling made the protestors look as narrow minded and rigid as the very bureaucracy they protested against.⁷⁴ SIRA proved more effective in framing media coverage by appealing to reporters who were looking to emphasize the human element in the conflict. Those reporters responded by documenting the lives of residents and how government policy affected them and their communities. They frequently emphasized the uncertainty and fear of expropriation facing residents, highlighted with control over their property frozen, procedures unevenly applied, and asked questions about whether expropriation would be voluntary or mandatory.⁷⁵

Such reporting alleged that the federal government did not have a clear solution to the problem.⁷⁶ This concern continued as the federal government failed to make a decision about the airport as more environmental assessments were being prepared over the airport lands. As Father Duquet of Center Center d' Information et d' Animation Communautaire (CIAC) stated in an interview when he flew into Richmond to support the residents in their fight, it really looked like

⁷² As early as 1969 SIRA was making negative pronouncements against the federal government. "Ottawa Accused of Launching Fear Campaign," *The Province*, July 30th 1969, VPL Pacific Press Clippings International Airport.

⁷³ John Cosway, "Art Show," *Richmond Review*, August 14th 1969, 4, CRA. "Residents Stage Unique Protest," *Richmond Review*, 1971, 1, Eunice's Robinson's Private Collection.

⁷⁴ Editorial, "Battle for the Battling," *Richmond Review*, September 29th 1972, CRA.

⁷⁵ "Expropriation Procedures Hinted for Sea Islanders," *Vancouver Sun*, July 21st 1971, VPL Newspaper Clippings Collection Sea Island Ratepayer Association.

⁷⁶ "Freeze Imposed on Sea Island," *Richmond Review*, June 28th 1972, 1, 3, CRA.

the federal government did not care about the people.⁷⁷ Although the *Richmond Review* chastised the City of Richmond for failing to stand up for its citizens, the federal government faced the most criticism.⁷⁸ As the debate over the runway expansion continued, the local press accused the federal government of pushing through with its project with little consultation, and ignoring the effects on local residents.

The issues raised in the press shaped the development of the APC. The press criticized the federal government and the lack of room for the average citizen in the decision-making process. The traditional economic benefits of public works projects now, were measured against environmental issues of growth and sustainability. No longer were facts from public servants taken at face value. Governments were expected to address multiple concerns with many different people or groups that were affected by the Sea Island runway expansion. Although the plight of the residents received considerable attention, after the creation of the APC, environmental issues came to the fore. In particular, key questions emerged about the impact of dredging and soil removal on the Fraser River as it snaked around Sea Island, an environmental impact of the runaway that would become the most hotly contested issue.⁷⁹

The Formation of the APC

The APC was established in the spring of 1973 after public pressure forced the federal government to change how it consulted with citizens over airports.⁸⁰ The local and national press had criticized the federal government for being arrogant and lacking any empathy for dealing

⁷⁷ For Father Duquet "Québec Priest Nicknamed Cure des Expropriés," *Richmond Review*, January 17th 1973, CRA 85410 Series 8 File 4. "Sea Island Homeowners Rap Ottawa as Slum Landlord," *Vancouver Sun*, January 10th 1973, VPL Pacific Press Clippings Vancouver International Airport Expansion.

⁷⁸ Editorial, "Duty Shirked," *Richmond Review*, January 31st 1971, CRA.

⁷⁹ "Diked March Vital to Salmon Report," *The Province*, June 24th 1975, VPL Pacific Press Clippings Vancouver Airport Expansion.

⁸⁰ Meeting of APC, June 6th 1973, LAC RG 127 Volume 238. File Part 1.

with citizens.⁸¹ The theme of locals being bullied by the government and public servants, pressing on with large scale plans despite criticism had been picked up all over the country.⁸² Pickering and Mirabel were becoming political headaches for the federal government, where there was little to no consultation and prolonged resistance and agitation with the local residents.

A new approach was needed. First, there was an acknowledgement that the federal government faced unique circumstances in British Columbia. As Environment Minister Jack Davis, a BC Minister, wrote to Transport Minister Jean Marchand “people who live in British Columbia are more sensitive to environmental issues than most Canadians.”⁸³ BC has a reputation of being one of the more environmentally conscious provinces in Canada. Greenpeace was established in BC in 1972.⁸⁴ Unlike other national airports developed at this time, environmental issues could not be ignored in British Columbia. Second, there was a growing resentment that the federal government was out of touch with the average citizens. There was a sense that politicians were too dependent on the civil service. Senator Arthur Laing, a resident of Sea Island, spoke candidly in a letter to Prime Minister Trudeau. Senator Laing wrote “[that] the Olympian neutrality, and indeed indifference, forced upon so many employees of the Government by the present clumsy and inefficient system must be revised or we shall suffer

⁸¹ Editorial, “Political Stickhandling,” *Richmond Review*, July 19th 1972, CRA.

⁸² For our purposes we can see a number of projects from expressways, dams and airports being protested against in similar ways. Tina Loo, “High Modernism, Conflict, and the Nature of Change in Canada: A Look at Seeing like a State,” (*The Canadian Historical Review*, Vol 97, Issue 1. March 2016), 34-58. Danielle Robinson, “Modernism at a Crossroad: The Spadina Expressway Controversy in Toronto, Ontario ca. 1969-1971,” (*The Canadian Historical Review*, Vol 9, No 2, June 2011), 295-322. Likewise the popular press had picked up on a number of concerns from high levels of growth, environmental degradation and attacks on expertise. This was seen in the high levels of coverage the Pickering Airport debate that was covered in many local and regional papers. “Flying Protest,” January 31st 1973, *Globe and Mail*, CTASC. The hang gliding student was covered across Canada. Another example would be changes in policy. It is not a coincidence that the NDP’s Agricultural Land Reserve was developed in British Columbia in the mid-70s. Interview with Harold Steves, January 25th 2016.

⁸³ Jack Davis, “Letter to Jean Marchand,” February 15th 1973, LAC MG 32-B46 Volume 89 File 14.

⁸⁴ Rex Weyler, *Greenpeace and how a group of Journalists, Ecologists and Visionaries Changed the World*, (British Columbia: Raincoast Books, 2004), 31. Frank Zelko, *Make it a Green Peace: The Rise of Countercultural Environmentalism*, (Britain: Oxford University Press, 2013), 53-56.

recurring and ignominies like that over Sea Island.”⁸⁵ For an older politician like Laing who was from an earlier generation where ministers were less dependent on their deputy ministers and staff, the current state of the federal government left much to be desired. As an editorial of the *Richmond Review* phrased it “we have editorialized for almost a decade on the putrid business failings of the federal government when it is dealing with its citizens.”⁸⁶ This distance between state and citizen was more acute in British Columbia where the activities of Ottawa were far away. Despite being a small infrastructure project there was a particular sensitivity to how publicly the airport would be handled in BC. The federal government wanted to avoid the political conflict that had erupted in Ontario and Québec especially as citizens groups became more media savvy and aggressive.

Third, the Trudeau government had recently created the Ministry of State for Urban Affairs or MSUA and the Department of the Environment or DOE in 1971. MSUA’s role was to examine urban issues from a federal perspective and help with the planning process. The Ministry in some ways was to be a neutral arbiter between municipalities, the provinces and various federal departments. The Sea Island Airport became a perfect test case for MSUA to try and mitigate conflict and create the best conditions for urban planning. As for the Department of the Environment, it would play a crucial role in providing cover for the government by providing environmental assessments and add some legitimacy to the runway expansion. These newly minted ministries would play an important role in examining the Sea Island runway expansion and would provide additional analysis that representatives from MOT could not provide. The

⁸⁵ Senator Arthur Laing, “Letter to Prime Minister Trudeau,” March 2nd 1973, LAC MG-26 O7 Volume 435 File 735.13.

⁸⁶ Editorial, “Odious Decision,” *Richmond Review*, February 9th 1973, CRA.

Environmental Impact Study ordered by the Minister of the Environment would become a crucial document in the debate over the Sea Island expansion.

Finally, there was an acknowledgement by MOT itself that planning national airports needed to proceed differently. The public hearings held under the *Expropriation Act* did not blunt the criticism that citizens had for the ministry. MOT understood that it could not unilaterally act alone and needed to try and bring different groups onside in order to proceed.⁸⁷

All these different factors came together in the creation of the Airport Planning Commission. Made up of representatives from different government agencies and concerned citizen groups, the APC operated between 1973 and 1976. MSUA organized the APC and suggested that subcommittees would be formed to investigate different aspects of the runway expansion. Organized under the mandate of MSUA, the ministry suggested tri-level meetings between the federal, provincial and Greater Vancouver Regional District (GVRD) representatives.⁸⁸ The structure of the APC was different from the usual committees or panels assembled by governments, as was the final report that it issued. Because voting by a simple majority would have been unfair to the citizen groups who have fewer seats than the public servants on the committee, the committee tried to work on a consensus basis. Committee work was handled by representatives from all the different organizations. The final report which was issued in 1976 did not have majority or minority opinions represented by different people. Instead different agencies wrote under their name on whether they thought the runway should be built immediately, delayed for further study or not built at all.⁸⁹ By putting the citizen groups on

⁸⁷ Ministry of Transport "Response to Public Hearings," March 1973, LAC MG 32-B46 Volume 90 File 5.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Airport Planning Committee, *The Airport Planning Committee Final Report*, Vancouver, 1976, 73-95.

the planning committee it was hoped that a spirit of cooperation would allow citizen and bureaucrat to work together towards a common goal.

Under its terms of reference, the APC was to produce studies to ensure the Vancouver International Airport was compatible with various levels of government and to make recommendations on the studies undertaken. There was an acknowledgement that MOT had failed to properly communicate the reasons for the airport and that the public proved hostile towards, and suspicious of their motivations.⁹⁰ The APC was to review the need for the runway and look at alternatives, all while providing a space for various departments and citizen groups to get involved.⁹¹ For MSUA, the APC was a chance to figure out how to make a large federal project that would have a profound effect on the local area better address provincial and local concerns.

The first meeting of the APC was held on June 6th, 1973 with the various federal departments involved in the committee. Before the Community Forum was established, members of the APC discussed the terms of reference and structure of the committee. Ivor Jones from the Ministry of Transport chaired the committee and informed the members of the urgency and problems associated with the projected growth at the Vancouver Airport.⁹² MOT officials informed the committee that Vancouver would remain the primary airport and that alternate sites posed difficulties in accommodating growth.⁹³ Various subcommittees would be formed to look at various principles rather than technical details. Although there was a commitment to have inter-department cooperation, there was an objective to meet the ministry's time frame to make a

⁹⁰ Ministry of Transport, "Airport Planning Committee Terms of Reference," April 16th 1973, LAC RG 127 Volume 238 File Part 4.

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Minutes of APC, June 6th 1973, LAC RG 127 Volume 238 File Part 1.

⁹³ Ibid.

decision.⁹⁴ During the same timeframe, the DOE started its assessment, which was to provide strategic advice to the APC and look at soil levels, water and land evaluation around the site. Public input was to be encouraged.⁹⁵ Although Pierre Dansereau did examine the impact Mirabel would have on the environment, this was the first time that a study was conducted before shovels were in the ground.⁹⁶

One of the first actions of the APC was to call for members to join the Community Forum. The Community Forum was to represent the interests of the general public in helping develop the airport. GVRD, with grants provided by MSUA, funded the Community Forum. The member groups of the Community Forum included the Sea Island Rate Payers Association, the Sierra Club, the BC Wildlife Federation and the Richmond Anti-Pollution Association.

Interestingly, the Musqueam Band, with whom the federal government was negotiating over their land needed for the runway expansion, was not included in the Community Forum and issues of Indigenous land were never brought up in APC meetings. By examining the groups that the Community Forum was comprised of we can evaluate how the public was represented. Many of the member groups were either blatantly anti-airport or had environmental mandates that went against development on ecologically sensitive land. Groups like SIRA had a vested interest in trying to stop the runway expansion and as environmentalism became a more potent political force, activist groups would apply environmental standards to government decisions. It is clear that the Community Forum was made up mostly of citizen groups who were anti-airport with environmental mandates. This would prove frustrating to MOT officials who believed the

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Department of Environment, "Sea Island Study," June 6th 1973, UBC Rare Books and Special Collections Box 47 File 1b.

⁹⁶ Pierre Dansereau, *Towards a new Definition of Ecology: Construction of the new Montreal International Airport and its Impact on the Natural and Social Environment*, May 1971, 1-8. Rita Lafond's Private Collection.

Community Forum was biased and not a true representation of the general public.⁹⁷ As Ruth Rodger's wrote, MOT was simply using the Community Forum to say there was full public participation.⁹⁸ It was much easier to control the process and the flow of information from inside the committee than fighting the public opposition through press releases. Assistant Secretary André Saumier wrote in a letter to a colleague, MOT had a naïve interpretation of what citizen participation in airport planning would be.⁹⁹ The officials at MOT would soon learn it was a lot harder to influence opposition groups than anticipated.

The different departments involved in the APC admitted that citizen participation was necessary. Although some members were reluctant to let citizens participate, arguing that elected officials represented the people, nonetheless the Community Forum was established. Ivor Jones admitted that all members of the APC were supposed to be equal, including the three representatives from the Community Forum.¹⁰⁰ For MOT the Community Forum was simply a collection of anti-airport activists who could hopefully be contained within the APC as opposed to making constant negative pronouncements to the media outside.

In a meeting in late 1973 Nancy Cooley of the GVRD explained to members what the purpose of the Community Forum was. The Community Forum was supposed to be a neutral organization. It was to be the watch dog over the APC, allow for direct input from the public, provide a dialogue for the exchange of opinions and offer a place where the public could focus their ideas.¹⁰¹ In one of the first meetings after the Community Forum was formalized, they clearly stated they did not believe the runway expansion was necessary.¹⁰² Clearly the

⁹⁷ Ministry of Transport, "Briefing Paper on Vancouver Airport," November 24th 1974, LAC MG 32-B46 Volume 55 File 35.

⁹⁸ Ruth Rodger, "Memorandum to Cyril Rosenberg," September 18th 1974, LAC RG 127 Volume 237 File Part 2.

⁹⁹ André Saumier, "Letter to Dr. H.P. Oberlander," LAC RG 127 Volume 237 File Part 1.

¹⁰⁰ Ruth Rodger, "Memorandum to Cyril Rosenberg," July 10th 1973, LAC RG 127 Volume 237 File Part 1.

¹⁰¹ Community Forum Minutes, December 3rd 1973, LAC RG 127 Volume 238 File Part 1.

¹⁰² "Community Forum Meeting Notes," March 28th 1974, LAC RG 127 Volume 238 File Part 1.

Community Forum decided in advance that the runway was not necessary. Although this should not be surprising, it does present some problems with how opposing sides can work together on a policy issue that affects the public. MOT officials claimed in letters that the Community Forum was sabotaging the process and constantly demanding more studies.¹⁰³ Although in the APC meeting notes there is no evidence of deliberate sabotage, it is worth noting that the member groups did go in with an idea to stop the runway expansion.

At the same time, DOE assembled a special advisory panel to report on the environmental factors for the runway expansion. This parallel study would have a profound impact on the work of the APC.¹⁰⁴ By assembling this panel, the minister could deflect criticism and also answer calls to have a proper environmental assessment on the runway expansion. This information would be used by the APC to help with the decision-making process.

This extensive assessment looked at how the runway expansion would affect the Fraser River estuary, which circles the Sea Island Airport. The study looked at fisheries, wildlife, noise, water pollution, land use changes and atmospheric data.¹⁰⁵ MOT officials lamented the panel's "zealous attitude" and complained that it was stalling and didn't understand the nature of planning an airport. MOT's assessment of the situation and the enthusiasm of the panel are partially founded on the fact that some members of the panel also worked with the Community Forum. Will Paulik served on the panel and also represented the BC Wildlife Federation on the Community Forum.¹⁰⁶ This would certainly lead MOT to suspect that the special environmental

¹⁰³ Ruth Rodger, "Memorandum to Cyril Rosenberg," September 19th 1974, LAC RG 127 Volume 237 File Part 2. Also see Ministry of Transport, "Briefing Paper on Vancouver Airport," November 24th 1974, LAC MG 32-B46 Volume 55 File 35.

¹⁰⁴ Department of the Environment, "Sea Island Study," June 6th 1973, UBC Rare Books and Special Collections Box 47 File 1b.

¹⁰⁵ Environment Canada, *Bulletin*, February 1974, Vol 1, No 1, CVA A, 1541 Volume 579-A-4 File 4.

¹⁰⁶ Ruth Rodger, "Memorandum to Cyril Rosenberg," September 19th 1974, LAC RG 127 Volume 237 File Part 2. Community Forum Membership List, October 22nd 1974, LAC RG 127 Volume 238 File Part 1 and Notes of Meeting of Special Advisory Panel to the Minister, March 14th 1974, LAC RG 108 Volume 277 File Part 4.

advisory panel was nothing but another anti-airport group in disguise. The antagonistic relationship between MOT versus other departments and the Community Forum was well documented by Ruth Rodger who was the BC Regional Planner for MSUA and sat on the APC. Rodger wrote to her supervisor how annoyed MOT officials were about any other department questioning its numbers or plans for the airport.¹⁰⁷ The Community Forum was a space where both MSUA and DOE could prove their relevance. This was especially true for MSUA, since it was set up to act as a conciliatory partner between federal and provincial departments to deal with urban issues. There was much at stake for all parties involved to make the APC work for them in the right way.

The Airport Planning Committee

Departments were used to working on their files without outside supervision. In the case of both the Pickering and Mirabel Airports other departments did not provide much support beyond Public Works dealing with the expropriated properties. In other words, the minister was beholden to MOT officials for their expertise on transport related issues. One of the tensions that existed on the committee was that members of the Community Forum believed that they were equal to the civil servants. They had a budget, issued reports, and would bring comments to every APC meeting. Officials suspected that the Community Forum would use funds to lobby ministers and would learn from the other airport groups on how best to obstruct the decision-making process.¹⁰⁸ This would be a fundamental break in the traditional relationship between ministers and their departments.¹⁰⁹ After MOT made a presentation to the Transport Minister, a Community Forum member demanded resources to present their own presentation to the

¹⁰⁷ Ruth Rodger, "Memorandum to Cyril Rosenberg," September 19th 1974, LAC RG 127 Volume 237 File Part 2.

¹⁰⁸ Minutes from APC Meeting, February 26th 1976, LAC RG 127 Volume 238 File Part 7.

¹⁰⁹ Savoie, *Breaking the Bargain: Public Servants, Ministers and Parliament*, 40.

minister.¹¹⁰ James Tyhurst, a member of the Community Forum, believed they should have equal access and be able to see any materials MOT gave to the minister.¹¹¹ This was a startling request, but as Transport Minister Marchand reassured his private secretary, no committee should have the right to veto who the minister seeks advice from.¹¹²

Public servants had difficulty reconciling the fact that citizens who participated in the policy process were going to be active and question the way decisions had been made. The Community Forum also wanted legal protection during the process and the same access to legal counsel as government representatives.¹¹³ In an internal memorandum Ruth Rodger wrote another striking letter as she suggested that providing the same legal protection to citizen representatives as to government officials equates the average citizen with an official. Rodger suggested that this might have been the intent of the request.¹¹⁴ She concluded that the government only was responsible for providing legal counsel to its officials. Interestingly she pointed out that while government officials were responsible for their actions, citizens might not be at all.¹¹⁵ There is a fundamental difference between on the one hand state officials who are beholden to their department and their political bosses and, on the other hand, citizens who can more easily walk away from a public project.

The APC was not supposed to be a cheerleader for the airport, at least that is what Minister of State for Urban Affairs Ron Basford said in a letter to Jean Marchand. The APC nevertheless was supposed to help the federal government's image in the region.¹¹⁶ The inadequate performance by MOT officials and the treatment of homeowners had made the

¹¹⁰ CVA AM 1541 Volume 579-A-6 File 6.

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² Jean Marchand, "Letter to J.W. MacNeill, February 5th 1974, LAC RG 127 Volume 237 File Part 1.

¹¹³ Minutes of APC Meeting, May 29th 1975, LAC RG 127 Volume 238 File Part 6.

¹¹⁴ Ruth Rodger, "Memorandum," June 24th 1975, LAC RG 127 Volume 239 File Part 2.

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

¹¹⁶ Ron Basford, "Letter to Jean Marchand," August 27th 1973, LAC MG 32-B46 Volume 89 File 7.

general public hostile and could hurt Liberal electoral fortunes in the province. It is fair to say that MOT was dragged into the APC; it was not a decision-making arrangement that it would have recommended. Being the main agency in charge of planning the airport, their statistics were used for the many reports issued on the airport. The early APC meetings revolved around setting up various sub committees to investigate different aspects of the airport. One element that is made clear is that the APC has no control over how MOT would distribute or use its funds.¹¹⁷ The panel would be involved in shaping policy, but it had no say in budgetary decisions.

While these subcommittees were meeting, and various heads of committees were reporting on their progress, in early 1974 MOT officials worked behind the scenes to try to get all the departments on its side. In a letter written to her supervisor Ruth Rodger commented on how MOT tried to settle some of the lingering issues of the airport expansion. Rodger's wrote that Ivor Jones said that MOT is very determined to build this runway.¹¹⁸ While the APC did research on the runway expansion, MOT through its offices, conducted its own research to try and address some of these concerns. This would become one of the main conflicts in the APC. Glen Waddell, Chairman of the Community Forum, wrote to Transport Minister Jean Marchand that studies commissioned by MOT outside the APC undermined the entire process.¹¹⁹ In an internal memo Marchand wrote that MOT must be able to advise the minister.¹²⁰ J.W. MacNeill responded to Marchand that by commissioning these studies, MOT may have undermined the authority of the APC. This issue was brought up during APC meetings where the Community Forum threatened to not follow procedure.¹²¹ We can see that citizen groups had difficulty

¹¹⁷ Minutes from APC Meeting, January 3rd 1974, LAC RG 127 Volume 238 File Part 2.

¹¹⁸ Ruth Rodger, "Memorandum to Cyril Rosenberg," January 11th 1974, LAC RG 127 Volume 238 File Part 2.

¹¹⁹ Glen Waddell, "Letter to Jean Marchand," January 28th 1974, LAC RG 127 Volume 237 File Part 1.

¹²⁰ Jean Marchand, "Letter to J.W. MacNeill, February 5th 1974, LAC RG 127 Volume 237 File Part 1.

¹²¹ J.W. MacNeill, "Letter to Jean Marchand," February 20th 1974, LAC RG 127 Volume 237 File Part 1. Notes from APC Meeting, February 11th 1974, LAC RG 127 Volume 238 File Part 2.

dealing with the political structures in the federal government that would not bend to their every suggestion.

By May 1974, in internal updates to the minister, MOT officials worried that they were falling behind on the projected building schedule and losing control of the process. The department wanted the runway to be operational by 1978. The MOT civil servants believed that the airport was viable and that the APC was useful for studying government policy but it was mostly to seek the rationale for expansion.¹²² In another letter Rodger tried to explain to Ivor Jones that the public believed that MOT was not presenting reasonable evidence on forecasts or maximizing existing facilities.¹²³ There was a clear disconnect between MOT and other departments in addition to the expectations of other citizens. Airports could no longer be built independently based solely on their economic value as public works. As a report prepared for the GVRD stated, “changing values toward growth and changes in the influence of economic, social, and environmental concerns in policy decisions now comprise the current milieu of decision making.”¹²⁴ Building the runway would not end all the uncertainty. Forecasts can change and so could economic conditions. The Ministry of Transport did not understand that the concerns expressed by the public would not go away. Although MOT officials continued to gripe about how the costs of expropriation kept increasing, citizens were asking questions about how this airport would affect the space around them.

¹²² Ivor Jones, “Letter to Nancy Cooley,” May 13th 1974, LAC RG 127 Volume 238 File Part 2. Ministry of Transport, “Vancouver Planning Meeting,” October 17th 1974, LAC RG 127 Volume 238 File Part 4. Ministry of Public Works, “Status of Expropriation,” March 29th 1973, LAC MG32-B46 Volume 89 File 8.

¹²³ Ruth Rodger, “Letter to Ivor Jones,” July 11th 1975, LAC RG 127 Volume 237 File Part 3.

¹²⁴ Greater Vancouver Regional District, “A Synthesis of Airport Development Issues,” February 7th 1975, UBC Rare Books and Special Collections.

The work conducted by the DOE panel caused some issues in slowing down the work of the APC. In a letter to the new Environment Minister, Jeanne Sauve, Jean Marchand wrote that it was paramount that the DOE report be released immediately so that decisions could be made on the Vancouver runway expansion.¹²⁵ The cost of continuous consultations mounted: MOT put the budget of the APC at \$1.5 million at the end of 1974 and all departments had depleted their resources allocated for the committee.

The DOE panel reported in early 1975 and considered how the runway expansion would affect the ecosystem around Sea Island but also how it would impact people. The panel reported on the environmental effects on the Fraser River such as the impact of offshore dredging on the marshes around the river.¹²⁶ The panel also investigated complaints from citizens in Vancouver who were very concerned with noise. However, the panelists acknowledged that by making adjustments to the plans for environmental reasons, such as moving the runway farther west, it could aggravate noise complaints.¹²⁷ The committee pointed out that while there was considerable pressure to start construction on the runway immediately this should not override the serious environmental concerns. The DOE panel stressed that environmental assessment was a vital part of the planning process.¹²⁸ The Fraser estuary which surrounds the Sea Island Airport is an important part of the eco-system in the area and by transforming all that land into a runway the government risked damaging the environment. According to the DOE report, the land could be put to much better use for parks or agriculture.¹²⁹ The panel made it clear that the runway was

¹²⁵ Ministry of Transport, Vancouver Airport Planning Meeting,” September 30th 1974, LAC RG 127 Volume 238 File Part 3. Jean Marchand, “Letter to Jeanne Sauve,” November 27th 1975, LAC MG 32-B46 Volume 89, File 9.

¹²⁶ Interim Report on Environmental Impact of Vancouver Airport, January 2nd 1975, LAC RG 108 Volume 277 File Part 4.

¹²⁷ For noise concerns in Vancouver Edwards, Chapter 2: Noisy Neighbours: Airports and Communities in the 1960s and 1970s,” *A Bumpy Landing: Airports and the Making of Jet Age Canada*, 79-129.

¹²⁸ Ibid.

¹²⁹ Ibid.

more than just a piece of property. It was a vital part of the local ecosystem for all organisms. MOT strongly disagreed with this assessment. Ivor Jones wrote to a bureaucrat in the Department of the Environment that MOT has taken every step possible to work with the department to ensure that the runway expansion met environmental standards. Jones wrote that the airport development should not become secondary to the management of the Fraser Estuary.¹³⁰ Despite the serious misgivings by her own department that MOT failed to properly integrate environmental policy issues into planning the runway expansion, Environment Minister Jeanne Sauv   supported the runway expansion.¹³¹

Citizen groups slammed the Environment Minister on the announcement and attacked her in the press. Rick Starling, a member of the Community Forum, wrote in a letter to the editor saying that Minister Sauv   “has allowed the ministry of transport to make her mind.” Starling criticized the minister for not standing up for the ecologically-sensitive Fraser estuary.¹³² A *Vancouver Sun* editorial chastised Minister Sauv   for ignoring the work of the APC and basing her opinion on Transport documents.¹³³ Minister Sauv   received many negative letters from concerned citizens and members of the Community Forum about her stand on the environment and her position on the airport.¹³⁴ Minister Sauv   was quickly switched out of the portfolio as Romeo LeBlanc temporarily took over the portfolio in December 1975 before Jean Marchand became the new Environment Minister in January 1976. His appointment was heavily criticized with an editorial in *The Province* arguing that “[t]he appointment will be taken as confirmation

¹³⁰ Ivor Jones, Letter to M.J. Romaine, May 23rd 1975, LAC RG 127 Volume 238 File Part 6.

¹³¹ P. H. Beaubier, “Letter to D. G. Hosgood,” July 8th 1975, LAC RG 127 Volume 237 File Part 3. “Mrs Sauve says Third Runway Needed,” *Vancouver Sun*, August 27th 1975, LAC RG 108 Volume 277 File Part 5.

¹³² Letter to the Editor, “Has Environment Chief Pre-judged Airport Issue,” September 6th 1975, VPL Pacific Press Clippings Vancouver International Airport Runways.

¹³³ Editorial, “Bureaucracy wins Again,” *Vancouver Sun*, September 22nd 1975, LAC RG 12 Volume 3953 File Part 4.

¹³⁴ LAC RG 108 Volume 277 File Part 5.

that Mr. Trudeau doesn't rate the environment department very highly, and that his debt to Mr. Marchand comes before his duty to the environment."¹³⁵ The Trudeau government wasn't able to successfully incorporate environmental policy issues into what would be considered a transport issue. Despite some good intentions it seems that neither the civil service nor the government was willing to admit they were out of sync with what the public demanded.

MOT was very concerned that the public consultation had simply served to consolidate the anti-airport, anti-growth and anti-government forces¹³⁶ Much of that consolidation, however, resulted from doubts about the MOT's willingness to consult with citizens and take their criticisms seriously. There was a large gap between the motivations of citizen groups and what public officials wanted to achieve.

The Community Forum brought up issues that the APC refused to deal with. In one meeting, after the Community Forum members discussed how they were meeting with some of the residents that night, Jones reminded the committee that the APC was not dealing with issues of expropriation.¹³⁷ In another letter to Ivor Jones, Glen Waddell suggested that the social and ecological costs of the airport needed to be studied beyond the traditional macro-economic concerns.¹³⁸ At the next APC members the Community Forum raised concerns that the studies commissioned by the APC were not proceeding at a timely pace and that the case of the runway expansion had still not been made. Jones reassured the panel that the studies were proceeding, and that MOT was using ample resources to evaluate all options.¹³⁹ Yet internally there were

¹³⁵ Editorial, "Marchand alias Kilroy," *The Province*, January 27th 1976, , VPL Pacific Press Clippings Vancouver International Airport Runways.

¹³⁶ Ministry of Transport, "Vancouver Airport Planning Meeting," November 24th 1974, LAC MG 32-B46 Volume 55, File 35.

¹³⁷ Minutes from APC Meeting, April 2nd 1974, LAC RG 127 Volume 238 File Part 2.

¹³⁸ Glen Waddoll, "Letter to Ivor Jones," May 4th 1974, LAC RG 127 Volume 238 File Part 1.

¹³⁹ Minutes of APC Meeting, May 9th 1974, LAC RG 127 Volume 238 File Part 2.

problems and MOT was very frustrated by the process. Different ministries responded to the APC depending on their objectives.¹⁴⁰ MOT saw itself more as the servant than the master in the APC process and acknowledged that different departments and agencies are serving their own interests. The DOE saw its role as protecting the environment while MSUA wanted to create new ways for different levels of government to work on urban issues. There were many government interests at play during the committee.

The APC was full of many contradictions between different departments and the expectations of the public versus federal public servants. This can be seen clearly in the diluted and contradictory final report of the committee. The only thing that every member seemed to agree on was that no one could agree on anything. The Community Forum was very concerned with the contents of the final report. The members of the Community Forum insisted that the different opinions expressed by the participants had to be expressed in the final report. The introduction of the report should clearly set out that there are strong opinions for and against the runway expansion.¹⁴¹ In addition, the Community Forum was very concerned with the use of MOT statistics on passenger forecasting that were based on assumptions that could change in the near future. Members of the Community Forum were also adamant that more work in the report needed to address the urban issues and social impact of the runway.¹⁴² MOT officials were also not satisfied with the tone of the report and the concerned disagreements. In one letter, a MOT official wrote that the report contained too much editorial license and should have focused more on the data submitted and less on interpretation of those reports. MOT believed the report was

¹⁴⁰ Ministry of Transport, "Vancouver Airport Planning Report," June 27th 1974, LAC RG 127 Volume 238 File Part 3.

¹⁴¹ Community Forum, "Community Forum Responds to Draft of APC Report," October 3rd 1975, LAC RG 127 Volume 237 File Part 5.

¹⁴² Ibid.

too lengthy and the opinion of the minority was highlighted.¹⁴³ Perhaps most importantly, the official wrote that the tone of the report was not positive and gave the impression that the APC was not very productive.¹⁴⁴

In the next meeting of the APC many of the bureaucrat members of the APC, including those from MOT, MSUA and GVRD, brought up the excessive length of the report.¹⁴⁵ The Community Forum responded they would rather have an issues section to highlight some of the issues with the runway expansion and that members were concerned if decisions for or against the runway were linked with different agencies.¹⁴⁶ In response to a letter from Rick Starling of the Community Forum, Transport Minister Otto Lang assured Starling that the final report would incorporate opposing views.¹⁴⁷

By the time the Community Forum walked out of APC in one of the final meetings it was clear there would be little agreed upon in the final report.¹⁴⁸ The Community Forum believed the spirit of the APC had been compromised by other members of the committee challenging the organization of the issues section. The members of the Community Forum walked out of the meeting feeling like the APC was no longer an open process.¹⁴⁹ The public servants did not understand why the Community Forum representatives walked out of meeting and what their problem with the final report was. In addition, by threatening to go public about those internal difficulties the Community Forum threatened to break the confidentiality of the APC.¹⁵⁰ In a

¹⁴³ D. G. Smith, "MOT Responds to Draft of APC Report," October 16th 1975, LAC RG 127 Volume 237 File Part 5.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

¹⁴⁵ Notes from APC Meeting, October 29th 1975, LAC RG 127 Volume 238 File Part 7.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid.

¹⁴⁷ Otto Lang, "Telegram to Rick Starling," November 26th 1975, CVA AM 1541 Volume 579-A-1 File 5.

¹⁴⁸ Ruth Rodger, "Memorandum," November 17th 1975, LAC RG 127 Volume 238 File Part 7.

¹⁴⁹ Notes from APC Meeting, November 13th 1975, LAC RG 127 Volume 238 File Part 7.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid.

letter to D.G. Hosgood of the APC, Rick Starling wrote that the Community Forum representatives walked out of the meeting because the issues section should have highlighted the policy differences among the different organizations. Starling believed that the APC was no longer neutral and became overtly partisan as MOT officials tried to shape the final report in their favour.¹⁵¹ In an internal memorandum Ruth Rodger of the MSUA wrote that she believed that the Community Forum's walk-out of was sheer posturing to detach themselves from the report. Since the Community Forum members did not support the runway expansion, they did not want to be associated with the final report that suggested that the runway should be built.¹⁵² In a briefing to the minister before the final report was released, MOT went over the essentials in the final report and the APC. MOT acknowledged that the runway proposal had been questioned in a number of ways, including the federal government's national transportation policy, energy policy and urban planning. The department believed that the on-going energy crisis was affecting how Canadians saw national energy policies and that it could mean the department had to re-evaluate how future airports would be planned.¹⁵³ However, the department believed the federal government must be clear on what the national transport policy is and how it is different from energy policy. MOT admitted in the briefing that the criticisms made by the Community Forum may represent many concerns of Canadians.¹⁵⁴ Yet, MOT wrote that many of those same concerns such as noise, environmental changes, and displacement of population were inevitable. It did not matter where a Vancouver airport would have been located or how long its runways

¹⁵¹ Rick Starling, "Letter to D.G. Hosgood," November 14th 1975, LAC RG 108 Volume 277 File Part 5.

¹⁵² Ruth Rodger, "Memorandum," November 17th 1975, LAC RG 127 Volume 238 File Part 7.

¹⁵³ Ministry of Transport, "Briefing on the Final Report of Airport Planning Committee," March 1976, LAC RG 127 Volume 237 File Part 5.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid.

were. The briefing concludes that perhaps in the time that it takes to construct the runway, the government could do more to address the concerns of the most adversely-affected people.¹⁵⁵

Conclusion

The APC final report in March 1976 made three recommendations. The recommendation to proceed with the development of the runway expansion immediately was supported by MOT, DPW, the provincial government, and the City of Richmond. The recommendation to delay until vital conditions were met, such as resolving noise and environmental issues was supported by the GVRD and generally MSUA and the City of Vancouver. Finally, the recommendation not to proceed with the third runway was supported by the Community Forum.¹⁵⁶ Following the release of the final report the Community Forum issued a press release that MOT had hijacked the APC and had not allowed adequate public input. The Community Forum believed that MOT had controlled the process from the beginning and shaped the final report to their liking.¹⁵⁷ The Community Forum stated that no matter how long the runway was, it would still cause major environmental damage and wasn't a good use of public funds.¹⁵⁸ Immediately following the tabling of the report, the various citizen groups and agencies starting lobbying for their respective positions. Helen Boyce of the MOE advisory panel wrote to the Minister of the Environment Jean Marchand, that the panel members were very concerned with the recommendations that MOT made in terms of how the runway would impact the environment and how the downturn in the economy would affect air travel, especially with increasing fuel costs.¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁵ Ibid.

¹⁵⁶ Airport Planning Committee, *The Airport Planning Committee Final Report*, Vancouver, 1976.

¹⁵⁷ Community Forum, "Press Release," March 12th 1976, LAC RG 127 Volume 237 File part 5.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid.

¹⁵⁹ Helen Boyce, "Letter to Jean Marchand," March 29th 1976, LAC RG 127 Volume 237 File Part 5.

At a public meeting held by the City of Vancouver, MOT argued that all the proper studies had been conducted and the runway should proceed. The airport as it currently stood could not handle the projected increases in passengers. The BC Wildlife Federation, the Greater Vancouver Citizen Committee on Noise Abatement, and the Sea Island Rate Payers Association all made presentations arguing that the environmental studies were not satisfactory, and the runway should not be built. They argued that growing concerns over the ‘health’ of the Fraser River made the runway inconceivable at this time. The APC had failed to study the impacts of noise on the local population and many residents stated that concern. Although some submissions, such as the airlines, spoke in favour of the airport expansion, the majority of citizen submissions were against the airport.¹⁶⁰ Despite all the work put into making the APC a site of compromise it seemed that the last three years of meetings were for naught. There was no space to make a decision that would satisfy all parties. The mutual suspicion and hostility that citizens and civil servants had for each other as well as interdepartmental rivalries made the APC a poisoned process. The newspaper reporters and editors took the position that there were still too many uncertainties in making a decision on the runway expansion.¹⁶¹ A *Vancouver Sun* article claimed that not enough research had to been conducted and MOT had not considered lower projected passenger volumes.¹⁶²

The decision was once again punted back to the federal government. Transport Minister Otto Lang was left to make the decision. On August 12th 1976 Transport Minister Otto Lang

¹⁶⁰ Organizations that made presentations to Vancouver City Council include the BC Wildlife Federation, Greater Vancouver Citizens Committee on Noise Abatement and the Ministry of Transport. CVA COV-S483 Volume 47-E-3 File 2.

¹⁶¹ Editorial, “More Airport Homework Needed,” *The Province*, March 12th 1976, CVA COV-S483 Volume 47-E-3 File 2.

¹⁶² Editorial. “The Shoes that Won’t Fit,” *Vancouver Sun*, May 21st 1976, LAC RG 12 Volume 3953 File Part 4.

announced that the runway will be put under further consideration and would not be started until 1978. Lang stated that the government would review the proposals for a shorter runway and they would be subject to a full environmental assessment.¹⁶³

As it turned out, despite the combination of inflation, the OPEC Crisis and changes in the aviation industry, passenger volumes at the Sea Island Airport actually doubled between 1970 and 1980, from 133,000 to 268,000. There was clearly a need for this runway expansion yet the additional runway at Sea Island would not be given the green light to be built until 1991.¹⁶⁴ Yet how we got to the airport expansion delay is worth examining. The bureaucracy did not know how to deal with a public who was more assertive and questioning authority. Citizen groups had become very distrustful of the state and in particular experts and public servants who claimed to know what was in their best interest. Indeed, it would be another fifteen years after the delay until the runway at Vancouver would be built. The decision to delay building the runway was not a good decision. Homeowners continued to languish wondering why their property was expropriated if the runway was never going to be built. Former resident Eunice Robinson spoke of the emotional toll of time marching on and on and on yet that third runway was not built. Robinson believed her family could have gotten another 20 years out of the property if the government was going to delay. Yet all of the residents of the Cora Brown community were expropriated by 1974.¹⁶⁵

The idea of neutral facts and a straight forward policy making process became more complicated as new players entered the political arena. It became increasingly difficult for

¹⁶³ Editorial, "Haunted House," *Vancouver Sun*, August 21st 1976, VPL Pacific Press Clippings Vancouver International Airport Expansion.

¹⁶⁴ Statistics Canada, *Aviation in Canada Historical and Statistical Perspectives on Civil Aviation*, (Canada: Ministry of Supply and Services Canada, 1986), 129. Federal Environment Assessment Review Office, *Vancouver International Airport: Parallel Runway Project: Report of the Environmental Assessment Panel*, (Hull, Québec: Federal Environmental Assessment Review Office, 1991), 7.

¹⁶⁵ Interview with Eunice Robinson, January 20th 2016.

politicians to just listen to their deputy minister and not examine how their policy would affect different areas of government. Officials in the Ministry of Transport had difficulty reconciling with the fact that other government departments, in this case DOE and MSUA, would have a say in how the Sea Island Department was planned. They saw little merit in having other departments criticize their work. Citizen groups who had an opportunity to work within the state struggled to work with state officials while still advocating for the positions they cared about. It is much easier to criticize government officials from the outside but once you have access to the levers of power, you may realize that compromise is usually the solution, not the problem. For members of the Community Forum who were very concerned with environmental issues and urban planning, the plight of the residents themselves seemed to completely disappear from any criticism of the Ministry of Transport. Larger more engulfing policy issues dominated the discussion of the Sea Island Runway. Despite being part of the Community Forum the voice of SIRA seemed to have been displaced by larger and more powerful groups. In the case of the Sea Island Airport, it seemed the different players in the conflict had very little room to compromise. The APC did little to address the multi-faceted policy concerns of the different groups. Governing by consensus is easy to imagine, but in reality, politics is much more complicated, dirty and messy.

Conclusion: Just Sign Here

In the 1970s, the federal government had to respond to citizens demanding a larger role in shaping policy. Citizens demanded input on policy decisions that affected their lives. Through the 1960s and 1970s, citizens joined interest groups and fought for their voices to be heard on policy issues. One of those policies was the mass expansion of Canadian airports. Based on projected passenger growth, the Ministry of Transport (MOT) recommended the expansion and creation of several airports in Canada's biggest cities. What MOT and federal politicians did not expect was the organized resistance by residents.

At the height of the welfare state, the federal government engaged in extensive planning. The political will, financial resources, and the development of a strong public service after the Second World War made this possible. Canada had a robust economy in the post war period and tax dollars flowed into government coffers. Ministers could dream big and civil servants had the tools necessary to plan accordingly.

Planning public works in the 1970s involved more than just getting shovels in the ground and building infrastructure. During this time, the Trudeau government got more engaged in regional planning and urban development. Cities were growing rapidly, and the federal government wanted to help shape their future role in Canada as magnets for capital and immigration. It used regional development programs, that centered around DREE, to help the less resource-endowed regions. The hope was that the jobs created through these programs would help spur economic development.¹ The fact that these policies interfered with areas that were under provincial jurisdiction was not lost on a federal government that was heavily engaged in responding to Québec nationalism.

¹ Harley R. McGee, *Getting it Right Regional Development in Canada*, (Canada: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1992), 10.

Public works can be built to accomplish multiple policy goals. The Mirabel Airport in Québec could be the site of large-scale economic development north of Montréal. The Pickering Airport, east of Toronto could direct growth and immigration towards Pickering. The runway expansion at Sea Island Airport, that served Vancouver, British Columbia, could highlight the efforts of the Department of the Environment to provide an environmental lens to federal policy decisions. Airports were no longer just a transport issue, a reality that quickly dawned on officials from the Ministry of Transport who now had to work across departments. Public works now served multiple purposes and multiple ministries had to be brought in to work on these projects. Although civil servants worked together, departments had different goals, which at times led to conflict.

Airport controversies in the 1970s were shaped by the mobilization of citizens that began in the 1960s, as interest groups formed to promote policy. Citizen groups formed in Mirabel, Québec, Pickering, Ontario and Sea Island, British Columbia, to contest the plans of the federal government. Residents were not going to let their property get expropriated without a fight. In each constituency, a protest group formed to debate, debunk, and embarrass civil servants and politicians. These groups collected data, created media relations strategies, launched legal challenges, and crafted large public profiles. As much as newspapers reported on federal plans, they also wrote stories on the resistance of the residents and the way they were treated by the state. The conflict over federal airport development took place during the peak of citizen movements in the late 1960s and early 1970s as people questioned prioritizing the public interest versus local interests.²

² Richard Harris, *Democracy in Kingston A Social Movement in Urban Politics, 1965-1970*, (Canada: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1988), 155.

Planners quickly realized that the public was not going to accept expropriation of property without some sort of consultation. In addition, as urban sprawl, environmentalism, and questions of sustainability began to be discussed in the 1970s, the government and public servants had to adjust how they planned public works projects. In all three airport cases, the state created some form of citizen consultation.

In the case of Mirabel (1968-1975), since the *Expropriation Act*, 1970 did not apply, the federal government was not mandated to have any public hearings. Yet MOT conducted several social-economic studies and an environmental assessment to see how residents and the region would be impacted by the airport.³ For the most part, residents had to depend on the good will of politicians to negotiate in public. It is clear there are limitations when the state is not legally bound to consult with citizens. However, despite the Mirabel Airport opening, The Center d'Information et d'Animation Communautaire (CIAC) was able to get concessions from the federal government and their opposition did not help the shaky case for the airport.

In Pickering (1972-1975), public hearings were held under the new federal rules for expropriation. When the public hearings did not satisfy everyone, a public inquiry was called.⁴ Although People or Planes (POP) participated in these state sponsored commissions, they lacked faith in their effectiveness. Ultimately, the decision to cancel the Pickering Airport came more from the politics in the provincial legislature than the work of these consultation processes.

The Sea Island runway expansion (1973-1976), despite being the smallest expropriation in question, had the most extensive public consultation. As the federal government lurched from one poorly-handled expropriation to the next, it tried to do something different. The Airport

³ New Montreal Airport Project Office, *New Montreal Airport Project Information Dossier*, (Canada: Information Service, 1971), 1-19.

⁴ Government of Canada, *Report of The Airport Inquiry Commission*, (Ottawa: Information Canada, 1974), 1-256.

Planning Committee (APC) was designed to solve many of the problems in the consultation process. By bringing citizen groups and civil servants together in the planning process it was hoped that there would be a less hostile working environment. Citizens were now on equal footing with the bureaucrats and had an opportunity to work on the plans from the inside. The civil servants, although dragged to the APC, could now address issues head-on instead of waging a war of words with residents in the press. The APC failed to resolve the issues between the public and the government. Instead of concluding on the future of the runway expansion, the committee was divided, and could not come together.⁵ The federal government had no choice but to delay making a decision and hope the participating parties could come together in the future.

Although the nature and extent of the negotiation was quite distinct in the three cases, citizen groups shared many of the same criticisms of planners and politicians. They communicated, shared their stories and tactics and worked together to undermine the airport plans.⁶ Much of the opposition around expropriation comes down to the themes of just and equitable treatment, and ignoring the much-discussed “human factor” in expropriation. The human factor could be the destruction of historic communities, with little thought being given to what to do with these people. Some of the opposition that the federal government faced perhaps could have been stifled if there were more projects like the co-op founded by some Sea Islanders. The Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) provided a loan so that that group of residents could buy some units and stay together.⁷ If citizens believed that the federal government cared as much about their lives as the construction of these projects, then the opposition would be more muted.

⁵ Airport Planning Committee, *The Airport Planning Committee Final Report*, (Vancouver, 1976), 1-115.

⁶ “Letter to Jean Marchand,” January 18th 1973, LAC MG 32-B46 Volume 81 File 5.

⁷ “Former Sea Islanders Find Haven in Co-op,” *Richmond Review*, August 4th 1976, CRA.

The federal decisions on air development did not stand the test of time. The Mirabel Airport was opened in October 1975. The Pickering Airport was cancelled in September 1975. The Sea Island Airport was delayed in August 1976. One would think these decisions were final. Yet history has shown that these were not the last words on any of these airports. If anything, the fights only got more intense as time passed.

The opening of the Mirabel Airport may have been the highpoint of its troubled existence. It was losing money almost as soon as it was opened. Toronto did eclipse Montréal as the center of capital in Canada. Airlines only landed in Mirabel due to federal regulations and quickly abandoned the airport as soon as they had the opportunity. The highspeed rail was never established and there was never a quick connection to Montréal. Mirabel was never a convenient place to land for passengers. It was clear, even by 1980, that it was never going to meet MOT projections on passenger volume.⁸ Some jobs were created in the adjacent industrial zone around the airport especially in the aerospace industry. For example, Bombardier developed a major operation in the area, and as of 2009, had 13,000 employees there. However, this is a far cry from the 100,000 jobs promised back in 1970.⁹

CIAC was patient. The leaders of the group continued to meet with opposition politicians at both the provincial and federal levels. For the group, it was less about convincing the Trudeau Liberals, and more about waiting for a change in government. The Parti Québécois, elected provincially in 1976, continued to advocate that the farmland be returned to residents.¹⁰ In the early 1980s, when it became apparent that Mirabel would never need additional territory, the

⁸ William Johnson, "Airports boss denies political influence used in Sky Shops decision," *Globe and Mail*, November 11th 1975. Privy Council Office, "Discussion Paper on Mirabel," November 14th 1977, LAC APB 3470-05 Box 13 Volume 3.

⁹ Laurin, 278.

¹⁰ Ibid, 137.

federal government did start to investigate whether some of the farmland should be returned. In 1984, Brian Mulroney and the Progressive Conservatives won a large majority and the Liberals were sent to the opposition benches. Roch LaSalle, who was a long-time ally of CIAC, became Minister of Public Works. He worked directly with CIAC on returning expropriated land and property. The PCs kept their promises about finding a resolution to the problem. Between 1985-1988, some 80,000 acres and 1400 properties were returned.¹¹ Although the battle was lost in 1975, the return of the expropriated properties shows us that CIAC won the war, as most of members land was returned.

In 2006, the Conservative Government of Stephen Harper announced that farmers had the opportunity to buy back another 11,000 acres.¹² Two years previously, Mirabel had shut its doors to passengers, although cargo traffic continues. Passengers were no longer treated to its system of buses that elevated passengers to their planes. In 2016, the terminals were torn down. CIAC residents look back on the disruptions with despair and anger.¹³ Many people lost their livelihood when their farmland was taken away.

Notwithstanding the Pickering Airport getting cancelled in 1975, this has not stopped the federal government and the Ministry of Transport from periodically attempting to resuscitate the project. The land expropriated was never returned to residents or sold on auction. The rural areas of Pickering are peppered with MOT signs.¹⁴ Every ten years or so, there is another study on

¹¹ Ibid, 143.

¹² Laurin, 61. Tenille Bonoguore, "Mirabel Farmers offered buy-back deal," *Globe and Mail*, December 18th 2006. Accessed June 14th 2018. <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/mirabel-farmers-offered-buy-back-deal/article1111906/>.

¹³ "Mirabel airport terminal, Trudeau's white elephant, to be torn down," *CBC News*, May 1st 2014, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/montreal/mirabel-airport-terminal-trudeau-s-white-elephant-to-be-torn-down-1.2628421>. Interview with Rita Lafond, April 1st 2016.

¹⁴ Land Over Landings "About Us," Accessed June 14th 2018. <http://landoverlandings.com/about-us/> Joy Malbon, "Airport warriors hold victory anniversary," *Globe and Mail*, March 1st 1982. James Rusk, "Pickering Airport takes off again," *Globe and Mail*, November 18th 2004, Author's Private Collection.

passenger projections and comments from MOT that Pearson Airport cannot handle all the traffic in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). POP fulfilled its purpose in 1975 but new residents and former protestors came together to form Land Over Landings (LOL). The successor group has been operating since 2005 and putting pressure on the municipal, provincial and federal government to return all the federal land.¹⁵ In 2013, The Harper government announced that the Pickering Airport was going to be built between 2027-2037. In spite of this announcement, in 2014 more than 10,000 acres were donated by the provincial government and the federal government to be part of the Rouge Valley National Park.¹⁶ The Liberal Government elected in 2015 has commissioned yet another study on the future of the airport. Meanwhile, LOL paid for its own study to turn the Pickering lands into an agricultural and tourist area.¹⁷

The provincial government and the City of Pickering did proceed with the Seaton Community 40 years after the province wanted to push urban development east of Toronto. Urban sprawl has spread across the GTA as millions of immigrants arrived into the GTA in the last few decades. As much as groups like POP pushed for saving farmland years ago, the reality is that in Ontario, a higher proportion of people are living in cities and it is that population and therefore Toronto, continues to grow rapidly.¹⁸ Although the Pickering lands have been preserved from development by expropriation, whose to say whether that would continue, if the

¹⁵ "About Us," Accessed June 14th 2018. <http://landoverlandings.com/about-us/>

¹⁶ "Responsible, balanced approach for the future of the Pickering Lands ends decades of uncertainty: Lands are being committed for an airport, economic development and a national urban park," *Canada NewsWire*, June 11th 2013. Kristen Calis, "Potential airport is Pickering's newsmaker of 2017," *Pickering News Advertiser*, January 4th 2018, Accessed June 14th 2018. <https://www.durhamregion.com/news-story/8032428-potential-airport-is-pickering-s-newsmaker-of-2017/>

¹⁷ Kristen Calis, "Potential airport is Pickering's newsmaker of 2017," *Pickering News Advertiser*, January 4th 2018, Accessed June 14th 2018. <https://www.durhamregion.com/news-story/8032428-potential-airport-is-pickering-s-newsmaker-of-2017/>

¹⁸ Ontario Ministry of Finance, "Ontario Population Projection Updates, 2017-2041," Accessed June 14th 2018, <https://www.fin.gov.on.ca/en/economy/demographics/projections/>. City of Pickering, "Seaton Community," Accessed June 14th 2018. <https://www.pickering.ca/en/city-hall/seatoncommunity.aspx>.

federal government sold the properties.¹⁹ The City of Pickering is in many ways, two cities. The southern part is a sprawling city, while the northern part retains its roots, as a collection of hamlets and little villages. The picturesque concept that LOL advocates is nothing but a distant memory in many parts of the area.²⁰

In Sea Island, the federal government delayed making a decision in August 1976. This delay continued until 1992. The deteriorating economic situation in the 1970s and 1980s made big projects like Sea Island seem expensive. Interest groups continued to be involved with consultations, but the federal government could not satisfy everyone. The federal government commissioned another study by an Environmental Assessment Panel, which was published in 1991. The panel wrote that the public was seriously divided on the runway expansion. Despite the economic arguments that supported the airport, the assessment made it clear that environmental concerns had to limit the impact of the construction.²¹ The panel recommended the construction of a runway with environmental and noise concerns at the center. It was built in 1992. For residents who lived in the communities on Sea Island, there remains resentment towards the federal government, about the runway and more about the possibilities that were lost. If it was going to take that long to build the runway, then another generation of Sea Islanders could have been raised on the land.²²

¹⁹ Edwards, *A Bumpy Landing: Airports and the Making of Jet Age Canada*, 77. The Pickering lands are not included in the Greenbelt. Greenbelt, The Friends of the Greenbelt Foundation. <http://www.greenbelt.ca/maps/>.

²⁰ Land Over Landings, "A Future for the Lands: Economic Impact of Remaining Pickering Federal Lands if Returned to Permanent Agriculture," April 3rd 2018. Accessed June 14th 2018, <http://landoverlandings.com/resources/a-future-for-the-lands-economic-impact-of-remaining-pickering-federal-lands-if-returned-to-permanent-agriculture/>.

²¹ Federal Environment Assessment Review Office, *Vancouver International Airport: Parallel Runway Project: Report of the Environmental Assessment Panel*, (Hull, Québec: Federal Environmental Assessment Review Office, 1991), 5-7.

²² Interview with Eunice Robinson, January 20th 2016.

The three cases studies were vastly different in terms of the scale of the expropriation, the geographic conditions, the role of the provincial government, and the outcomes. Mirabel was built, Pickering was cancelled, and Sea Island was delayed. Yet, in all three cases, citizen groups formed, and pushed back. They crafted media relations strategies, created their own data, used stunts to attract attention, and maneuvered within Canada's political system. The fact that the three groups cooperated and worked together, show that many of the same issues were repeated.²³ Residents felt they were mistreated by politicians and bureaucrats who ignored their complaints. Protest groups felt that national objectives trumped local concerns. There were issues of inequality and injustice as expropriation was applied unevenly across Canada. Pickering and Sea Island had public hearings while Mirabel did not. Pickering had a public inquiry, yet Sea Island had the APC. In all three cases, protestors did manage to get the federal government to respond to some claims. In all three cases, residents received more money for their property and adjustments were made on rent.²⁴ Yet, these cases show that the federal government did yield.

In its efforts to build these airports, the federal government changed the way it consulted with citizens. We move from informal consultation through elected politicians at Mirabel, to hearings and inquiries that allowed citizens to present their cases to the government at Pickering. At Sea Island, the federal government created a formal planning committee in which citizens participated as members of the committee. In all three cases, the government did work with citizens whether that was mandated or not. Protestors were never satisfied, indeed could never have been satisfied with anything short of the federal government cancelling these projects.

²³ Georges Duquet, Charles Godfrey, John Reynolds and Bill Schaeffer "Letter to Jean Marchand," January 18th 1973, LAC MG 32-B46 Volume 81 File 5.

²⁴ Luana Parker, "\$16 million more for Mirabel land called 'candies,' *The Gazette*, November 10th 1973, SHGMI P053 S4 SS1 D64. "Expropriation Offers Upped For Pickering Airport Lands," *Barrie Examiner*, August 14th 1973, CTASC. "Islanders may get more \$ for land," *The Province*, June 17th 1975, VPL Pacific Press Clippings Vancouver International Airport Expansion.

Public servants were visibly frustrated by these processes. Internal letters speak to what public servants saw. Opening up government to the public would only bring more criticism and misinformation. Protestors would only use these occasions to embarrass the government. Interest groups are not neutral arbiters of facts and figures. They had their own motivations just like the politicians and bureaucrats.²⁵ Despite there being many opportunities, there was very little room for compromise. The federal government did consult with citizens and shifted its strategies of dealing with citizens throughout this time. Citizen groups, for the most part, just didn't agree with the final result.

The role of politicians comes into question. Many protestors were negative about politicians and their role in these conflicts. Documents show that local MPs were very aware of their own situation, and the troubles of their own constituents. In the case studies shown, most of the local MPs were federal Liberals. Most of these MPs followed the party line and voted with the government, while privately working to get the best deal for their residents. In all these cases we see MPs fighting for their constituents, and in many instances, being the ones responsible for changes to MOT policy.²⁶ Locals responded in different ways. In some cases, such as Tom Goode, Sea Island residents voted the Liberal out and brought in an opposition MP. In Mirabel, locals continued to support Francis Fox. The Pickering Airport probably did not help Norm Cafik's run for provincial politics in Ontario, as he held onto his seat by only 4 votes into the 1972 election.²⁷ This case shows the importance of local political representation. They have their ear to the ground and know what is going on in the riding. I believe local MPs will continue to

²⁵ O. G. Stoner, "Memorandum to Jean Marchand," April 25th 1973, LAC MG 32-B46 Volume 86 File 3. Desmond G. Allard, "Letter to the Editor," February 22nd 1974, *The Province*, CVA COV-S483 Volume 46-C-1 File 1.

²⁶ Norm Cafik, "Letter to Prime Minister Trudeau," March 20th 1975, LAC MG 32-B46 Volume 89 File 4. Francis Fox, "Letter to Prime Minister Trudeau," November 23rd 1973, LAC MG 2D 07 Volume 440 File 735.13.

²⁷ "Reynolds Motion on Runway Fails," January 19th 1973, *The Province*, LAC MG 32-B46 Volume 90 File 4. "Résultats officiels de l'élection du 8," *L'Argenteuil*, July 17th 1974, SHGMI P053 S4 SS1 D72. Geoffrey Stevens, "'A breath of fresh air,'" *Globe and Mail*, October 5th 1973.

play an important role when various levels of government establish infrastructure projects. Not every project will be reported on, and it will be up to the MP or MPP to inform their leader and caucus about what people are saying.

In the last forty-five years, planning has shifted away from the federal government. The Ministry of Urban Affairs did not last through the Trudeau government, as the provinces did not want the federal government encroaching on any more provincial territory.²⁸ DREE was completely changed by the Mulroney government, but the federal government has not given up on regional development. Notwithstanding the accusations of pork barrelling, federal and provincial governments continue to try and promote economic development in marginal communities across the land.²⁹ Provincial governments also changed how they approached regional development. In the late 20th century with the federal government trying to balance the budget, many provincial governments have downloaded a variety of services onto municipalities. In Ontario, some regions have regional councils with membership consisting of local town councillors, that make planning decisions for the area.³⁰

Because the federal government privatized the management of the airports in the mid 1990s, more research needs to be conducted in how the Local Airport Authorities (LAA) have handled consultation. Did the LAA's consult in a meaningful way as airports continued to expand, or were the citizen shut out of the discussion? What we can say for sure is that airports

²⁸ For the end of MSUA, see Zachary Spicer "The Rise and Fall of the Ministry of State for Urban Affairs," *Canadian Political Science Review*, (Vol 5, No 2, 2011), 124.

²⁹ Donald Savoie, *Regional Economic Development: Canada's Search for Solutions*, 2nd ed. (Canada: University of Toronto Press, 1992), 1-309.

³⁰ White, 364.

will continue to face structural challenges as more people and cargo are moved domestically and internationally, and planners will continue to look ahead for possible expansions.³¹

In many ways, criticisms in the 1960s and 1970s have come 180 degrees. Planning is certainly a local matter now. Citizens can go to townhall meetings and get as close to government as possible.³² It is a lot easier to contact a municipal councillor than a federal cabinet minister. Accessibility is important in planning, but so is having a long-term vision. The most forgotten point in the history of airport planning in Canada, is those original Transport Canada projections that called for dramatic increases in passenger growth.³³ It is true that passenger volume did decline in the 1970s and the early 1980s due to the OPEC Crisis and the downturn in the Canadian economy in the early 1980s. However, passenger growth has increased dramatically in the last forty-five years. In Canada, passenger traffic increased from “56.7 million in 2001 to 133.3 million in 2015.”³⁴ Most of that growth has been at Toronto-Pearson, Montréal-Dorval and Sea-Island-British Columbia.³⁵ The federal government and civil servants

³¹ Edwards, *A Bumpy Landing: Airports and the Making of Jet Age Canada*, 288-289. “Terminal Enhancement Project,” Accessed June 27th 2018, <https://www.torontopearson.com/rethink/#>. Jason Magder, “Montreal’s Trudeau airport to get \$2.5- billion facelift,” *Montreal Gazette*, April 30th 2018, Accessed June 27th 2018. <http://montrealgazette.com/news/local-news/montreals-trudeau-airport-to-get-5-billion-facelift>. Derrick Penner, “YVR accelerates expansion on soaring passenger count that hit 24.1 million in 2017,” *Vancouver Sun*, January 23rd 2018, Accessed June 27th 2018, <http://vancouver.sun.com/news/local-news/embargoed-yvr-accelerates-expansion-on-soaring-passenger-count-that-hit-24-1-million-in-2017>.

³² White, 374.

³³ For Pickering, Government of Canada, *Report of the Airport Inquiry Commission*, (Ottawa: Information Canada, 1974), 49. For Sea Island, O.G. Stoner, “Memorandum to the Minister,” February 28th 1973, LAC MG 32-B46 Volume 89 File 14. For Mirabel’s justification based on growth statistics Ministry of Transport, *Montreal International Airport Technical Information*, October 7th 1968, BaNQ Québec E7 1994-10-010/60.

³⁴ Edwards, *A Bumpy Landing: Airports and the Making of Jet Age Canada*, 29.

³⁵ Ian Robinson and Richard Simeon, “State, Society, and the Development of Canadian Federalism,” Royal Commission on the Economic Union and Development Prospects for Canada, (Canada: Ministry of Supply and Services Canada, 1990), 303. For the impact of stagflation Wayne Simpson, “Discussion Paper No. 161 Wage Structure and Stagflation in the 1970s,” Economic Council of Canada, 1980, Robinson and Simeon, 214 For the OPEC Crisis Peter C. Eglinton, and Russell S. Uhler, “Potential Supply of Crude Oil and Natural Gas Reserves in the Alberta Basin,” Economic Council of Canada, (Ministry of Supply and Services Canada, 1986), 18. Edwards “Breaking New Ground: Montreal-Mirabel International Airport, Mass Aeromobility, and Megaproject Development in 1960s and 1970s Canada,” 27. Statistics Canada, *Aviation in Canada Historical and Statistical*

did not have malicious or criminal intent when they expropriated land for the airports. At the time in the late 1960s, they acted on the best advice possible, based on the facts that were produced. We can debate the quality of those facts and the motivations of politicians, but they are not intentionally trying to hurt citizens. The federal government was trying to act in in the regional and national interest. In the case of building infrastructure in Canada, in most cases, locals will be affected, and their lives will be disrupted. Although these public works can be seen as examples of government failure and insensitive civil servants, instead we should look at the evolution of public consultation.³⁶ The federal government tried to respond to local concerns while keeping the national interest in check. We elect politicians to make decisions for us. Planning something like an airport is not a one term project. Sometimes a government will need to hold the line to see something through. Expropriation is not fair or sensitive to human needs, but it can be necessary. As much as the 'local' has been celebrated, there is something to be said about the iron will of a democratically-elected government. Sometimes, you must be firm to get things finished.

Perspectives on Civil Aviation, (Canada: Ministry of Supply and Services Canada, 1986), 123. Edwards, *A Bumpy Landing: Airports and the Making of Jet Age Canada*, 291-292.

³⁶ Feldman and Milch, 228-229.

Abbreviations

AIC- Airport Inquiry Commission

APC- Airport Planning Commission

BANAIM- Bureau du Amalgamation du Nouvel Airport de Montréal

BAnQ- Bibliothèque et Archives Nationales du Québec

CF- Community Forum

CIAC- Center d'Information et d'Animation Communautaire

CRA- City of Richmond Archives

CTA- City of Toronto Archives

CTASC- Clara Thomas Archives and Special Collections, York University

CVA- City of Vancouver Archives

DOE- Department of the Environment

DPW- Department of Public Works

DREE- Department of Regional Economic Development

GVRD- Greater Vancouver Regional Development

LAC- Library and Archives Canada

LAC-V Library and Archives Canada Vancouver

MOT- Ministry of Transportation

MTRC- Metropolitan Toronto Review Committee

MSUA- Ministry of State for Urban Affairs

OPDQ- Office of Planification et de Développement de Québec

POP- People or Planes

SATRA- Le Service d'Aménagement du Territoire de le Région Aéroportuaire

SHGMI- Société d’histoire et de généalogie des Mille-Îles

SIRA- Sea Island Ratepayers Association

UBCRBSC- University of British Columbia Rare Books and Special Collections

VPL- Vancouver Public Library

List of Figures

Figure 1: Map of Mirabel Expropriation.....	57
Figure 2: Proposed Sites for Second Airport in Greater Toronto Area.....	110
Figure 3: Map of Pickering Airport.....	112
Figure 4: Map of Lower Mainland British Columbia.....	162
Figure 5: Map of Sea Island.....	163

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