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**THE ASSOCIATION FOR
CANADIAN STUDIES IN
AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND:
ITS BEGINNINGS AND EARLY
YEARS**

Introduction

In so far as the material for this paper has involved a subject of research and consideration of the findings of that research, it may be regarded as an academic contribution. At the same time, it is also a very personal paper, as the early years of Canadian Studies in Australia and the Association for Canadian Studies in Australia and New Zealand (ACSANZ) in particular are so closely intertwined with my academic career. The personal always gets in the way of academic objectivity, no matter what some may claim. However, in telling something of the beginnings and

early years of ACSANZ, the personal will be much more in evidence and, for that, I make no apology.

The First Steps

I returned to Australia in 1970 after two years in the Canadian province of Newfoundland and Labrador. With a doctoral thesis to finish, as well as being in possession of other Newfoundland research materials, my research and writing continued to be essentially Canadian. Significant Canadian content was incorporated into my teaching at the then new Macquarie University, especially units concerned with resource and environmental management and regional development. The new and innovative environment that was Macquarie in the early 1970s provided the ideal opportunity in which to continue my Canadian interests; to return to some of my Australian interests from an earlier period; and in particular to develop my growing interest in the comparative study of certain issues in the two countries. We tend to take such comparative studies for granted today, but there were few of them twenty five to thirty years ago. Returning to Australia, I was struck by the many similarities between Australia and Canada. Another factor heightened the awareness. In my first spell in Australia, following migration from England, I had spent a year in Tasmania. As a result, I was able to take the comparisons further than most people.

I was not alone at Macquarie in having an interest in Canada. In 1971, through one of the senior library staff, Mollie Thompson (with the help of Tess Reynolds), Macquarie was one of the first university libraries in Australia to take advantage of the Canadian Government's book donation scheme, donations that stimulated the Library's own purchase of Canadian materials. The early development of a 'Canadian Collection' was an important factor in my introduction, in the late 1970s, of a course on the geography of Canada. For me, this was a means of making use of available resources and indulging my own interests, but in a way that complemented the existing teaching program. In many respects, this unit was the catalyst for the development of Canadian Studies. Some how or other, it came to the notice of Connie Watkin, the Public Affairs Officer in the Canadian Consulate General in Sydney. Connie was a passionate Canadian. In his report on the development of Canadian Studies in the United States, Richard Preston commented that there were two requirements for the successful development of this field of study, a committed academic and a committed bureaucrat in the local Canadian diplomatic post (Preston 1980). If I can lay claim to the former (Foster 1995, 1), then Connie Watkin was certainly the latter. No Canadian diplomatic post has ever had a more committed person.

At this early point in the story, two strands emerged, the first centred at Macquarie and the second at the national level. Connie contributed substantially to both and both owe her a significant debt. Without her contribution, little if anything would have been achieved. Both strands also drew on my knowledge of the developments

taking place in Canadian Studies in Canada, the United Kingdom and other countries and the contacts I had established with some of the people involved.

Developments at Macquarie University

As indicated above, I was not the only one at Macquarie with strong Canadian interests. In the 1970s, a number of units in History, Geography, English and French language literature, and Economics had significant Canadian content. It was possible to put together a substantial program in Canadian Studies, even though it could not be regarded as a major. I must make particular mention of the contributions of George Raudzens, Eric Donachie, Mark MacLeod and John Purcal.

During a period of study leave spent in Canada in 1979, I visited the Academic Relations Division of the Department of External Affairs in Ottawa. The visit followed many discussions with Connie Watkin about the potential for Canadian Studies at Macquarie, building on what had already been done, and, more speculatively, what might be possible beyond Macquarie. I had a lengthy meeting with Joseph Jurkovic and also met Richard Seaborn, the head of the Division. The outcome was a commitment for substantial support for Canadian Studies at Macquarie, in the establishment of the Canadian Visiting Fellowship, supported by the Canadian Government and the University, and further substantial donations to the University's Library. The Macquarie Library also received other donations, including gifts from the Canada Council and the Alberta Government. With over 5,000 volumes, the Library's Canadian collection became second only to that of the National Library. The Canadian Visiting Fellowship attracted a growing number of eminent applicants and appointments (Table 1). The local profile of the position was raised with the introduction of the annual Macquarie Canadian Lecture, the first being given by Peter Waite in 1983 (Waite 1983). Canadian Studies achieved recognition within the University.

One of the main outcomes was that Macquarie became a focal point for Canadian Studies in Australia, with a steady stream of Canadian visitors. Among the academics were Tom Symons, Maurice Careless, Johns Matthews and Tuzo Wilson; writers included Margaret Atwood, Marian Engels and Michael Ondaatje; there were many from the Canadian diplomatic service and federal and provincial bureaucrats; some from the world of business; and others including an elder statesman of the Macquarie clan in Prince Edward Island. They were not only interested in spreading the word about Canada; they were also interested in and informed by the similarities between their own country and Australia.

Developments at the National Level

Let me now turn to the national level and, initially, take a step back in time. As I was to discover through the 1970s, other people — predominantly Canadians — were

making similar findings to my own about Australia and Canada. A few illustrations must suffice. In 1976, J.W. Pickersgill, a Newfoundlander and former Canadian cabinet minister, wrote:

I have become gradually aware, during the past twenty years, that Australia has more in common with Canada than any other country. We are the only two federations with British parliamentary government. Our history under the British crown is roughly equal in length. Though both economies were originally based on farming, and still depend on exports from the farm for much of their national incomes, both are highly urbanised — Australia even more than Canada. There are wide disparities in the developed wealth and the potential of the Australian states, though not as great as among the rich and poor provinces in Canada. Both countries have problems of federal-provincial or federal-state relations. But all this does not make Australia a mirror image of Canada: the differences are almost as illuminating as the similarities. (*The Financial Post*, Toronto, June 26, 1976)

Three years later, a former Canadian High Commissioner to Australia observed that 'No two countries have in common more interests of a fundamental nature than Australia and Canada'. (Beesley 1979) At about the same time I discovered a paper entitled 'Australia and Canada: a comparison of resources' written in 1954 by Griffith Taylor, the eminent Australian geographer who was hounded out of this country but who went on to found the geography departments at Chicago and Toronto universities. (Sanderson 1988) Of course, the links between the two countries and their peoples go back much further to the early years of European settlement in Australia. James Cook honed his navigation and mapping skills in the St. Lawrence and around Newfoundland between 1762 and 1767 (Whiteley 1975), a number of his remarkable maps of parts of Newfoundland being in the National Library of Australia. Many of the links — in terms of the activities of Canadians in Australia, including the 1840 Exiles — have been documented through the research of Jim Bennett. (Bennett and Fry 1995; see also Donaghy 1995)

Coming closer to our own times, there were a number of efforts to stimulate contacts between the two countries and an interest in Canada, especially by the Canadian Government and its diplomatic posts in Australia. For example, as indicated earlier, donations of Canadian books were made to a number of university libraries; there was support for lecture tours by visiting Canadian academics; and there was particular interest in fostering Canadian links with the Centre for Federal Financial Relations at the Australian National University. Also important in publicising Canada was the Sydney office and film library of the National Film Board of Canada, managed for a number of years by Tom Bindon, a Newfoundlander, until it was closed in the early 1980s.

In parallel with the Macquarie developments, discussions with Connie Watkin stimulated the search for other academics with Canadian interests, beyond those that were known to us. Ken Wiltshire of the Department of Politics at the University of Queensland was brought into the discussions regarding the possibility of forming an interdisciplinary association for Canadian Studies in Australia. In 1980, we sent a letter regarding our proposal to all the people we could find who might have an interest in Canadian affairs. The results were sufficiently positive — a 30% response — to justify the decision in late 1980 to form the Australian Association for Canadian Studies (AACS).

Developments at the International Level

The timing of the formation of the AACS was fortuitous. In 1981, I went to Halifax for the meeting of the Association for Canadian Studies (ACS), held at Dalhousie University. Also present were representatives from Canadian Studies associations in a number of other countries. As part of the meeting, there was an International Workshop with the theme 'Ways of Seeing' (drawing its inspiration from the report, 'To Know Ourselves' [Symons 1975]), and a meeting of representatives of the various associations. I was there on the strength of a new name, an intention to hold a first conference, and — most importantly — a bank account for the new association! The result was the formation on June 1, 1981, of the International Council for Canadian Studies (ICCS), in which the AACS played a significant role as one of the eight founding members. The ICCS was sponsored by James Page, then President of ACS, and Gerald Rutan, then President of the Association for Canadian Studies in the United States (ACSUS). The other founding member associations were France, the German-speaking countries, Italy, Japan, and the United Kingdom. In addition, there were representatives present from Denmark and Ireland.

For Canadian Studies, these were exciting times. I was privileged to be a member of the first ICCS Executive Committee. Australia continued to play an important role in the evolution of the Council in its early years, especially because our membership base involved more than one country and our emphasis was on comparative studies rather than Canada per se. Strange as it may now seem, there were real concerns to avoid a global proliferation of national Canadian Studies organisations. In the following years, developmental meetings were held in Vancouver, again in association with the ACS meeting, and in Grainau, in the Bavarian Alps, in association with the meeting of the Association for Canadian Studies in German-Speaking Countries.

The First Australian Canadian Studies Conference: Macquarie University, 1982

Whilst AACS had gained official recognition in Halifax, it was at its first conference when the Association really came into being. The theme of the conference was 'Theory and Practice in Comparative Studies: Canada and Australia'. The support of Canadian Government was critical, not only in terms of funds, but in other ways, especially the personal interest and presence of the High Commissioner, Ray Anderson, and a number of his colleagues. Ray Anderson was a fine ambassador and a source of considerable support for the new Association. Other support, from Macquarie University and a number of sponsors, was limited but nonetheless important. We did not expect a large number, but more than 60 registered and some 30 papers were presented on a wide range of topics, most of which were later published in the conference proceedings (Crabb 1983a). The Association was formally established; among other things, an Executive Committee was elected, it was agreed to publish a regular Newsletter, and, with the presence of a number of people from across the Tasman, the name was changed to the Australia and New Zealand Association for Canadian Studies. Many people met for the first time at the Conference and important personal and professional contacts were made, many of which have stood the test of time. The gathering ended the isolation in which many Canadianists had been working.

It is interesting to look through the names of those who participated in this first conference. Over the following years, many made important contributions to the development of the Association. At this point, I will mention the names of only two people, Grahame Jones, Professor of French at the University of New England, and Hector Kinloch, Reader in History at the Australian National University, who are no longer with us. Gentlemen and eminent scholars in their fields, I not only acknowledge their contributions but also express my gratitude that I was able to know them through this strange being called Canadian Studies. Both left us much too soon.

Significant Developments

While Macquarie may have been the key place for Canadian Studies in Australia, it was by no means alone (see Crabb 1983b). There were important initiatives at La Trobe, Griffith, New England, Queensland, Western Australia, Tasmania, and Canterbury. At La Trobe, a Research Group for Australian-Canadian Studies was formed. In terms of the history of the Association, the most important initiative of

Gordon Ternowetsky and his colleagues was the independent foundation of the journal, *Australian-Canadian Studies*: an interdisciplinary social sciences review.

These early days were not without their difficulties, especially as some people tried to jump on 'the Canadian Studies band wagon'. Also, there were times when I had great difficulty in educating colleagues about how to work with members of the Canadian diplomatic service. Whilst the developments outlined thus far were the visible manifestations of the progress of Canadian Studies in Australia, there were others. Not least, there was great support from many people, especially in Canada and the United States. Special mention must be made of Tom Symons and Jim Page, to whom Canadian Studies everywhere owes so much. (Cameron 1996) There were a number of other proposals for Canadian Visiting Fellowships, but the Canadian Government made it clear that what it wanted to see was Australians and New Zealanders undertaking research and teaching on Canada.

During my visit to Canada in 1981, I again went to Ottawa, this time for a meeting with Richard Seaborn, who was in charge of Academic Relations in the Department of External Affairs. This was a critical meeting. Dick's task was the advancement of the cause of Canada through the development of Canadian Studies. Our discussion centred around what was to be defined as 'Canadian Studies' in Australia and New Zealand. My case was that, except for a few individuals (including Grahame Jones and Don Beer at New England), there was only limited interest in Canada in terms of research and even less in terms of teaching. However, there was considerable interest and real potential in comparative studies involving Canada and Australia, as a growing number of academics were demonstrating. Drawing support from the 1975 Symons Report, I pointed out that comparative studies would not only enable Australians to learn about Canada, they would also provide Canadians with new insights into their own country. I told Dick that Canadian Studies in Australia was unlikely to be more than 50 per cent Canadian content. In taking an honest but somewhat uncompromising position, I took a risk. Dick was an extremely tough negotiator, and that could have been the end of Canadian Studies in Australia! However, Dick was not only tough, he was extremely fair and he listened. Would that there were more negotiators like him. I am glad to say that my arguments won him over. I had, and still have, the utmost respect for Dick.

Without that agreement on the definition of Canadian Studies, much of what followed in Australia and New Zealand would not have been possible. It was critical for the new Association, the Faculty Enrichment Awards, and the later Bicentennial Awards and the Faculty Research Awards, as well as other Canadian government programs. The importance of the acceptance of comparative studies later extended well beyond Australia and New Zealand. The purpose of the Faculty Enrichment Awards, extended to Australia and New Zealand in 1983, was to develop teaching about Canada, with a 'Canadian course' being one with a minimum 50 % Canadian content. I am sure such courses have fulfilled their purposes, both in the eyes of the Australian and New Zealand academics and their Canadian supporters.

Further assistance with travel to Canada was provided by the establishment of the CP Air Canadian Studies Awards in 1983, very largely through the activities of Connie Watkin and her contacts with Mrs Kay Staley of CP Air in Vancouver. Later known as the Canadian Airlines International Awards, they required the same standards for application and assessment as other academic research awards. Unfortunately, the awards were a victim of Canadian's financial difficulties and the elimination of their own flights to Australia, but to those who received them they were invaluable.

There was continued support for university libraries from the Canadian Government. University libraries added to their own Canadian collections. For a short time, there was similar support from the Alberta Government. It also provided some financial support to ACSANZ. Within Australia, the National Library gave increased publicity to its Canadian collection through the publication of a number of Current Awareness Bulletins by the Area Studies Section.

The 1984 and 1986 Conferences

The Association's second conference was held at the University of Canterbury in Christchurch, New Zealand, in 1984. With the theme 'Regionalism and National Identity', it was organised by Reg Berry and James Acheson. The location proved a significant attraction and over 120 people attended. It was a good conference with a high standard of presentations, as evident in the volume of proceedings (Berry and Acheson 1985).

At Christchurch, another name change for the Association was formally adopted. The acronym of our second name, ANZACS, is well known in Australia and New Zealand. What is not so well known is that its use is closely guarded by law and, unknowingly, we had broken that law. That was why the name became the rather more clumsy Association for Canadian Studies in Australia and New Zealand (ACSANZ).

The third conference was held in 1986 at Griffith University in Brisbane, Queensland, with the theme 'The Search for New Futures: issues and debates in science, technology, cultural studies, social and economic policy'. The very well organised conference — thanks to Gillian Whitlock, Malcolm Alexander and their colleagues — attracted an attendance of over 150. For the plenary sessions, there were a number of high profile speakers from both Australia and Canada, including Stuart Smith, W.H. New, Wallace Clement, Arthur Kroker, Colin Campbell, Barry Jones (then Australian Minister for Science and Technology), and Ed Schreyer (then Canadian High Commissioner to Australia). There was the largest gathering ever in Australia of Canadian writers, including Robert Kroetsch, Daphne Marlatt, Nicole Brossard, George Bowering, Betsy Warland, Doug Barbour and Constance Rooke.

At the conference, the Association agreed to take over responsibility for the journal, *Australian-Canadian Studies*, and Gillian Whitlock and Malcolm Alexander became the editors. Recognition of the full scope of the Association's interests was provided by a change to the journal's sub-title, namely 'A Journal for the Humanities and Social Sciences'. Building on the pioneering work of the LaTrobe group, Gillian

and Malcolm did much to establish the journal as a quality publication. Many of the papers from the Griffith conference were published in subsequent issues of *Australian-Canadian Studies*, while others appeared in a volume entitled *Comparative Political Studies: Australia and Canada* (Alexander and Galligan 1992).

A most appreciated feature of the conference was the presentation of the first life membership of ACSANZ to Connie Watkin and the second to myself.

The Evolving Nature of ACSANZ

Thus far, I have mentioned only a few names and where I have done so, it has been in relation to specific events. However, many others were involved in the early years of the Association and, though I risk of omitting names, at least some should be mentioned.

Having started the Association and been its first President, I was determined to step aside. I had seen too many people hang on to positions, to the detriment of themselves and the organisations with which they were involved (Foster 1995, 4). That is why the Constitution states that a President can serve no more than two terms. Though I acknowledge this can at times result in a loss of continuity, I believe the wisdom of the decision has been more than proved, with a significant number of people having been involved in the management of ACSANZ and a constant flow of new ideas. Among the many who played important parts in the early years, as well as those mentioned before, were Brian Galligan (the second President), Reg Berry (the third President), Lois Foster, Bruce Davis, Alan Lawson, and Lynette Wallace, who did so much work as the first Secretary-Treasurer.

ACSANZ played an important role in stimulating other activities, both directly and indirectly. Only a few illustrations can be provided. Periodic seminars were held in Sydney, bringing together people from the then three universities, the Canadian Consulate, and other organisations, an activity in which Deryck Schreuder played an active role. In various ways, there was support for research, such as the joint Australian-Canadian geography conference held in Vancouver, and for publications, including *Public Policies in Two Federal Countries: Canada and Australia* (Mathews 1982). Through the endeavours of Grahame Jones and in recognition of his work on French-Canadian literature, a Québec Studies Centre was established at the University of New England. The quality of the comparative research being undertaken by Australian academics (as well as some purely Canadian work) was recognised by grants made available by funding bodies such as the Australian Research Council and the Australian Water Research Advisory Council.

Some Benefits That Have Come Through ACSANZ and Canadian Studies

The purpose of Canadian Government support of Canadian Studies in other countries has been stated to be 'the development of knowledgeable and sympathetic understanding of Canada'. This has been, and continues to be, achieved. So has much more. There is no doubt about the economic returns on the money invested in Canadian Studies. One study indicated that for every dollar spent on Canadian Studies in the United States, seven or eight were spent in Canada (a more recent study has put the figure at around fifteen). The figure for Australia would be no less.

I have already stressed the importance of comparative studies and indicated some of the benefits that can come from such work. Drawing on the words of Symons (1975), in seeking to know Canada and Canadians, we are not only able to inform and enlighten Canadians, we also have a unique and expanding opportunity to learn more about Australia and Australians. In my own research over recent years, I have been able to put Canadian resource managers in touch with each other and especially with colleagues in Australia, to their mutual benefit. Some time earlier, members of a Nova Scotia trade delegation to Australia visited Macquarie. I had previously met one of the group in Halifax, James McNiven, the Province's Deputy Minister of Development. I told him that visiting New South Wales and Victoria was fine, but given where he came from, the one place he should visit was Tasmania. There he really would find people grappling with similar issues to those confronting Nova Scotia and the other Atlantic Provinces. Initially, he said his schedule was already too crowded, but I kept on and he did make a short trip to Hobart. When he returned to Halifax he wrote to tell me that it was the most valuable part of his visit to Australia. Helping to make such connections has been a real reward. So, too, was playing a role in the establishment and then the adjudication of the Canada-Australia Bicentennial Institutional Research Awards (CABIRA), part of Canada's gift to Australia on the occasion of its Bicentennial in 1988. That a \$25,000 award for Australian-based work on Canada was made available for each of five years (and in some years, more than one award was made) was recognition of the quality of Australian research and its value to Canada.

Some of the other benefits, both tangible and intangible are discussed below.

The Future

Two issues continue to confront ACSANZ and individual Australian and New Zealand academics working on comparative studies of Canada and their own country. They are issues that have been there from the start.

First, whilst I believe there is no doubt about the benefits of comparative study, it involves great difficulties. There is the particular problem of the need to be an authority on an issue (or whatever) in two countries. This is compounded by the fact that they are so far apart — the long haul across the Pacific is a major deterrent, and

not just in terms of the cost of the air ticket. And if your area of interest is 'down east', then the situation is even worse! No matter how good your contacts and sources, when you are not there, there is always that nagging feeling that you may have missed something, especially when working in such constantly changing fields as geography, economics and politics. This why regular visits to Canada are essential, together with the support for such visits and the time to write up work following visits.

My second issue is, I believe, more important. I have a continuing concern about the great over-dependence of Canadian Studies activities in this country on funding from the Canadian Government. What I have outlined provides a clear indication of the extent and size of the funding. Other sources are few in number and their contributions limited. The one exception is the universities, certainly prior to the savage funding cuts that have been inflicted upon them. Our universities have provided generous support, a number particularly so, in terms of teaching, libraries, and support for research and conferences. There has also been some Australian research funding, while many Australian academics have been generous in funding their own work.

The imbalance in funding sources was something I tried to change when I was actively involved in the Association, but regrettably with little success. I tried to get Australian Government support: after all, if Canada benefits from we Australians going to Canada, then surely Australia benefits from Canadians coming here. I had no success, in spite of gaining the support of Senator Doug McClelland in 1984 when he was President of the Senate. The chances of any support now must be rated as zero.

The other potential source is the business sector. There has been small support for particular things, such as the conferences (mainly from the airlines) and the initial support that Gordon Ternowetsky put together for Australian-Canadian Studies. In the early 1980s, contacts were made with people in the business world, including a function hosted by the Canadian Consulate General in Sydney and Macquarie University. Discussions regarding business support were held over the period 1982 to 1984 with Canadian diplomatic staff and with representatives of a few Canadian companies operating in Australia. The objective was the establishment of a fund that would support all Canadian Studies activities in this country. There was strong encouragement — and gentle pressure — to set up such a fund from the Department of External Affairs. A meeting at the Sydney Consulate in 1983 was a tough one and its lack of success was due at least in part to inexperience in negotiating with such people. (Crabb 1985) The idea of a fund was not rejected, especially in terms of a single source of corporate support for all Canadian Studies activities, but there was no active support.

A model for such a fund exists in the Foundation for Canadian Studies in the United Kingdom. It receives one-third of its support from British companies operating in Canada, one-third from Canadian companies operating in Britain, and one-third from the Canadian Government. The Fund is the prime source for all Canadian Studies activities in the United Kingdom. There is a significant Canadian

business sector in Australia (for example, see Berry 1997), and the Australian presence is evident in Canada. As a start, it might help to contact the funds in the United Kingdom and the United States to discover how and why they are successful. By now, there may also be a little more local expertise in negotiating with the business sector. To gain the support of private businesses, we have to be able to convince them that we can make a contribution that will benefit them, quite apart from any publicity they may receive. We also need to place our emphasis on areas that are of interest and meaning to potential donors, for example, economics, political and constitutional issues, resource and environmental management, especially in terms of the benefits to be gained from comparative studies. We need to tell them why they should support our activities (Table 2).

Conclusion

Canadian Studies and ACSANZ are, I believe, strong. The Centre for Canadian Studies at the University of Western Sydney and the publication last year of the papers from the La Trobe conference are two indications of this strength (Burridge et al. 1997). Whilst some of the early initiatives have not survived and others may be terminated, the Association must continue to encourage research and teaching by Australians and New Zealanders about Canada and the comparative study of our two countries. At the same time, it must search for new initiatives and seek to re-allocate limited and perhaps declining funds to their best use. The future should not be more of the same, no matter how comforting that might be. The nature of the relevance of the Association will change and part of that change may involve the search for what it and its members can do for potential benefactors. I believe that ACSANZ must be seen as an organisation that makes a real contribution to Australian/New Zealand-Canadian relations.

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Year	Visitor	Home University	Discipline
1981	Rowland Lorimer	Simon Fraser	Communications
1982	Eric Ross	Mount Allison	Geography
1983	Peter Waite	Dalhousie	History
1984	Doug Killam	Guelph	English
1985	Bruce Hodgins	Trent	History
1986	Peta Tancred-Sheriff	McMaster	Sociology
1987	Brad Morse	Ottawa	Law
1988	James Dean	Simon Fraser	Economics
1989	Leslie Monkman	Queen's	English

Table 1 Canadian Visiting Fellows at Macquarie, 1981-1989

1	To contribute towards greater understanding and respect between Australians and Canadians.
2	To offer an opportunity to corporations to contribute towards the broadening and enriching of the academic experience of young Australians.
3	To demonstrate visibly the serious responsibility flowing from corporate citizenship in Australia.
4	To enhance the awareness throughout Australia of your corporate name and image.
5	To support the exchange of academics between Australia and Canada with a view to broadening the base of knowledge and understanding between the nationals of both countries.
6	To expand the publication of material for distribution throughout Australia on the similarities between our two countries and the opportunities available to deepen intellectual, business and economic ties.

Table 2 Some suggested reasons why Canadian companies operating in Australia should support Canadian Studies (Crabb 1985)

MAUREEN BAKER & DAVID TIPPIN

FIGHTING 'CHILD POVERTY': THE DISCOURSE OF RESTRUCTURING IN CANADA AND AUSTRALIA

Abstract

Neoliberal governments in Canada, and to a lesser extent in Australia, have used the concept of fighting 'child poverty' to justify targeting social benefits to low-income families. Social democratic groups have also embraced this concept, as few people would argue that children are 'undeserving' even in a political environment emphasising economic rationalism and individual responsibility. In both countries, the Prime Ministers vowed to seek to eliminate child poverty within a decade, yet this goal is unlikely to be achieved within the foreseeable future. This paper compares the discourse of restructuring social programs for families with children with actual program reform in Canada and Australia. We illustrate how the distinction between the undeserving and deserving poor has been emphasised in determining who will receive social benefits, at the same time that insecurity in the paid labour market is increasing. The changing nature of 'dependency', as influenced by the concept of child poverty, is also explored.