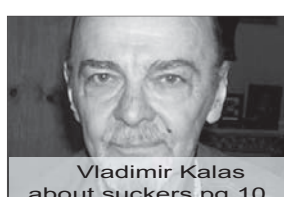




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# NOVÝ DOMOV



THE NEW HOMELAND

Pravda vítězí!



CZECH AND SLOVAK BI-WEEKLY NEWSPAPER [www.novydomov.com](http://www.novydomov.com)

## Food bank saves tonnes of food for those in need

The Czech food bank, operating since 2006, annually saves almost 250 tonnes of foodstuffs worth some 15 million crowns that would otherwise be disposed of, the weekly Respekt writes in its latest issue out on Monday.

The current two food bank branches, in Prague and Ostrava, north Moravia, take over food products the guarantee period of which would soon expire from giant supermarkets, mainly cans, butter, packed bread, meat and dairy products as well as coffee, tea, juices, fruit and vegetable, and offer them to various clients. Among them are asylum homes for mothers with children, homes for the elderly and homeless, hospitals and children's homes, Respekt writes.

The food bank must only see to that the recipients get foodstuff that is not unwholesome and that meets all hygiene restrictions.

The food banks in Prague and Ostrava have only one van and two permanent employees each. Their annual budget is some 800,000 crowns. The major donors are private persons, Respekt writes.

The worldwide project of food banks was introduced in the Czech Republic four years ago by Ilja Hradecký, from the Nadeje (Hope) charity organisation, and French journalist Fabrice Martin-

Plichta.

Martin-Plichta recalls in Respekt that he was inspired by social unrest in the neighbouring Slovakia in 2004 when hundreds of local Romanians from poor settlements were looting food stores after drastic cuts in their social benefits.

"All of a sudden I could see hungry people in the middle of the 21st-century welfare," he told Respekt.

Martin-Plichta then got in touch with Hradecký and his charity organisation and they jointly launched the Czech Federation of Food Banks within the world network.

"People in need and the poor are all over the world and food is being wasted as well," Martin-Plichta added.

The original idea of a food bank was born in the United States in 1967. At present food banks are operating not only overseas but also in many European countries, such as in Belgium, France, Italy and Spain as well as in Hungary and Poland out of the post-communist countries, Respekt writes.

Martin-Plichta told Respekt that he hopes the project would expand in the Czech Republic and that food banks would be working in every region in the future.

Source: Respekt, ČTK, April 14, 2010

## Prague gets a farmer's market

There is nothing like buying fresh produce on an open-air farmers' market – but what may be common in other European cities has been missing in the Czech capital for years. Now things have finally changed. The very first farmers' market was held in the district of Dejvice in March and immediately attracted some fifteen thousand people. On Saturday, the stalls opened for the second time. Saturday morning was drizzly and cold, but the farmers' market in Dejvice was crowded with people eager to buy fresh home-made products. Shoppers waited in long queues in front of the stalls with vegetables, fruit, sausages and flowers. The market is organized by the Prague Town Hall along with Gurmán Association, which selects the farmers who put their goods up for sale and guarantees the quality of the products. Judging by the number of people who came on Saturday, a farmers' market is something Czechs were really waiting for. Prague finally gets a farmer's market. Source: Ruth Franková, April 13, 2010 <http://www.radio.cz/en/article/126902>, (Story shortened by editor)

There are 27 Czech political parties running in May's general elections. Only a few of them have a realistic prospect of entering the lower house of Parliament, but they all drew numbers on Tuesday to put on their ballots. With the elections approaching, Czech expats around the world who want to cast their vote only have until this Saturday to register.

The party favoured by most polls, the Social Democrats, drew the number 9. Their biggest rivals, the liberal-conservative Civic Democrats, will run with number 26. Other parties that are likely to cross the five-percent threshold to enter the Chamber of Deputies include the Communists, number 6; the conservative TOP 09, number 15; the Christian Democrats, number 17; the Greens, with number 20; and a new party called Public Affairs, number 4.

One of the more bizarre political groups, called "Jesus is Our Lord", will run under number 3. The party is running in just one of the 14 constituencies and the only candidate has reportedly stepped down, so the Jesus party might face some problems there. A right-wing, anti-communist grouping known as Pravý blok, or the Right Block, whose official name has 225 words, got number 18. Number 1 went to a marginal liberal group občané.cz, or citizens.cz; the lucky number 7 to the monarchist Bohemian Crown. And a new party formed around the former PM and ex-Social Democrat leader Miloš Zeman, called Citizens' Rights Party, got the unlucky 13 – but some polls in fact suggest they might in fact get in with just over five percent. Czech citizens abroad have of course a chance to cast their ballots for one of the parties as well. Polling stations will be set up at most Czech embassies and

## CZECH PARTIES GET NUMBERS TO RUN WITH IN MAY'S ELECTIONS

By Jan Richter

Consulates General around the world. Deputy Foreign Minister Hynek Kmoníček says that there are two ways Czech expats can take part in the elections – but they only have until Saturday to register. "One of them is that you are included in the voters' lists which are already open at places where Czech citizens can vote abroad. These lists will close on April 18. The other option is that you get a voter's pass which says that you were excluded from the voters' list at your place of residence. With this voter's pass, you can walk in and vote at any polling station, irrespective whether it's in the Czech Republic or abroad, at one of the Czech embassies and Consulates General." In the Czech Republic, polling stations will open on Friday, May

28 at 2 PM, and close at 10 PM the next day. However, the polls at Czech embassies and consulates in the Americas will open and close one day in advance because of the time shift. Czech expats' votes from around the world will then be added to one of the Czech constituencies.

In the previous elections, the votes were incorporated into the South Bohemian region – so where will they go this time? "Surprisingly, it will be the very same region – South Bohemia. It was [decided in] a lottery, and the South Bohemia region won again, so that's where voters from outside the country will be counted in."

More information about voting abroad in the upcoming elections can be found – only in Czech – at the Foreign Ministry's website [www.mzv.cz](http://www.mzv.cz).

Source: April 13, 2010, <http://www.radio.cz/en/article/126885>

## THANK YOU, RADKA

Yesterday I received hard copies of Nový Domov, The New Homeland (March 11, 2010) with the article about my grandfather. Vera very graciously sent them to me. I immediately felt very proud of my grandfather. But a little later, I realized that I owe you my deep appreciation for all your help. If you had not taken an interest, Edward would not have added his own research, and Vera would not have agreed to publish it. You were instrumental in all of this. I sincerely thank you. By the way, I e-mailed copies of this article to my 2 children: Daniella in Bochum, Germany, and Lee who lives nearby to us. Also, I e-mailed copies to each of my brother's children, Sarah and Matthew who live in Oregon, and Geoffrey who lives in Bangkok, Thailand. Each of them responded with enthusiastic appreciation for this new

information about their great-grandfather. Geoffrey, who is a teacher in Thailand, printed the article and put it on his classroom door for his students and colleagues to read. I have also showed my close friends the diary and the photo. All of them have marvelled at my good fortune to have such an interesting family history with original documents from over 100 years ago, still in good condition. So, I once again thank you for your help in this project. You inspired me to put this story in writing. On behalf of my family, I extend my deep appreciation to you. Best wishes to you, Jaromir, and Martin. Larry

Larry Svoboda (who sent us the story about grandpa) wrote about himself: I was born in 1946 here in California where I grew up and have lived most of my life. My father was born in Prague in 1917 and came to the US in 1939. My mother was a first generation American whose parents were from Russia. My wife and I have 2 children, Lee who is 30 and is married but has no children. Our daughter, Daniella, is 35, married and just gave birth to a boy whom you see in the photo I sent to you. Justus and his American parents are currently living in Germany.



Laurence with grandson

# SECOND TRIP TO HOUSTON

Written for

New Homeland By Justin Pouzar

**EXCLUSIVE**

130 was my second trip to Houston where I was providing support for the Canadarm in the NASA Mission Control Center at Johnson Space Center. It was another very exciting and humbling experience as I was surrounded by history and the enormous effort it takes to launch and operate a Space Shuttle. The control centre was very happy with the success, but the mood was also quite subdued as this will be one of the last launches of the Shuttle program, which will be retired in September 2010. Throughout the mission, I was mostly responsible



Space Shuttle Endeavour

for analyzing Canadarm data to assure that the arm was working properly, at normal temperatures and not damaged from debris strikes. Next is a summary of each Flight Day with emphasis on the Canadarm operations. After a 24 hour delay in the start of STS-130 due to low cloud cover at KSC, the Space Shuttle Endeavour successfully completed the last planned night launch of the Shuttle Program on Monday, February 8 at 4:14 EST. The crew aboard Endeavour includes Commander George Zamka and Pilot Terry Virts. Joining them are spacewalkers Nicholas Patrick and Robert Behnken, and mission specialists Stephen Robinson and Kathryn Hire.

The primary goals of Endeavour's flight are to bring Node3 (Tranquility) and the Cupola to the ISS. Tranquility will be the final node to be installed on the ISS and will support air revitalization, oxygen generation, urine and water processing, and crew exercise

equipment (COLBERT).

The Cupola is a panoramic dome that will house one of the International Space Station (ISS) Robotic Workstations and provide Crew views for ISS and Earth Observation.

Approximately three hours after launch, the Canadarm power up and checkout was completed, confirming that the Canadarm was ready for on-orbit operations. During this checkout, we were looking closely at the data to make sure everything was working properly.

Early in the morning of Flight Day 2 (pict. #2), the Canadarm removed the 50' Extension Boom from the starboard side of the payload bay to perform a seven hour inspection of the Space Shuttle's wings and tiles. Video imagery collected during this inspection

was downlinked to ground for engineering analysis to ensure that there is no need to repair the wings or tiles while docked to the Space Station. The Extension Boom was then returned back into the Shuttle payload bay after successfully completing the inspection routine.

Endeavour (picture #3) successfully docked with the ISS just before midnight on Flight Day 3 (Tuesday). After the Shuttle crew was welcomed to the ISS, robotics operations continued. The Canadarm then removed the Extension Boom and maneuvered it to a position where it can view the following days Spacewalks.

There were three Spacewalks (pict. #4) during the Shuttle mission. The first was on Flight Day 5, when the Spacewalkers prepared Tranquility Node for installation onto the ISS. Following the Spacewalk, the Tranquility Node was installed onto the ISS using Canadarm2, which is permanently located on the ISS.



Spacewalker Outfitting the Cupola with SSRMS, SRMS and OBSS in the Background

Flight Day 6 (Friday night/Saturday morning) consisted of working on the Cupola. The crew also prepared for the second spacewalk of the mission.

The second spacewalk was conducted on Flight Day 7 (Saturday night/Sunday morning) as the spacewalkers installed hardware necessary for the operation of Tranquility such as ammonia lines and thermal insulation.

During Flight Day 8 (Sunday night/Monday morning), the Canadarm 2 grappled the Cupola and relocated it to its permanent home on the port of Tranquility that faces the earth.

On Flight Day 9 (Monday night/Tuesday morning), the crew was able to enjoy some well deserved off duty time.

Flight Day 10 (Tuesday night/Wednesday morning) saw the crew complete the third and final Spacewalk of STS-130 (picture below). This Spacewalk was again completed by spacewalkers Nicholas Patrick and Robert Behnken. The primary focus of the Spacewalk was the external outfitting of the newly installed Cupola, which included the removal of insulation covers. Once completed, the crew was able to get their first great views out of the station's new large windows.

Flight Day 11 (Wednesday night/Thursday morning) was a pretty quiet day for the crew. The crew maneuvered the Canadarm and the Extension Boom in preparation of the undocking from the ISS on Flight Day 12.

Flight Day 12 (Thursday night/Friday morning) was the final docked day to the ISS. The crew said their farewells and closed the hatch at the end of the day and the Shuttle separated from the ISS.

On Flight Day 13 (Friday night/Saturday morning), the standard late inspection was performed with the Canadarm and Extension Boom of the wings and thermal tiles to ensure the Shuttle is safe for re-entry.

The Extension Boom was stored back into the Shuttle payload bay and on Flight Day 14 (Saturday night/Sunday morning) the Canadarm was powered down and stowed in the payload bay as well.

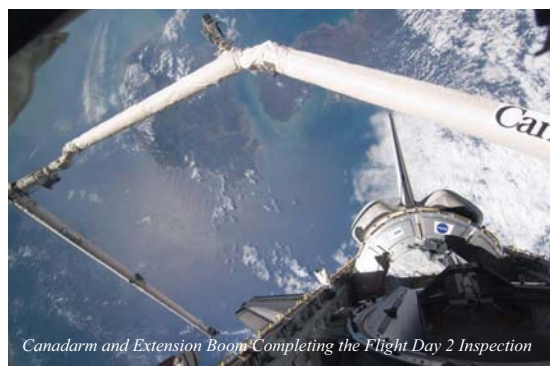
STS-130/20A has concluded as safely and smoothly as it began, with a perfect deorbit and landing of Endeavor at Kennedy Space Center at 10:20 pm on Sunday (Flight Day 15). This marks the conclusion of the 130th Shuttle flight.

We thank Justin Pouzar for a most fascinating report from outer space, written exclusively for us.

On behalf of all those who enjoyed reading it.



Launch of STS-130 Endeavour - picture taken 115 miles north of the launch site (near Ponte Vedra, Florida)



Canadarm and Extension Boom Completing the Flight Day 2 Inspection



Endeavour on Approach to ISS with a Sunset Backdrop



Dexter (SPDM) "Guarding" the ISS. Dexter is a dexterous robot manufactured by MDA with two "arms" that is permanently located on the ISS and will perform repair and construction operations on the ISS.



Enjoying the View from the Cupola



Sarah Hauer is one of twenty two girls attending the contest of Miss Czech and Slovak Canada. The final is in June. She was born in Canada to Czech parents. What kind of young lady is Sarah? We'll try to answer this question thru an interview.

I was born and raised in Toronto, Ontario.

My mom was born in Prague and my father was born in Karlovy Vary. I have visited the Czech Republic many times throughout my life and I hope to visit again soon.

**What is your favourite city in Czech Republic?**

I would definitely have to say Prague because of its rich historical background and the architectural beauty in the city.

**What is the most important things in your persons life?**

The most important things in a persons life is family, health, education, and happiness. Having my family around is beneficial because they are my guidance, my support, and they give me unconditional love. Being healthy is a part of my lifestyle and it is easily achieved with a balanced diet and regular exercise. Attending college or university provides students with knowledge and experience. Education is the gateway to a better life and more opportunity. Most importantly, nothing is truly complete without happiness.

**Do you have time for hobbies?**

My hobbies include reading, swimming, and spending time with friends and family. During the day I attend school and I normally spend my weekdays doing school work.

**What do you most like to do in your free time?**

I love being outside. I most like to walk around downtown Toronto with friends and visit local restaurants and vintage boutiques.

**What are you studying in college?**  
I am currently enrolled in the Law Clerk program at Humber College. The subject of law has always intrigued me and the career opportunities in the legal field are endless.

**Would you like to travel to other countries? If so, which ones?**

I love to travel the world and see new places, people, and cultures. My favourite places have been Czech Republic, Mexico, and Florida. I would most like to go to Hawaii, France, or Japan.

**Who is your role model? Why?**  
I do not have a particular role model but I very much admire my parents and my sister. They inspire me to make the right decisions in life and they are always there to stand by me.

**Why did you enter the Miss Czech Slovak Canada 2010 pageant?**

Like many other young ladies, I always had the desire to compete in a pageant after watching them on television. I

was really inspired by the, Miss Universe 2005, pageant when Miss Canada, Natalie Glebova, took the reign. She is a very ac-

dependent on them?

My parents mean everything to me and I am very glad to have them close to me. Since I am

extra income.

**What are you grateful to your parents for?**

I am grateful for my life and

complished young woman and I soon hope to be Miss Czech Canada 2010.

**You still live with your parents, isn't it bothersome to be**

currently in college, it would only be beneficial for me to stay with my parents so that I am able to focus solely on my studies. I also do freelance modeling for

everything my parents have taught me. My parents have always influenced me to be polite, respectable, and level-headed. I thank my parents for teaching me



The last time I visited CR was in 2005, I was truly taken back by the beauty of the city and country sides. CR is the most interesting and mesmerizing place I've ever seen. I decided to go with my father to visit my grandmother, aunts, uncles, and cousins in Brno. I spent one week in Brno and most of the time, my father and I, spent traveling on the streetcars and exploring museums and shops. We took the train to Prague, which was nearly two hours away. The train ride took us through the fields of green grass and beautiful castles and ruins. When we arrived in Prague we headed for the main boulevard, Wenceslas Square. The boulevard is filled with luxury shops, hotels and many tourists and locals. It was one of the most crowded places in Prague, besides the metro. The stunning beauty of Charles Bridge over Vltava River attracts hordes of tourists. The bridge is dotted with black statues and it exudes the serene and sublime beauty of the river beneath the bridge. We hea-

ded down to the metro and came up to an escalator, and when I got on, I looked down and I could not believe how steep it was. I have never seen such a steep escalator in my life. Prague's architecture, both the old city and the new city, is amazing. The many cities in CR are filled with thousands of steeples, cobble-stoned streets, breathtaking cathedrals, chur-

## My Trip to Czech Republic

ches, and theaters. My favourite part of the day was eating at the traditional Czech restaurants and pastry shops, and buying the delicious fresh fruit and vegetables. The people in Czech Republic are much more laid back and relaxed than here in Canada. People in Czech Republic seem to be less pessimistic and much more happy. We then travelled to Carlsbad, which is my fathers birthplace. It is a pleasant environment filled with rich cultural life, entertainment, and it is among the most well-known spa towns not only in Czech Republic, but also within

the whole Europe. Carlsbad was a very romantic city and I would love to visit again with friends. My trip to the Czech Republic was the most amazing trip I have ever had. My parents have always been extremely patriotic and instilled the same into me. I am very proud to be from Czech Republic and I will continue to visit. I would also like to visit the neighbouring country of Slovakia and go skiing in the mountains. Everybody from Czech Republic is very laid back and optimistic. I have found that most of the people are more concerned about their family and friends than they are concerned about money. Money is, of course, important to everyone well-being but it should not be the most important thing in life. In Czech Republic everybody smiles at you and is very friendly. I miss Czech Republic primarily because of the friendly people. The children are brought up with very strong values and morals, and they are taught from a young age to respect their elders.

to be positive in life and strive for what I believe in.

**What is your motto?**

Live for today. Life is too short and we should all make the most of it while we are here. Try something new and you might enjoy it, if it doesn't go as planned, at least you had the courage to try it and hopefully you enjoyed some of the process and learned from it.

**What is the worst quality somebody can possess?**

While I think everyone finds confidence attractive, nothing will do more to reverse that than to cross the very fine line of being arrogant and cocky. I find this to be a very ugly quality in a person, often because they believe they are better than those around them.

**What is your biggest accomplishment to date?**

My biggest accomplishment to date, aside from attending college, is competing in the Miss Czech Slovak Canada 2010 pageant.

**If you had the power to change one thing in the world, what would you change?**

I would rid the world of racism. Racism is usually brought on by ignorance and fear and it hurts many innocent individuals. I have learned the only way to change racism is to be the change you wish to see in the world.

The questions asked - vk -

## CANADA.SK

**Entertainment** presents first year of beauty pageant for Czech and Slovak girls in Canada MISS CZECH and SLOVAK CANADA. Between January and March 2010, numerous selection rounds was held in the largest Czech and Slovak concentration cities throughout Canada and the United States. Grand finale competition will take place in May 2010 in Toronto. Prizes include a car, dream vacations, air tickets, contract with modeling agency etc... Our audience will also select Miss Press, Miss Internet and Miss Photogenic. Official guarantor of the competition and Head of the jury committee is Czech Miss 2005 Katerina Smejkalova. Stay tuned, detailed information about the preliminary rounds venues and dates will be posted onto <http://www.missczechslovakcanada.com> website. Each contestant will be contacted directly with further instructions. The Miss Czech & Slovak Canada regional contests registrations for 2010 will open on June the 1st, 2009! For more information about the registration process, visit <http://www.missczechslovakcanada.com>. Check out our commercial at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f16rF9mrj6M> Official sign-up form can be found at [http://www.missczechslovakcanada.com/mis\\_reg\\_form.doc](http://www.missczechslovakcanada.com/mis_reg_form.doc)

A few weeks ago an email went through this communication service describing to what benefits and help the newcomers to Canada are entitled to. There were a few disturbing facts in this email, so our reader from Burlington Mr. Vladimir Kalas asked Mr. Wallace his member of a parliament for clarification. (Here is the answer of Mr. M. Wallace, first is the article, than the answer.)

"I did a Google search on this article under "The National Post Sucker nation... by Diane Francis", and found a series of articles by her, including this one. Pretty sad! Do other countries other than Canada have this happen, I wonder? - by Diane Francis, Financial Post Vancouver's skyline of often empty pied-a-terres populated by who and why? Condos in Vancouver and Toronto are often empty because they are addresses of convenience. Owners work abroad tax-free but pretend to reside in Canada to qualify for immigration, health care and other entitlements and ultimately citizenship for themselves and relatives. Here are two stories about residency fraud from a source with the initials WS, a Canadian: "I'm 39 and I've worked all over the world (Asia, Europe, Canada and the U.S.). I recently returned to a top American Ivy League school for a master. I was stunned to discover the degree to which Canadian immigration is being abused." "I had dinner with six good buddies, all from 'questionable' foreign countries [Pakistan, Syria], all great guys and I found out they were all 'Canadian'," he said. "None of these guys has spent more than a few weeks in Canada. Yet four were citizens and two were permanent residents who will become full blown citizens shortly." "They come from rich families in corrupt countries and they travel the world freely on our passports, without ever paying a dime in tax."

**The residency fraud**  
Here's how it works:  
n "Extremely rich people from corrupt countries apply for permanent residency at their local embassy and it is my guess that their certain 'special influence' is exerted so they can get themselves and members of the family into Canada as immigrants."  
n "They visit Canada for a few weeks, get bank accounts, buy a condo then hit the road and leave Canada, letting the clock tick until they qualify for Canadian citizenship."  
n "Once they have a passport the party begins and they can come back and forth to use our services at will without contributing to taxes."  
n "These people are rich beyond our wildest dreams. A spare condo in Toronto [or Vancouver] is chump change if one looks upon it as [free entitlements

like health care], needed 'insurance' against a collapse at home or a change in government." He left school and began a management consulting job in the U.S. where the story was the same. "I started chatting with a guy from India who was a landed immigrant even though he had never even visited Canada. He obtained his residence permit by applying in Singapore, then moved directly to the U.S. where he studied at a mediocre school." "He is trying to become a permanent U.S. resident and when I suggested that he could just work for a Canadian bank in Toronto, where salaries were roughly the same, he looked utterly disgusted that I could even make such a suggestion." "I assure you, he will get our passport and use us like dogs: travel and

ment of Our Beautiful Big Country during 40 or 50 years, CANNOT receive more than :  
· Amount/month \$1,012.00 in Old Age Pension and Guaranteed Income Supplement X 12 months===== \$12,144.00 annual income  
· A difference of: \$16,776.00 per year  
\* Perhaps our seniors should ask for the Status of Refugees instead of applying for Old Age Pension.  
\* Let us send this message to as many Canadians as possible, and maybe the allowance of refugee could then be reduced to \$1,012.00, and that of our Canadian pensioners (who actually deserve it) may enjoy the money that they have been forced to disburse in income taxes for

## CANADA: SUCKER NATION...

By Vladimir Kalas

work worldwide without paying a dollar in taxes or giving a damn about the place. It's a step up to a more respected passport for free." Now his wife is pregnant and they plan on having the kid, free, in Canada. "This is so common in the U.S. that I just stopped paying attention. But it is important and relevant because these guys are not only cheapening the Canadian good name but they are taking up previous immigration seats that our economy desperately needs. Furthermore, processing each permanent resident and new citizen costs money." The Swedes are smarter. He also pointed out that Sweden, where he lived for three years, is wise to fraudsters: n You cannot get permanent residency easily or by "buying in" by investing in a condo of a hundred thousand or so. n Secondly, once one has permanent residence, you cannot leave Sweden for more than two months except under special circumstances which must be approved in advance by government. Subject: Canadian Pension  
\* In Canada, instead of applying for Old Age Pension, you should rather apply for the Status of Refugee.  
\* It IS interesting to know that the federal Government of Canada allows:  
· A monthly pension of: \$1,890.00 to a simple refugee  
· plus: 580.00 in social aid  
· = = = = =  
· A grand total of : \$2,470.00 monthly  
X 12 months  
= = = = =  
= \$28,920.00 annual income  
· By comparison, the Old Age Pension of a senior citizen who has contributed to the develop-

40 or 50 years, switches from \$1,012.00 to \$2,470.00.  
\* AN INCREDIBLE NON-SENSE!!! BECAUSE IT IS THEM, OUR CANADIAN SENIORS CITIZENS, WHO HAVE ACTUALLY PAID!

Posted by Ian Holland, Whitecourt, Alberta, Canada (I am a semi-re-tired acreage owner with wife, 2 grown children - 5 grandchildren, 3 horses, 10 to 50 chickens - depending on the time of year, up to 10 turkeys, goldfish and a dog plus 5 neighbouring dogs that seem to hang out here).

Mr. Wallace I would like to add something to my previous email. In the link I am supplying, I am interested in the article : Canada: the sucker nation.

I am disturb not only by abuse from people not even living here, but also about old age pension, which I am receiver. Your opinion on those subject are really interest to me. Thank you. Mr. Vladimir Kalas, Burlington.

**Dear Mr. Kalas,**

Thank you for your follow-up e-mail regarding the resettlement of refugees.

The information on the gentleman's blog that you have forwarded me is over five years old and completely incorrect. Please allow me to clarify.

There are two broad groups of refugees in Canada: refugee "claimants" whose claim for protection must be heard by the Immigration and Refugee Board and "resettled" refugees (usually from UN refugee camps) who have already undergone a selection process by Canadian immigration authorities overseas and entered Canada as permanent residents.

Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) does not provide any financial assistance to refugee "claimants" who enter Can-

ada seeking protection. However, these persons may be entitled to income assistance under a provincially administered social assistance program. A single person's entitlement in Ontario would be around \$580 per month.

In the case of refugees who have been "resettled" in Canada as permanent residents, CIC does provide financial assistance under the Resettlement Assistance Program (RAP) to a limited number of government-assisted refugees each year. The RAP allowance scale mirrors provincial social assistance rates.

A first month entitlement for single refugees under the RAP is \$1890. Allow me to clarify that this is a one-time "start-up" contribution for single persons that includes money for basic furniture and household items, in addition to funds for the first month's rent, food and incidentals. Subsequent monthly RAP allowances are parallel to monthly provincial social assistance rates (e.g. \$580 for a single person in Ontario). The newcomer will continue to receive the RAP contribution for another 11 months, or until he or she becomes self-sufficient, whichever comes first.

While government-assisted refugees are in receipt of benefits under the RAP, they are not entitled to income support under provincial social assistance programs such as Ontario Works.

In addition to providing financial assistance to government-assisted refugees for up to one year, the RAP delivers a comprehensive orientation program to the refugees during their first few

weeks in Canada and helps find their first permanent accommodation. Canada accepts and resettles approximately 7,500 "resettled" government-assisted refugees each year. Of this total, roughly 1,800 are destined to Quebec and are supported in whole by the government of Quebec under the terms of the Canada-Quebec Accord, and then the balance by the federal government.

I hope that this clears up any misconceptions about Canada's Resettlement Assistance Program. Sincerely, Mike Wallace

**About Michael L. Wallace:**  
(born September 3, 1963) is a Canadian politician, currently representing the electoral district of Burlington in the Canadian House of Commons as a member of the Conservative Party of Canada. He was first elected to Burlington City in the fall of 1994, representing the southeast area of Burlington, now Ward 5. He was re-elected in 1997, 2000, and 2003.

Before running for councillor, Wallace graduated from the University of Guelph, majoring in economics and political science. Wallace was nominated as the candidate for the newly-formed Conservative Party for the 2004 federal election, running against long-time Liberal incumbent Paddy Torsney.

A last-minute resurgence in Liberal support across Ontario resulted in a 4,000-vote victory for Torsney. Wallace did not resign as councillor for the 2004 federal election and continued to represent Ward 5.

( Were Written for Novy Domov)

## Visit to Prague Castle

The Prague Castle, an ancient symbol of the Czech lands, is the most significant Czech monument and one of the most important cultural institutions in the Czech Republic.

(The Prague Castle was most likely founded in around 880 by Prince Bořivoj of the Premyslid Dynasty (Přemyslovci). According to the Guinness Book of World Records, the Prague Castle is the largest coherent castle complex in the world, with an area of almost 70,000 m². A UNESCO World Heritage site, it consists of a large-scale composition of palaces and ecclesiastical buildings of various architectural styles, from Roman-style buildings from the 10th century through Gothic modifications in the 14th century. The famous Slovenian architect Josip Plečnik was responsible for extensive renovations in the time of the First Republic (1918-1938). Since the Velvet Revolution, the Prague Castle has undergone significant and ongoing repairs and reconstructions. The Prague Castle is open daily - 5.00 - 24.00 in summer season (April 1 - October 31), 6.00 - 23.00 in winter season (November 1 - March 31). Historical monuments are open daily except 24.12. 9.00 - 18.00 in summer season (April 1 - October 31) 9.00 - 16.00 in winter season (November 1 - March 31). Ceremony by the Castle gates takes place every hour. At noon it also includes a fanfare and the flag ceremony in the First Courtyard. Rooms used by the Office of the President of the Czech Republic are open two days a year. The first Saturday after May 8 and the first Saturday after October 28 as a rule. The gardens are freely accessible in the summer tourist season. (April 1 - October 31).

When visiting Prague Castle you can use the service of Information Centres of Prague Castle in the second and the third courtyards. They provide tours through Prague Castle guided by professional guides of Prague Castle Administration (including foreign language service). Russian. Pražský hrad, 119 08 Praha 1, Phone: +420 224 37 3368.

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