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Toronto's Vomit Comets

"Four out of ten 'street meat' stands inspected this year failed to meet city health standards, according to **Toronto Public Health**. ... There are 322 licensed hot dog and sausage carts in the city. Inspectors are only mandated by the **Ministry of Health** to check the carts once a year." (**National Post**, July 20, 2007)

Immigration -- In Action!

Just because you've been issued a work permit, it does not necessarily follow that you *are* working now, or, for that matter, that you have ever worked. What it does mean is that of Canada's refugee "class of '97," fewer than half have ever been issued a permit in ten years residence. And note the curiously low rates among a group normally paraded as the embodiment of the work ethic. **Adult Refugee Claimants 18 Years of Age or Older by Top Source Countries Showing Percentage Who Have Ever Been Issued a Work Permit (CIC, Facts & Figures 2006)**

Source countries (1997)	Percentage
Mexico	69.4
China, People's Republic of	42.0
Colombia	87.5
Sri Lanka	82.6
India	74.7
Haiti	71.7
Nigeria	87.7
Zimbabwe	100.0
Pakistan	74.0
Burundi	91.4
Congo, Democratic Republic of	91.3
Turkey	81.3
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	80.3
Guyana	50.9
Iran	75.7
Russia	75.5
Peru	73.6
Bangladesh	83.8
Algeria	86.8
Costa Rica	68.4
Argentina	82.5
Hungary	83.0
Czech Republic	51.0
Top 10 source countries	71.6
Other countries	19.0
Total	46.1

A Place That Reminds Us Of Canada

"Statistics Canada estimates 20-thousand people moved to Saskatchewan from other provinces in 2006. **Chamber [of Commerce]** President **Dave Dutchak** says international immigration accounted for a small portion of the increase, but the main reason was interprovincial immigration. Dutchak says the Chamber would like to see 1.8 per cent growth per year. He says that would bring the population to 1.5 million by 2030 and restore the losses that have occurred since the mid-1970's." (**Action News Saskatchewan**, August 8, 2007) So a decades-old population haemorrhage has been reversed-- no thanks to the stampede of immigrant entries. Not directly, anyway. Perhaps residents of high immigration areas are realizing that they've been seriously underestimating Saskatchewan's charms.

... And Them Of Britain

"Brits are leaving the **UK** in their thousands in search of a better life abroad. Another Brit leaves *every three minutes*, the **Institute for Public Policy Research** has estimated. ... There are now 5.5-million expat Britons with the highest concentrations in Australia, Spain, the US, Canada and Ireland. ... Former immigration control officer **Liam Clifford** set up **globalvisas.com**, a visa consultancy firm, 12 years ago. This year, he has seen a 400 per cent increase in enquiries for visas to countries such as Australia and Canada. [And there's no Saskatchewan in England.] 'Because of immigration, even rural villages are now overstretched so people can't just move out of the city any more. People don't want to be seen as racist, but they feel they are not getting the services they require.' (**The Sun**, August 15, 2007) And guess what? "A recent **Mori** opinion poll commissioned by the government's **Commission on Integration and Cohesion** showed that almost 70 per cent of British people thought that we had let far too many immigrants into the country. This figure, incidentally, included almost half of all black and Asian British citizens polled. It was a remarkable poll not so much for its statistics, however, as for the strange *response* to those statistics. The establishment — the government, the **BBC**, the race charities and so on — professed themselves very worried and wondered what on earth should be done." (**The Spectator**, July 7, 2007) Well, according to Ottawa, a public questioning immigration is a public in need of "Outsourcing Children" While countries like Canada ramp up immigration to deal with low birth-rates ... babies are everywhere in France, a country that gives presidential medals to its most prolific parents. Corinne Seror, a harried mother of three [who once lived in Canada, says] 'I think it's a bit easier here to have children.' ... She won't return to her guaranteed high school teaching job until the toddler turns three. At that point she will have been on leave for eight years. She currently gets the equivalent of about \$400 Cdn a month in benefits for her three children. Statistics Canada reported this week that, for the first time ever, more Canadian families are made up of couples without children. The birth-rate is far below the 2.1 children per woman of child-rearing age required to sustain a population. ... Canada's estimated birth-rate for this year ... 1.61 children per woman ... France's estimated rate, by contrast, is two children per woman. ... 'France is leading the way,' The Economist magazine reported earlier this year in a special analysis of Europe's demographic challenges. ... Analysts aren't certain why the French are so keen to have babies. ... Some point to the confidence the French have in the country's child-care system, which gets enormous government support. ... 'Some countries have struck a successful balance between life and work that enables parents to raise children without sacrificing their careers,' The Economist concluded." (Edmonton Journal, September 14, 2007) Just maybe, the riots, the car burnings, the no-go zones, the terror threat and demographic swamping have persuaded the French that French babies are the answer.

Kirpans, Hijabs & Herouxville

As Quebec embarked on widespread public consultation on reasonable accommodation, Premier Jean Charest said, "Our charters have always aimed to protect minorities against abuses by the majority. They were never designed to allow the contrary." With a budget of \$5-million, the hearings take place in 17 Quebec communities from September through November, and commissioners Gerard Bouchard (a social worker) and Charles Taylor (a "philosopher") submit their report to Premier Charest on March 31. Almost immediately the predictable squawking broke out -- the commissioners were too old, too white, too academic, too parochial; the venues were too rural; Quebecois too backward to be entrusted

with such a sensitive process (and e-mails to the commission were immediately parsed "for objectionable content"); the media was excoriated for the inflammatory way it reported ethnic stories. In short, the usual hyperventilations. All of this is just a little ironic to "the rest of Canada," given that "Quebec is the only province that chooses its own immigrants. ... Before [2001], Quebec was taking in only about 27,000 newcomers each year, or barely 13 per cent of the Canadian total. A shift in policy starting in 2002, under the former **Parti Québécois** government, boosted the targets. Quebec now takes in about 18 per cent of Canada's 250,000 new immigrants each year, which is still below the province's 23.5 per cent share of Canada's population." (*Globe and Mail*, September 6, 2007) **Salam Elmenyawi**, president of the **Muslim Council of Montreal**, said he hopes the hearings *will be controlled* to avoid extreme comments. "This kind of forum will add more to Islamophobia and will fan the flames of racism within the province," he said. A Rwandan refugee suggested Quebecers should clean up their French if they want to be better respected. **Christiane St-Laurent**, a federal civil servant, "lived with a Muslim man for six months and said she understood from the experience just how much devout Muslim men believe women should submit to men, just as they do to God. She also takes issue with how devout Muslims behave at work, including one woman on her floor who washes her feet in the [only] sink before praying. 'I find that disgusting,' St-Laurent said. [But] when she tried to organize a Christmas party last year on her floor, there was a problem, she said: Even though only a handful of her 68 colleagues were immigrants, she was advised to call the party 'a seasonal celebration' ... and the person who suggested that was a French-Canadian. St-Laurent also recounted an incident in 2000 when she accompanied her boss's pregnant wife to the **Jewish General Hospital** in Montreal. After the birth, instead of being discharged the following day, the mother got an extra two days in bed because she couldn't drive home on the Jewish Sabbath, St-Laurent said. With accommodations like that, 'I think we're just shooting ourselves in the foot,' she said. 'We're getting too pure, too politically correct. We should just start living.'" (*Montreal Gazette*, September 12, 2007) And perhaps that is the point exactly.

Flaky Exemption

"A 42-year-old Vietnamese woman can stay in Canada after she developed a severe case of psoriasis when she donated a kidney to her dying brother, a federal court has ruled. **Thi Thiet Tran** entered Canada in 2004 on a visitor's visa after being identified as a donor match for her brother, a Canadian citizen who had been on the waiting list for a transplant for more than two years and was suffering acute kidney failure. The transplant transformed her ... into someone whose head and body are covered with open sores and dead skin. "Today her altered appearance has proven difficult for her to bear and has become the cause of embarrassment and self-loathing. The chronic skin condition has laid waste to her beauty. Both physically and mentally she is only a fraction of her former self," wrote Vancouver lawyer **Des Friedland** in documents urging the woman's admission to Canada on humanitarian and compassionate grounds. ... Tran has four children and a husband living in rural Vietnam, where she worked as a farm labourer. Her brother offered to sponsor Tran and her family so she could continue receiving medical help and they could move to Canada. Her doctors told **Citizenship and Immigration** Canada officials that her condition had not responded to treatment and that [like her brother] she needed sophisticated medical care. Being returned to the hot, humid, tropical conditions in her homeland would only make her condition worse, they said, adding that it would be impossible for her to return to work as a labourer. But an immigration official denied the application because Tran had not proven she couldn't get the same medical attention in her own community. Federal Court Justice **Sandra Simpson** overturned

that decision." (*Times Colonist*, September 19, 2007) Who failed to inform this woman that organ donation carries certain risks? As a hilarious footnote, the most promising new treatment for psoriasis -- more efficacious than the most potent prescription drugs -- is the mangosteen -- a fruit native to and widely used in Vietnam.

Myths From The Home Front

According to **Statistics Canada's "2004 General Social Survey"** ... rates of spousal violence by a current or previous partner in the 5 year period were 7% for women and 6% for men. [Although officially, men don't suffer. **StatsCan** notes that] a larger proportion of female victims of spousal violence reported the incidents to the police relative to male victims (37% versus 17%). ... The numbers of male victims of spousal violence who used a helping agency were too small to produce statistically reliable estimates. ... In addition, in a larger proportion of instances of wife assault police made an arrest or laid a charge than in the case of husband assault (41% versus 21%). ... The rate of spousal violence among those who are gay or lesbian was twice the rate of reported violence experienced by those who are heterosexual (15% versus 7%). ... Aboriginal people were three times more likely to be victims of spousal violence than were those who were non-Aboriginal (21% versus 7%). [In 1999, 25% of aboriginal women and 13% of men reported spousal abuse. -- 5 years later, 24% of aboriginal women reported spousal abuse while aboriginal men were on the receiving end of a growing share of the violence, at 18%. Moreover,] aboriginal victims of spousal violence experience more serious forms of violence at the hands of their intimate partners than do non-Aboriginal spousal violence victims ... (41% versus 27%). ... This analysis does not include the Northwest Territories, the Yukon or Nunavut where high concentrations of Aboriginal people live." (**Statistics Canada, Family Violence in Canada: A Statistical Profile, 2005**)

Our Spin Cycle

According to "the research findings of American political scientist **Robert Putnam** ... social capital is weakened by ethnic diversity. Survey evidence from the United States suggests that individuals in ethnically diverse regions and cities are much less trusting of their neighbours and less engaged in community networks than individuals living in more homogeneous parts of the country. Americans in diverse communities, Prof. Putnam suggests, are 'hunkering down' in social isolation. Not surprisingly, Canadian commentators in both the English and French news media have latched onto these results, *importing his pessimism into Canadian debates*. [Here it is in all its glory -- the central-Canadian-CBC-mindset that would rather kill the messenger than question the sheer genius -- that's right, genius! -- of our post-Trudeau policies. They're not open for discussion and they certainly don't need any fine tuning, thank you very much. In reality, Putnam has delayed publication as he desperately casts about for some way to put a positive spin on his findings. But Canadians are not to know that: Read on.] They have not paused to ask whether his **U.S.** findings apply with equal force here. In fact, we do have good survey evidence on social capital and social integration in Canada. ... **Social Capital, Diversity and the Welfare State** (UBC Press, 2007) reveals a tension between ethnic diversity and the trust Canadians have in each other. The larger the presence of visible minorities in the neighbourhood, the less trusting is the majority. This is true even when one controls for other factors that influence trust levels, such as economic well-being, education, gender and age. Members of racial minorities, in contrast, are less trusting where the majority is very dominant, although their trust levels rise modestly as their neighbourhoods become more diverse." (*Globe and Mail*, August 31, 2007) So, *this* is where we diverge from **US** findings? Non-Whites (practically the only immigrants admitted in the past few decades) actively embrace the demise of traditional Canada, but that is reckoned a bad thing in the **US**, right

across the colour spectrum. But then, we've seen and heard quite enough of White people in this country, haven't we?

Chop Sockey Jockey

"A dozen Chinese teenagers have been caught in a failed plot to sneak into Canada [not, of course, by Canada] masquerading as kung fu masters from the famous **Shaolin Temple**. ... The 12 had no martial arts experience but joined a team of genuine kung fu performers from a school in Henan province, also home to the 1,500-year-old temple, that was leaving for a tour of Canada, the official **Xinhua News Agency** said. They had paid up to \$90,000 each to a human smuggler, or 'snakehead,' and *two coaches from the martial arts school* who often accompany students on trips abroad, **Xinhua** said. The teenagers, ages 17 to 19, had a one-day training session at a hotel on June 24 to learn the basics of the art of Chinese lion dancing, **Xinhua** said. The group was stopped less than a week later while trying to enter Hong Kong after border guards' suspicions were aroused, but the report did not give any details. **Xinhua** quoted a policeman in Changle, a city in eastern China's Fujian province from which the alleged bogus kung fu masters originally came, as saying the **Shaolin Temple** had been an innocent victim of the conspirators. [Despite the fact that two of the school's coaches were paid off?] 'The **Shaolin Temple** had nothing to do with it,' **Xinhua** quoted the officer. ... The teens and the two coaches were detained and returned to Fujian for interrogation, the agency said. The snakehead was arrested [Aug 6] after six weeks on the run." (**CNN**, August 11, 2007)

First, Disconnect The IV

"In 2006, Canada deported 41 immigrants found involved in war crimes or crimes against humanity, according to a federal report. But it also mentioned that 59 removal orders could not be carried out because of such impediments as a lack of travel documents, while another 39 were awaiting a pre-removal risk assessment. *The report only names cases that have been the subject of public attention.* 'Anyone that's subject to removal from Canada can request a pre-removal risk assessment and that is to determine whether there is a risk of persecution, torture or threat to life if they're deported,' said a spokeswoman from **Citizenship and Immigration** Canada. 'If they are subject to those conditions, they are not removed. Then, they would have a stay of removal until such time as those conditions change,' **Karen Shadd-Evelyn** said. [Witness] the case of **Mahmoud Mohammad Issa Mohammad**, a convicted terrorist who hijacked a plane [and who] has been thwarting his expulsion since 1988 [and presumably has not paid for his 30-odd appeals himself]." (**National Post**, August 12, 2007) Once again, Third Worldism triumphs: Eldery, infirm Central and East Europeans are shamefully hounded to the death (for statements they may or may not have made 60 years ago, regarding events dating even further back) while mass murderers and torture artists at the top of their game are spared because their countries remain mired in primitivism. "If I were working as a consultant for war criminals, what I would tell them is that Canada is probably the best place to go in terms of avoiding prosecution and in terms of avoiding deportation," [says] **Tom Quiggin**, an ex-intelligence analyst for the war crimes units of both the **RCMP** and **Citizenship and Immigration**. ... Quiggin, who also served as an intelligence analyst for the **International War Crimes Tribunal** for the former Yugoslavia, says the number of suspected modern war criminals in Canada reaches well into the thousands. ... 'The whole point of the Canadian immigration system is to get people into the country.'" (**Canadian Press**, September 1, 2007) Meanwhile, the **Rwanda Information Exchange** estimates that at least five, likely more, architects of the genocide "are living free in Canada." Canada's **War Crimes Unit** (\$15.6-million budget) was established four years *after* Rwanda. Those identified as living in Canada are **Léon Mugesera**, **Pierre Célestin Halindintwali**, **Gaspard Ruhumuliza**, **Vincent Ndamage**, **Evariste Bicamumpaka**. Of the five, four have ties to the former prefecture of

Butare. Located in Rwanda's southwest, Butare is home to the **National University**, founded in 1963 by a Canadian **Dominican** priest. Over the years, the university has maintained close ties with the **Université Laval** and the **Université du Québec**.

Multi-Cull

While every advanced nation on earth has reluctantly concluded it must reassess multiculturalism, Ottawa thick-os continue to drive us down the bleak and dismal path. And speaking of bleak and dismal, tooling along a country road around 11 at night, **Bachitar Singh Brar** came across a scene straight out of his Punjab homeland -- a *jaago* -- or Sikh wedding perambulation through the neighbourhood. Transplanted to rural British Columbia, the surreal tableaux evidently unhinged Mr. Brar to such an extent that he put his foot down and headed straight for them. Media accounts of the wedding procession inexplicably range from 25 to 100, but what is certain is that Mr. Brar killed six outright and approximately 17 more careened off, or were dragged along under his Chevy pick up. When the accumulated carnage slowed his relentless progress (police found no skid marks at the scene), the 71-year-old Brar was pulled from the cab and beaten: "**Kulwant Brar** told radio station **Red-FM** that his father suffered injuries to his neck, face, eyes and chest and that he has a broken nose after the accident and the beating. 'My dad is pretty stressed out,' he said. ... Const. **Casey Vinet** of the Abbotsford police department confirmed the family has told investigators that Brar was assaulted. Vinet said any possible charges are weeks away." (**Canadian Press**, August 29, 2007) Wow, kill six with minimal inconvenience to you -- welcome to Canada. According to **CKNW** radio (August 26) "Family friend **Jagdish Gill** can't understand how this tragedy could have happened, given the guests' bright clothing and the loud music that was part of the procession. 'They were wearing nothing black, so they probably had you know, things on their heads which they have lights on. They had a *drum person* in the front, so it wasn't like something you can't see.'" And some news editor actually thought this fractured commentary worthy of wider distribution. The procession was meant to be accompanied by a pilot car, but the impatient throng set off before it arrived. "A sombre Brar told radio interviewer **Gurvinder Dhaliwal** that he froze when he saw the crowd of people as he went over a hill. 'I don't know what game fate played and then I realized everyone was in front of me. My truck was rolling up the hill and I couldn't see anything,' he said in Punjabi. 'I didn't have time to react. It happened so fast. When I hit someone I went into shock. That's all I remember.'" (**Toronto Star**, August 28, 2007) Does Brar hold a valid BC driver's licence? Will he continue to?

HEALTH WATCH

It's Always Something

"Canine rabies, almost unheard of in Canada, is at record highs in China. Last week, the on-line news service **Shanghai Daily** reported that the dog-bite clinic at [Shanghai's] **Pu'nan Hospital** treated 1,387 patients bitten by rabid dogs *in the last month*. 'The high temperature may cause dogs to be irritated, especially if left in a hot room for a long time,' said **Yin Zhifa**, a Pu'nan official. [Now, there's a novel reading of rabies!] A correspondent for the **Toronto Star's** Asia bureau reported on July 23 that 'rabies is now the deadliest infectious disease in China.' Last year, 3,215 people died of rabies from dog bites, according to the article. 'Desperate to stem the epidemic, public health officials touched off an international storm of criticism by ordering a mass extermination of dogs. In the province of Yunnan, officials clubbed, hanged or electrocuted more than 50,000 dogs in a single week.'" (**Maclean's**, September 3, 2007) "In a five-day cull, dogs were clubbed to death in the street as their owners watched. Other dog owners took matters into their own hands, poisoning or electrocuting their pets." (**BBC**, August 4, 2006) Rabies is a peculiar encephalitic brain disease: The bullet-shaped viral load travels from the site of the bite until it reaches

the central nervous system. From there it heads for the salivary glands, where it starts replicating. Thus, onset of symptoms will take much longer if one is bitten on the heel than, say, the face or neck. The record incubation period is 19 years. There is no test for the presence of rabies. Not that it matters; Canada can't even get no-brainers like tuberculosis and HIV testing right.

CRIME WATCH

Any More Like You At Home?

Huan Qui Zhang, 52, is one of 28 Asian immigrants arrested in October 2005 after **RCMP** seized nearly \$20 million worth of weed from a farm near Sundown, a small southeastern Manitoba community near the Canada-U.S. border. All but one of the suspects had been living in Toronto prior to their arrest at the farm. Zhang and four other suspects are now on trial charged with production of marijuana and possession for the purpose of trafficking. Their lawyer **Mike Cook** is arguing they are innocent of the charges *because they did not know they were doing anything illegal*. [And we wouldn't want to blight anyone's sunny first impressions of good ol' Canada by emphasising that, immigration apart, laws actually exist here.] Zhang, who was *living on welfare* in Toronto prior to her arrest, said she was approached by 'a friend' and offered \$100 a day to work at a Manitoba farm. She said she didn't know what kind of work she would be doing but accepted the job, hoping to earn enough money to buy her son a computer. [She's 52. Just how old is this needy son?] Zhang was driven to the farm with six or seven other recruits and was put to work harvesting marijuana. Police raided the property Oct. 7 and found ... massive greenhouses containing \$10.5 million worth of marijuana plants and 2,700 pounds of harvested bud. Another accused, **Van Duc Du** said the immigrants worked from 'sunrise to sunset' with their remaining hours spent eating, showering and sleeping. 'When I got there, I just imitated what other people were doing,' said Du. 'We pull off all the leaves, then we throw the plant away and cut the flower off.' Zhang and Du said they had been working just eight or nine days before they were arrested. They weren't paid a cent. Du said she only learned what she had been doing was illegal when a police interpreter told her so. Last January co-accused **Fai Ng**, 47, pleaded guilty to one charge of marijuana production and was sentenced to one day time served. In June 2006, 31-year-old **Keung Kwok Leung** was sentenced to 18 months time served. Leung, an illegal immigrant, was denied bail following his arrest and remained in jail until his sentencing. He was later deported to Hong Kong. The alleged mastermind behind the operation, **Kyhong Wong**, is believed to be living in Southeast Asia." (Winnipeg Sun, September 11, 2007)

Another Career Criminal Deportee Still Here

"**Mickie Roan Beckford** has been described as a career criminal, a man who has been in and out of jail 20 times [racking up over 60 convictions] in the 20 years since he first came to Canada from his native Jamaica. [Other achievements include being a] crack addict who refuses to work and hasn't taken any medical treatment after being diagnosed with **HIV**. ... Immigration officials insist they have done their job [but] after Beckford was ordered deported Sept. 12, 2005, the landed immigrant had the legal right to an appeal, which he filed the next day. Because of a huge backlog in cases – some 9,200 – his appeal wasn't heard until two weeks ago ... but Beckford never showed up. That's because three days prior to that, he was in the Old City Hall courtroom of Justice **David Fairgrieve** where he was being sentenced to 10 months in jail for the 17 offences he had committed *since the deportation order*. ... Beckford has 'no genuine interest in dealing with his crack cocaine addiction' or finding a job, said the judge, adding Beckford once 'candidly informed' his parole officer 'he would not be interested in any job that would interfere with his eligibility for welfare.'" (Toronto Star, July 19, 2007) Nevertheless, Beckford "plans to 'vigorously appeal' a deportation order back to his

native Jamaica, says his lawyer. ... 'All his family is here. He has no one back there in Jamaica,' said [**Jordan**] **Weisz**. 'It would not be very compassionate to send him back.' Meanwhile, a police spokesperson said yesterday that both victims of Beckford's assault have been informed of his **HIV** status and advised to see a doctor. He had bitten one woman [security guard] on the finger." (Toronto Star, July 21, 2007) If it weren't such a commonplace, it might be amusing to hear more about "compassion" from this quarter.

The Next Big Constitutional Challenge

"When civil war erupted in the late 1980s, and Somali refugees scattered around the world, *khat* followed them. Canada responded by banning the plant, formally known as *catha edulis*, under the **Controlled Drugs and Substance Act**. 'It is an offence to possess, to traffic, to import,' said Inspector **Lise Crouch**, officer in charge of the **RCMP's Drugs and Organized Crime Awareness Service**. 'It's an illegal drug.' ... Police now seize more *khat* than cocaine, heroin, opium, crack, meth and Ecstasy combined. That's partly because it's a bulky drug. Still, there were almost 900 seizures in 2006. ... But Canada's *khat* law is a sore point within the Canadian Somali community, which numbers about 150,000, one of the largest in the world. *Khat* users complain it has criminalized part of their culture and that it was a result of lobbying by Saudi-educated imams who want to impose their austere codes of conduct on the entire community. [But *not* because drugs contributing to wasted, blighted lives are frowned on by this culture?] '*Khat* is part of Somali life,' said Toronto lawyer **Mohamed Doli**. ... 'Every community in Canada has something that is special to their culture,' he said. '*Khat* is specific to the Somali and Yemeni communities. So when *khat* is criminalized, in essence you have criminalized the culture of these communities. Any law that affects specifically a group of people to the exclusion of other Canadians is a direct violation of the Charter,' he said. [He's] not the only one who thinks the law violates the **Charter of Rights**. **Ed Morgan**, who teaches law at the **University of Toronto**, thinks it should be struck down. 'In Somalia, *khat* is not like drugs in Western culture,' said Mr. Morgan, former president of the **Canadian Jewish Congress**. 'It's a very open part of the culture' [like cocaine in Bolivia.] Mr. Morgan has already filed a constitutional challenge on behalf of one of Mr. Doli's clients, but it died when the Crown stayed the charges. The basis of the challenge: the law unfairly targets Somalis and is unjustified, since there is insufficient proof *khat* is harmful. ... **Mohamud Abdi** said husbands and wives are always fighting over *khat*, mostly because of the cost to families that can ill afford to spend \$80 three times a week. 'Most people in the Somali community, they don't like *khat*,' he said. It causes 'health problems, financial problems and the person, he can't work. He like to sleep 24 hours.' Some Muslim clerics have declared *khat* *haram*, or forbidden by Islamic law. [And compulsive jonesing does nothing to further the claim that *khat* is a harmless caffeine substitute.] At a strip mall near Lawrence Avenue West and Weston Road, there was anticipation. It had been days since the last shipment of *khat* and the men were getting anxious. They cruised the parking lot in their cars, looking for the dealers. In an alley behind a restaurant, men sat at tables playing cards. Dried twigs littered the ground -- the refuse of the last shipment. Those too desperate to wait resorted to chewing *graba*, dried *khat* leaves that are considered a poor substitute for the fresh stuff, but that will do in a pinch." (National Post, September 29, 2007) But they can quit anytime.