

CONTENT OF POLICY GUIDE-LINES

These guide-lines were drawn up to assist selection officers in the "final judgment" they must make when all factors have been assessed in connection with a prospective immigrant. Normally, an applicant who achieves the required number of units will be accepted, and normally those who fail to do so will be refused.

However, the regulations provide that this is not a rule to be followed slavishly, that there can be exceptions - in both directions; in other words, a selection officer in special circumstances can refuse an applicant who obtains the required number of points or accepts one who falls below this number....

It is clear that the exercise of such discretion must be based on good reasons of a substantial kind; furthermore, the reasons must be submitted in writing to, and approved by, a superior officer - who would normally be the officer in charge at a border-crossing point or immigration office.

Selection officers are asked to take into account, in the case of overseas applicants and those at ports of entry who meet the norms of assessment, before making their final judgment, substantial legal, contractual or moral obligations which such persons may be under in their country of origin.

Such obligations could apply to persons against whom criminal charges are pending, persons who are heads of families and have deserted, persons who are separated or divorced and are not living up to their legal obligations to their families, persons who are leaving excessive debts behind, without any arrangements for settlement and persons who are serving on an active basis in the armed forces of their country.

The guide-line makes it quite clear, both in content and in context, that the final judgment of selection officers should be based on commonsense, a positive rather than a negative approach, and on a sympathetic understanding of human beings....

FIGURES FOR 1968

Last year, in Canada and at ports of entry, this discretionary power was exercised in favour of applicants in 84 cases and against in only 11. These, by the way, are the offices at which most, if not all, U.S. military deserters would apply for permanent entry to Canada. At overseas points, it was exercised favourably in 884 cases and against in only 137. It should be noted that these figures, both in Canada and abroad, include all applicants for whom this discretion was exercised, of whom deserters make up a very small proportion.

This is the practice as it now exists. As I have noted earlier on a number of occasions, this policy is currently the subject of a detailed review. The objective is to find a more acceptable way, if possible, of dealing with military deserters.

In any such review of current policy on deserters a number of alternative courses of action present themselves. One is to disregard completely active

military service when examining prospective immigrants. A second option is to return to the practice which existed prior to January 1968 and make active membership in the armed services of another country a bar to permanent entry to Canada. A third choice is to continue the present approach, or a variation of it.

Apart from these considerations, I should say that two features of our current approach are causing me considerable concern. One is the heavy responsibility which immigration officers at ports of entry and offices abroad have in refusing admission in what has become a most delicate and controversial matter. Even though the negative exercise of this discretion has been very sparing - at the most only 11 times at border points in 1968 - and even though the decision must be concurred in by the superior officer, it may be that some other approach would be more appropriate.

My second cause for concern is the fact that officers inside Canada are not required to exercise this discretion in the case of deserters, while those at ports of entry and offices abroad are. This is not an entirely satisfactory situation and in our review we are seeking a more balanced approach.

I hope that my review of this delicate and controversial subject will result in a Government decision in the near future.

INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTION

The seasonally-adjusted index of industrial production rose strongly in March, to 169.7, a gain of 1.6 per cent from the revised February level of 167.1. The whole of the 1968 index of industrial production has now been revised to incorporate raw data changes and more up-to-date seasonal factors. These new factors have also been incorporated into the 1969 data.

Virtually all the March increase was due to the 2.1 percent increase in manufacturing, as utilities rose only fractionally while mining fell slightly. Durables accounted for almost two-thirds of the manufacturing gain.

While gains in durables were widespread (seven of the eight major groups rose), most of the increase was due to the motor-vehicle advance in transportation equipment, where one of the major producers resumed full production after cutbacks in February. Other major contributors to the durables gain were wood, where lumber production rose from the weather-induced slump of the earlier part of the year, and metal fabricating. Steel pipe and tube mills rose by more than 20 per cent, largely in response to increased demand for pipe-line construction.

Non-durable increases were also widespread as ten of the 12 major groups rose. The major factors in the increase were pulp and paper, in large part due to increased exports of newsprint, printing and publishing, and rubber.