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THE ECONOMICS OF IMMIGRATION

"The life of an immigrant, during the first year or two in a new country, is never pleasant; it is often quite difficult," Mrs. Ellen L. Fairclough, the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, told the Jewish Immigrant Aid Services of Canada at a meeting in Montreal on May 7, 1961. "The work done by organizations such as yours does much to mitigate the hardships of this period and to help the newcomer adjust as quickly as possible to his new environment and become a happy, productive citizen of Canada." Mrs. Fairclough went on to suggest that few Canadians were aware "that the excellent record of immigrant settlement in Canada in recent years" had been due to "the helping hands" of voluntary agencies. She then turned to examine the record of the Department of Citizenship and Immigration itself, in the following words:

"...The Department of Citizenship and Immigration...has occasion, from time to time, to glance back over the records and recapitulate its operations of recent years. We find it useful to refer as often as possible to our ledger of debits and credits in this business of the movement of peoples. On the whole, the picture is a creditable one. Immigration policy, especially when it is a human, flexible and selective one, is not easy of administration. Undoubtedly there is room for improvement in our regulations and legislation, and I have said so on many occasions.

"Nevertheless, the record seems to indicate that, notwithstanding these drawbacks, the application of our policy has been reasonably sound and practical. When we look back over the files and study and case-

histories, I think we are justified in the conclusion that settlement arrangements have been good for the immigrants, and good for Canada, too.

POSITIVE ASPECTS OF IMMIGRATION

"Only a few months ago, during the passage of the Estimates through the House of Commons, I was able to report on some of the positive aspects, from an economic point of view, of immigration into Canada. I was able to point out, for example, that over the past 11 years immigrants had established almost 6,000 businesses in this country and purchased some 5,385 farms. These businesses and farms created employment for almost 35,000 persons and represent a value of \$140 million.

"This is probably only a very small part of the whole picture, since the figures I have just given you represent only those transactions which were voluntarily reported to the Department. Immigrants, after all, are under no obligation to report such purchases, or any other aspects of their private business, to the Department.

EVIDENCE OF WILLINGNESS

It is rather interesting to note, too, that in the purchase of these businesses and farms the cash down payments amounted on the average to about one-half of the value of the enterprises bought or established. I think there is real evidence here of the willingness of the newcomers to work hard, to save their money, and to make sacrifices in order to establish themselves securely in their new homeland.