



STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

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CANADA - A CREATION OF IMMIGRANTS

A Address to the Jewish Immigrant Aid Services of Canada, Toronto, on January 20, 1963, by the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, Mr. R.A. Bell.

...Canada has been built and sustained by the strength of immigrant people. Today, some 350 years after the first European adventurers settled on our shores, approximately one-sixth of our population was born in some other land. Indeed, in 1961 Canada had a slightly larger proportion than in 1951 of foreign-born residents - a reflection of the high level of immigration during the decade.

More People Needed

Make no mistake, this country needs a larger population to achieve its full national potential. Our destiny cannot be fulfilled with only 18.7 million people. We simply do not have the population to develop the rich and vast resources of what is territorially one of the giant nations of the world. I would not hazard a guess as to what number of people is the balanced figure for our optimum national development, but we have ample room to grow in - that is certain! The question to be decided is not whether our population should grow - but at what pace it should grow.

Our Canadian birth rate of 27 per thousand of population is one of the highest of the developed nations of the world. But the historic fact is that the normal processes of population growth, taken by themselves, are not enough. Yes, Canada must have a much larger population and immigration must be a major factor in that population growth.

...I am not one of those timorous souls who believes that a balanced intake of well-selected immigrants is an impediment to economic growth in Canada. On the contrary, I believe that the introduction into Canada of properly selected and prepared immigrants provides a positive, direct and immediate stimulus to the economic growth of the country.