

Canada is growing with the contribution of people from many lands. This is not a peripheral contribution - it is essential to the present configuration and future promise of the Canadian "mosaic". More than a quarter of all Canadians are descended from, or have themselves come from countries other than France or the British Isles. They give a quality to Canada not of one pattern but of kaleidoscopic variation.

The presence of many ethnic groups in Canada has a two-way effect. The country derives benefit from the richness of the gifts which people with varied backgrounds give to Canada. For their part, our citizens of non-British and non-French stock are able to express their group personality freely within a bilingual framework. The narrow belief that all the ethnic minorities in Canada should be and would be automatically assimilated culturally into a homogeneous society has passed away - I would add, unmourned. Of course the process of "integration" not "assimilation" continues as New Canadians gradually come to terms with their new environment. But I hope and expect that we shall all continue to profit from the cultural contributions of readily identifiable ethnic groups of diverse origin throughout the country. We must ensure that this is so.

This overview of Canada makes clear the complexity of the problems which we face. No two countries are alike, but most can learn lessons from others in building a nation. In Canada's case, however, I do not think that there are reliable guideposts. A few countries share some of our problems - none share them all - so we must map our own way.

In this Centennial Year we have much of which to be proud - for example, such great achievements as Expo '67. But in