

The Foundation of Nationhood

A lively response to environment, a capacity to assimilate and blend different cultural forces, and the assumption that diversity offers no threat to national unity -- these are the materials of Canadian nationhood, the strength of which depends on the number and character of Canada's citizens. Thousands of these citizens have, in modern times, come to Canada from abroad; in 1900 there were 41,000 immigrants to Canada; in 1913 the new arrivals numbered over 400,000. Two world wars and the depression of the thirties combined to reduce drastically this enriching flow of people, which began again on a small but fruitful scale, in 1945. Although Canada's population has, by immigration and natural increase, grown by nearly two million since the end of the second world war, the population density is something less than 4 per square mile, compared with, for example, 516 in the United Kingdom, 712 in Belgium, and 717 in the Netherlands. Canada has room for newcomers; and it is the present policy of the Canadian Government to welcome them.

The Immigration Act^x

The responsibility for all immigration matters under the provisions of the Immigration Act rests upon the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration. The Immigration Branch, one of the five branches comprising the Department of Citizenship and Immigration, administers this Act.

Immigration from overseas was controlled by legislation as early as 1874, but it was not until 1906 that inspection staffs were stationed along the Canadian-United States border. In substance, the Immigration Act currently in force was first enacted in 1910. It has been amended from time to time in the light of changing conditions and administrative experience.

Broadly speaking, the Immigration Act is divided into two parts. The first provides for administrative machinery, sets out the duties of Immigration Officers, and defines the procedure applicable to persons asking

x Immigration to Canada for the Fiscal Year ended March 31, 1950

	<u>From Overseas</u>			
	<u>British</u>	<u>Others</u>	<u>From U.S.A.</u>	<u>Totals</u>
April	2,994	5,538	560	9,092
May	2,217	6,331	636	9,184
June	2,903	8,228	636	11,967
July	1,939	7,937	740	10,616
August	1,806	5,210	835	7,851
September	1,165	2,155	854	4,174
October	1,450	5,394	708	7,552
November	1,822	3,864	666	6,352
December	644	4,053	467	5,164
January	556	2,699	455	3,710
February	855	3,728	376	4,959
March	847	4,427	527	5,801
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	19,198	59,564	7,660	86,422