

REVIEW THE POLICY OF ESTABLISHING IMMIGRATION OFFICES IN THIRD WORLD COUNTRIES

Criticism of the lengthy delays in processing applications from Third World countries generally, and India in particular, is frequent. It is alleged that far fewer offices exist in Third World countries, that procedures are especially onerous, and that lengthy delays are often unexplained.

Largest: In a written response to these allegations, provided by the Secretary of State for External Affairs in November 1983, it was noted that in 1982 India was the fourth highest source country for immigrants entering Canada and that the immigration section in the Canadian High Commission in New Delhi is the largest immigration processing office in the world. It was also noted that the lengthy processing period, which can be attributed primarily to factors such as the lack of a reliable system of record-keeping in the country of origin, has nevertheless been reduced on average by 20 days from 1982 to 1983.

Review: On balance the explanations provided by the Department of External Affairs appear reasonable and reflect no deliberate or systemic discrimination against visible minorities. However, it would also appear that a general review of policy in this area, including the determination of the number and location of offices in Third World countries, and the expansion of options such as honorary consuls or regularly scheduled tours by officials, is in order.

RECOMMENDATION:

External Affairs Canada should conduct a general review of its policy with respect to the location of offices and the procedures for processing applications in Third World countries from which Canada receives substantial numbers of immigrants and/or visitors.

CONDUCT AN EVALUATION OF EMPLOYMENT DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

Programs: Because of the need to develop a public policy on unemployment and underemployment, the federal government has a secondary role as an employer outside of the public service. In the wake of economic recession, high unemployment and dramatically changed work force skill requirements, the federal government over the past few years has developed a number of employment assistance programs in line with the strategy outlined in the 1981 task force report on Labour Market Development in the 1980s.

Action: Some of these programs, such as the National Industrial Training Program, and several of the Employment Development Programs such as LEAP, Summer Canada and Canada Community Development Projects, already contain a specific positive action component for Native People and Inuit. Others, such as the Outreach Program designed for Blacks in Nova Scotia, are exclusively directed towards a target group.

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