

IMMIGRANTS' CONTRIBUTION

In a recent speech to the Montreal Chapter of the American Marketing Association and the Sales Executives Club of Montreal, Mrs. Fairclough, the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, discussed the contribution which immigrants have made to the Canadian economy in recent years.

Mrs. Fairclough said in part:

"In the last nine years immigrants have established in this country a total of 2,358 small business enterprises by purchase, at a cost of \$27,602,500, and 84 by rental. These enterprises have resulted directly in the establishment of 2,701 immigrant operators who, with their dependents, numbered 8,350. They have also provided for the employment of 8,947 Canadians and newcomers.

"A striking feature is the fact that more than half of these enterprises were established in 1958. In the past year alone immigrants established 1,324 small businesses of various kinds, 1,303 by purchase and 21 by rental.

"Why was 1958 such a banner year for the establishment of immigrant enterprises? The reason is partly financial. Many of these operators lacked both capital and Canadian business experience and had to work for some years to acquire sufficient funds and knowledge before striking out on their own. Quite likely also, it was the optimistic reports of earlier immigrants which induced other small businessmen to establish firms in Canada.

"And what are these enterprises and where are they? They were established in eight of the ten provinces. The majority, 805, were established in Ontario. British Columbia was second with 222 and Quebec third with 153. Nova Scotia received seven, New Brunswick two, Manitoba 40, Saskatchewan 22, and Alberta, 73.

"These concerns were of various types. As an example of their diversity, in Ontario and Quebec there were established, last year, 27 firms dealing in meat products, 40 in bakery products, 43 groceries and delicatessens, 154 construction firms, 18 plants manufacturing wood products and 22 dealing in metal products; 81 firms were engaged in automobile repairs, sales and service, 32 in the manufacture of leather goods, knitted goods and paper products and 13 in publishing, printing and lithography.

"Twenty-four firms came under the heading of truck gardening and florist shops and 84 were retail outlets for departmental store items. These were in addition to 19 commercial concerns dealing in dairy and feed mill products, fishing, etc., 22 tailoring establishments and 63 barber shops and beauty salons. There were established, as well, 127 service establishments, 24 radio-television sales and service outlets, and six tourist accommodation centres.

"Nor was the field of finance overlooked, since 31 insurance, real estate, import-export and wholesale firms were established in 1958.

"These figures lend support to the findings of the Royal Commission on Canada's Economic Prospects. It was the opinion of the Gordon Commission 'that immigrants have made a decided contribution to the scale of economic development in Canada'. The report added: 'This is true in aggregate terms because of the addition that immigrants have made to the available labour supply. It is equally true in qualitative terms when one considers not only the relative mobility of immigrants and their willingness to accept the types of work that are less attractive, but also when one thinks of the various skills and cultural accomplishments with which many immigrants are helping to enrich our Canadian life. It is our firm belief that it is in Canada's interest to continue to encourage people from other countries to emigrate here in order both to assist and participate in the development of our country and also to contribute further variety to our social organizations and institutions'.

"I was interested to note in the latest annual report to the Netherlands-Canada Chamber of Commerce that some 40 Dutch firms have set up branches or subsidiary companies in Canada. Fifteen of the 32 concerns listed in the publication are in the importing and distributing field, four in banking and investment, three in insurance, two in general trade and one in the nursery business. Seven others manufacture, assemble or package a wide variety of products - metal goods, alcoholic beverages, clothing, gelatine products, pharmaceuticals, radio and electronic equipment, essences and pipes.

"In addition, two large Dutch mining companies have acquired property and are doing exploratory work. Another group of bankers and businessmen is developing a typical Dutch "polder" in British Columbia and has formed a Canadian engineering firm which is bidding on a number of projects in Canada. Dutch manufacturing, trading and transportation companies and shipping lines have active selling connections in this country and are enlarging their interests every year.

"What the Dutch have accomplished has been duplicated by the nationals of other countries, particularly since the end of the Second World War. The Italians, for example, are prominent in the construction industry, in wholesale fruit and grocery businesses; the Germans in a variety of occupations, including real estate, retail furniture, nursery and landscaping, dressmaking and the restaurant business; the Jews in the clothing industry and the Greeks and Chinese in the restaurant trade.

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