

STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES



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No. 64/2 THE CONTRIBUTION OF IMMIGRANTS TO THE CANADIAN ECONOMY

An Address by the Honourable René Tremblay,
Minister of Citizenship and Immigration,
to the Richelieu Club of Hull, Quebec,
on March 17, 1964.

...I shall attempt today to highlight some of the contributions of immigrants to the national economy in various fields of endeavour.

Immigration policy followed since the Second World War may be summarized in four essential points:

1. To increase the population of Canada;
2. To facilitate the admittance of immigrants likely to become good citizens;
3. To plan the immigration movement so that it does not make any fundamental alteration in the character of the Canadian nation;
4. Finally, to regulate the number of newcomers to the absorptive capacity of the Canadian economy.

It would, of course, take too long, in view of the time allotted to me here, to analyze each of those four principles and to estimate to what degree they have been applied. I shall dwell only on the last, but not before I recall that 2,244,500 immigrants have entered the country since the end of the last war. Those immigrants have proved themselves worthy of the confidence and welcome given them by their country of adoption. Over 450,000 post-war immigrants have chosen to settle in the predominantly French province of Quebec. Among them we find several thousand Dutch people, known for their love of the land, who have become happy farmers in the St. Maurice Valley, the Lake St. John region, the Eastern Townships or Bois France. We also find Belgians, as exuberant as we, who, in Quebec, Montreal and elsewhere, have shared with us the delights of their cuisine. We find French people, of course, who, in more than one sphere, including goldsmithing, cabinet making and gastronomy, have brought us the secrets of their talents. There are also Portuguese, who have become market gardeners in several counties of the province, while they learned with laborious patience to speak our language. And we also find Hungarians, 27,000 of whom were brought among us by the tragic wave of the Budapest revolution. Many a doctor, engineer,