

Late Shifts

The numbers and the occupations of Canada's newcomers have changed significantly in the last decade. Immigration has much declined in recent years — from 218,465 in 1974 to a planned 100,000 in 1979. There is a new preference for persons with vocational training or occupational skills, rather

than those with higher education in a broader sense. Applicants may now amass a total of 23 points for vocational training and job experience, while the maximum allowed for education has dropped from 20 to 12. The greatest shift in occupations has been in the category "managers and entrepreneurs," where the numbers have greatly increased, and in the "professional and technical" and "manufacturing, mechanical and construction" categories, where they have dropped substantially.

Some Well-Landed Immigrants

Mohamed Meghji, Bookkeeper

Mohamed Meghji, an Asian refugee from Uganda, came to Canada in September 1972, when he was 46. He, his wife and their two children, a boy of 12 and a girl of 17, were living in Kampala when Idi Amin ordered all persons of Asian descent to leave the country within 90 days. Below are excerpts from an interview with Mr. Meghji:

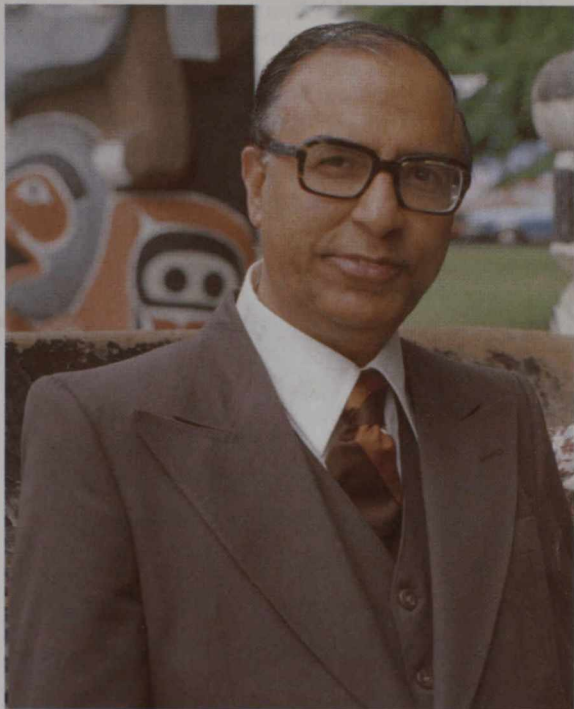
"The order to leave was a total surprise. For one month nothing happened, and then Idi Amin sent out another announcement saying, 'I have not seen people moving away and I'm not going to give any extension of time. If people are not out within the time scheduled, they will be put in a camp.' There was a concentration camp two or three miles outside of the capital. People were terrified and I too decided that the time had come.

"The Canadian Embassy announced that Canada would take 5,000 refugees. We were among the first to come out and were only allowed to take 1,000 Ugandan shillings out, which came to just under \$130 in Canadian money, and that was per family, not per person. Before we boarded the plane they examined all of our luggage, and if there was anything, they took it away.

"We were airlifted to Montreal. What a change! The atmosphere in Uganda was so tense, and Montreal was so relaxed. The immigration officials in Montreal asked us where we intended to go. Some of our people said to us that Vancouver was a good place; the weather was good. So I said I wanted to go to Vancouver.

"I became a bookkeeper for an insurance company, and my wife, Malek, works as a seamstress. We saved our money and bought a very small bungalow in the suburbs.

"My son, Arif, is 19 now, and my daughter, Zainul, is 24. He is finishing high school and has a job as a cook in a restaurant. She is married and lives in Toronto. We are very happy."



Mr. and Mrs. Meghji are at home in Vancouver.

