

*'Living space'
to support
population
increase*

The geometric increase in the world's population, with the ensuing strife, famines, poverty and disease, has propelled a large number of internationalists to point at Canada as one of the countries with international responsibilities, and indeed an obligation to relieve these population pressures. Although Canada has accepted just over four million immigrants since the end of the Second World War, internationalists maintain that it can absorb a higher rate of population growth through immigration so that it can meet its international responsibilities. Canada's moral responsibility in the face of population pressures elsewhere is at the heart of the proposals for a more liberal immigration policy. Justification for this stand rests on several arguments: recognition that Canada has "living space" that could support a larger population-base; relative abundance of natural endowments compared to the rest of the world; the fact that a larger population may lead to economies of scale for Canadians; an obligation to do whatever can be done to relieve population pressures throughout the world; and, finally, the more pointed observation that, if we do not populate our land, it will eventually be taken from us by those who require it.

Resource share

Perhaps the most critical argument, however, is made by internationalists who maintain that Canada possesses a disproportionate share of the world's resources. It is important to note in this regard that proponents of this view maintain that enlightened population and immigration policies are a creditable form of international assistance. This approach favours population and immigration policies that are approved and co-ordinated by the international community rather than through the process of bilateral agreements. The multilateral approach would thus ensure a concerted effort to work towards a global strategy rather than a piecemeal effort.

The process of emigration is not, however, regarded as a panacea by all developing countries. It is true that some of the smaller developing countries view emigration as a short-term measure of relief from the problems associated with rapid population growth. The larger countries of the Third World, however, appear to be more hesitant in endorsing emigration as an effective long-term strategy for eliminating population problems. Indeed, the tendency of current immigration policies in the developed world to accept only those immigrants with high

levels of education and special skills is seen by many leaders of the Third World as a threat to the prospects of their countries for growth and development.

Another counter-argument involves the limitations placed on Canada's absorptive capacity in the domain of relieving population pressures through immigration. Furthermore, global population growth is so excessive that immigration would not significantly alter the balance. To date, however, Canada does not have an official Government policy that spells out the correlation between population and development within the scope of Canadian international assistance.

Brain drain

During the past decade Canadian immigration policy has strongly favoured the highly-educated, professional and skilled groups of potential immigrants. The gains to Canada in high-quality manpower have been very substantial. It has been estimated that the dollar value of Canada's gain in manpower resources from the developing countries far exceeds its contribution in foreign aid to those countries. This conflict of aims is particularly perplexing in view of Canada's international manpower-assistance programs, carried out by such organizations as the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), the Canadian University Service Overseas (CUSO), and the Canadian Executive Service Overseas (CESO). These organizations try to forward the development process in the developing countries by providing them with the services of Canadians who have skills and expertise that are greatly needed in the Third World.

The economics of using immigrant manpower as a source for enhancing Canada's manpower resources has come under considerable scrutiny of late. The saving in human capital expenditures that is revealed by this economic analysis reflects the absence of Canadian private and public expenditures on medical fees, housing, shelter, clothing, education, etc., all of the standard expenses that are normally incurred in the process of raising an infant to the age when he will be able to enter the labour force. In this respect, the cost of raising each migrant worker is borne by the immigrant's country of origin. Conversely, an immigrant's country of destination reaps the benefits of a member of the labour force without incurring the cost of his upbringing. The economic significance of this imputed saving, particularly in the case of highly-skilled and professional people, has been estimated to