

Immigration 1979



The first immigrants were the Inuit (Eskimos) and the Indian.

As Franklin Delano Roosevelt once told the Daughters of the American Revolution, we're all immigrants.

The Indians came some 10,000 or more years ago, and the Inuit (Eskimos) a few thousand years after that. The Europeans — probably Celts or Vikings — came next.

Many of the immigrants, past and present, have been refugees as well — some fleeing tyranny, some starvation.

Last year Canada proclaimed a new Immigration Act, the first revision since 1952. It is intended to deny entry to no one because of race or national origin, and it makes special provision for refugees, such as the Vietnamese boat people shown on the cover aboard the freighter "Tung An." In this issue of CANADA TODAY/D'AUJOURD'HUI we offer some details of Canada's program to admit Indochinese refugees, compare the old immigration standards with the new, spout some statistics and report on the present good fortune of a number of Canadians who have come from other places.



A Change of Immigrants and a Change of Attitudes

In the late eighteenth century Canada was still a loose collection of British colonies, and it seemed natural that they should be settled by loyal fellow subjects of the Crown. For years the policy governing immigration to Canada would be mildly exclusive, welcoming those who were British and resisting those who were not.

The American Loyalists fleeing the Revolution were welcomed, but some later immigrants from

the south were not. In 1794 the first legislative assembly of Lower Canada appointed commissioners to reject at the border those who "seemed unlikely to become loyal settlers."

As historian Helen I. Cowan has noted, the theory in Great Britain was that "the vast undeveloped wastelands of the colonies could be used for the good of the whole empire, of the landlords with overcrowded estates, of the manufacturers seeking new markets, of a government striving to quiet agitators."

One well-conducted emigration from Scotland to Canada was supervised by the Earl of Egremont's Petworth Emigration League. Its purpose was not