

the present absorptive capacity of the Canadian economy is approximately one per cent of our population per annum. This, I emphasize, is a target, an objective, not necessarily to be achieved in 1963 or in 1964, but a target, an objective, which I believe is in the long-run interests of the Canadian nation -- one which will provide a genuine stimulus to our whole Canadian economy.

The "feast-or-famine" approach to immigration, the "tap on -- tap off", will not produce the economic growth which all of us so greatly desire. In my view, a satisfactory flow of immigrants to Canada, particularly from our traditional sources, requires a consistent and regular programme of information and promotion. We need to tell our story abroad, to spell out the opportunities which exist in Canada, to assure prospective immigrants of the fact that Canadians genuinely want them as fellow-citizens.

In my view, 1961 was the low point in our immigration. 1962 showed a slight upgrade and 1963 holds promise of very substantial improvement. Since the new Regulations came into effect last February 1, the number of applications received has increased by over 50 per cent and the trend is definitely upwards. I shall do my best to stimulate that movement.

These new Regulations have now had 11 months of trial. On the whole, they are working well and have opened new avenues to prospective immigrants. They remove from our immigration laws the last vestiges of discrimination on the grounds of race, colour or creed. Indeed, Canada is one of the few countries of the world which can assert that it has made a genuine, an honest effort to remove discrimination from its immigration policy. That certainly will be the policy as long as I am the Minister.

Today's Basis for Choice

Selection today is on the basis of universal and uniform criteria applied everywhere in the world. The stress is upon education, training and skills as the principal conditions of admission. One of the problems which worries me is whether our definition of skills is adequate. There are certainly many difficulties in this field. For example, it is difficult to equate training in different parts of the world with that required for Canadian employment. How do you assess qualifications and decide what is equivalent to Canadian training, experience and qualifications? That is the difficult problem. And it is not enough for a visa officer overseas merely to make a routine assessment of skills in the narrow sense. Significant also is the assessment of such intangible qualities as resourcefulness, initiative, integrity, flexibility -- intangibles which cannot easily be reduced to precise assessment, but which are the real qualities which make a good immigrant for Canada.