

controversial issue has been whether Canadians are prepared to accept immigrants of widely divergent racial and cultural backgrounds. As late as 1967 almost 80 per cent of Canada's immigration flow came from Europe, but by 1974 slightly less than 40 per cent of immigrants were European (SJC, 1975:14).

When the Liberal government looked to Canadian public opinion in the mid-1970s for indications of consensus on how to resolve these issues, it got little help. During the boom years of the preceding decade, there had been no incentive to question immigration policy and few people had much understanding of the issues involved. As Tienhaara's study of Gallup polls (1974) indicated, Canadians tend to be ambivalent in their attitudes to immigration because they are usually apathetic about it. However, during periods of economic recession Canadians of all income levels become opposed to immigration, with lower income, unskilled, or uneducated Canadians — those most vulnerable to unemployment — most opposed of all. On the issue of racial discrimination the evidence is mixed. According to an analysis by Anthony Richmond (1975), a liberalizing trend has occurred since World War II and a non-discriminatory policy has a 'broad basis of approval.' However, the few Canadians who do wish to discriminate on the basis of race or nationality (only six per cent, according to Richmond), make Asians and Blacks their 'prime targets' (p. 20).

EAST INDIAN SETTLEMENT AND CANADIAN REACTION

According to the Census of Canada (1971:7), 67,900 people in Canada in 1971 were of East Indian origin.² Calculations of how many people of East Indian origin now live in Canada depend on how one defines an 'East Indian.' According to statistics of the Department of Manpower and Immigration (hereafter M/I), Canada has received approximately 45,000 immigrants from India since the 1971 Census. If one adds other South Asians and people of South Asian origin coming from East Africa, the Caribbean, Fiji, and elsewhere, and adjusts for natural increase and emigration from Canada, the present number of people in Canada regarded by the man in the street as 'East Indian' is approximately 200,000. Geographically, they are settled in every province of Canada, although three-quarters of them are in Ontario and British Columbia.

Table I demonstrates the rapid rise of East Indian immigration prior to the immigration policy debate of 1975-76. Despite efforts to impose stiffer regulations regarding employability, the availability of the sponsored and nominated applicant categories has allowed East Indians landed in Canada to bring in an ever widening network of extended family members. One result has been that Punjabis, who were the first East Indians to settle in Canada, have continued to constitute the majority of immigrants (about 66 per cent) from India. Immigrants from outside India have

² For an excellent introductory essay and bibliography on East Indians in Canada, see Buchignani (1977).