

*Immigration Policy in Australia*

WITH SO MANY NATIONS seeking to solve their social and economic problems by the expedient but inadequate route of emigration and so many others, including our own, tightening the barriers against immigrants or relaxing them only to the slightest degree, it is heartening to follow the course of policy in Australia and a few of the Latin American nations to the south. The Prime Minister of Australia has sought with commendable urgency to impress upon his people that Australia's survival depends upon immigrants. Australia needs an increase in population, he pointed out. Only eight years ago, he argued, a powerful enemy looked "hungrily" toward Australia. Nations with static or declining populations, however, have powerful enemies within as well as without. New citizens are arriving in Australia at a rate of 70,000 a year and possibly this year the rate will be increased to 100,000. A nation's human resources are a more important factor in its economic growth than any of all the other evidences of a nation's wealth. Australia, by welcoming the immigrant, is taking the surest road to economic well-being for all its citizens, the old as well as the new. For well-being results wherever and whenever people and land and other natural resources meet, and when the social institutions assure the people access to the resources. In the latter respect, Australia has made interesting social experiments, too. It is when the social institutions deny people access to resources that immigration must be barred and emigration spurred. Indeed, theoretically it would appear that if social institutions were such as to encourage the most efficient use of existing resources, in any but the more barren lands a continuing policy of welcoming immigrant could be adopted. Unfortunately, no nation has attempted to put theory into practice.

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