

Letters

Immigration policy

The 155 "boat Tamils" are bearing the brunt of public outrage at an immigration policy that is flawed. Thousands of people less worthy of Canada's compassion have been admitted as refugees. The Tamils' mode of transportation may have been unconventional, but their pain is genuine. Instead of trying to keep the Tamils out, the public attention should be focussed on reforming the immigration system. This system is undermining the Canadian values of justice, fairness, civility and compassion and is, in the long run, against Canada's interests.

While some unscrupulous people are being allowed in, competent, skilled people are being turned away. A scientist working for a leading Canadian telecommunication company, unable to get immigration for his wife, left in disgust and joined the Canadian company's major competitor in the United States. An internationally recognized packaging expert, who used to frequently consult in Canada, got sick by the Immigration officers' harassment and now no longer comes to Canada; he goes to the United States instead. A businessman who wanted to invest millions in Canada was mistreated at Toronto airport by

immigration authorities. So he settled in the U.S. and invested his money there.

The family reunification objective of the immigration policy is becoming a farce. A person's mother-in-law, who wanted to escort his two-year-old son to Canada, was denied a visitor's visa. Another person's sister, who wanted to visit his new-born baby, was also denied a visitor's visa. Both these persons have lived in Canada for 15 years, are Canadian citizens, and hold responsible management positions in leading Canadian corporations. Shocked by the treatment meted out to them in their adopted homeland, they are now planning to move to the U.S.

These examples are symptomatic of a serious problem which requires immediate action.

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