

## Letters

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### Canada's immigrants

SIR – Canada didn't invent the points system for immigrants in 1967 because of idealism, as you suggest, but rather to combat rapidly diminishing immigration from west Europe ("No country for old men", January 10th). The points system was designed to select those whom

bureaucrats believed to be the most adaptable individuals from Asia, Latin America and other regions. With strong economic growth and a welfare state at its height, there was little need for politicians, or immigrants, to worry much about job opportunities.

The new immigration policy that gives priority to those with job offers returns Canada's immigration policy to its roots: an inexpensive means to attract workers. From the European fur traders in the 1700s to the farmers recruited en masse to settle the prairies at the start of the 20th century, Canada has always been extraordinarily skilful at exploiting immigration policy to serve the needs of the labour market.

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