

## THE PART PLAYED BY IMMIGRANTS IN JERSEY'S ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OVER THE CENTURIES

by

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*This article is the text of a talk given to members of the Société Jersiaise by Colin Powell, M.A., States of Jersey Economic Adviser, on 3rd February 1988.*

When attention is focused on expanding, prosperous centres of economic activity like California, the French riviera, or the south-east of England they generally have a common theme — immigration. When attention is focused on areas in decline such as Belle Île, the west of Ireland, or southern Italy the common theme is generally the opposite — emigration.

Although there are exceptions, emigrants tend to be those in the community with courage and enterprise. Little wonder therefore that so often immigrants are relatively successful in their adopted country.

Against the background of these general comments it is not altogether surprising to find that when immigration has been a significant factor in the economic life of Jersey the economy has been relatively successful. In part the immigrants have been a source of prosperity; in part they have been the necessary fuel, when events from time to time have conspired to present Jersey with economic opportunities which, in order to be exploited, have required more than the resident population alone could provide.

In considering the part played by immigrants in the economic development of Jersey I do not propose to go back beyond the sixteenth century, and will take the knitting industry as the first stage in this review. For the most part, however, I shall concentrate on those periods when immigration was at its greatest, and the population of the island increased most significantly — the first half of the nineteenth century and the period since 1945. This is not to say that the economy prior to the sixteenth century, an economy based largely on fishing and farming, did not reflect the influence of immigrants, but either the influence was not so marked as in later years or it is less well documented. Trade, military activities, and religious and civil contact clearly brought strangers to the island, and many settled, but economic prosperity appears to have been spasmodic, with trade continually being disrupted by the warring between England and France.

Of course, one of the difficulties faced in piecing together a picture of any community



in the distant past is determining the accuracy of written accounts of the time. For example, in the seventeenth century some observers described the islanders as lazy, whereas others remarked on the fact that the women walking back from the market managed to carry their burdens in such a way as to keep their hands free for knitting as they walked; hardly evidence of laziness.

Returning to the knitting industry and the immigrant influence, in *Balleine's History of Jersey* the question is asked "when and how did the inhabitants of Jersey learn to knit?" The answer is given as "possibly from Protestant refugees who brought their skills from France." However, immigrants were not the sole factor in the development of the knitting industry. Proximity to the port of Southampton with which there were strong trading links, Southampton's position as an important wool trade port, and the tax privileges of the island in trade with England also combined with the development of new skills to make the industry the success it was.

Though one cannot say for certain, it is likely Jersey experienced a cycle in the development of the knitting industry which was to be repeated in future years. That is, a combination of factors having presented an economic opportunity, that opportunity could only be exploited initially with some reliance on immigrant skills but as the industry developed those skills were taken up by the native islanders and in time the industry took on a more indigenous character.

#### **The seventeenth and eighteenth centuries**

The seventeenth century saw continued expansion of the knitting industry, and of trade and privateering, but the impact on the prosperity of the island as a whole appears to have been limited. At the time of the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685 when Jersey received a large number of Huguenot refugees, it was described as a community of humble smallholders and fishermen. There was said to be some 15,000 people living, according to Dumaresq, in some 3,000 houses and hovels. The people were poor, rents unpaid and, to quote Dumaresq, "There was much work for Lawyers, this tending towards the ruin of the Island". Doctor Heylin in writing about the Channel Islands in 1656 referred to the poverty of its inhabitants. The States were anxious about the poverty and at their meeting on 2nd April, 1685, they were of the opinion that it was caused principally by the bad prices obtained from the sale of stockings and cider, and each parish was required to raise a voluntary subscription — and if those with obvious means did not pay their assets were to be seized.

A Mr Pipon in a letter written at the end of the seventeenth century to someone in England who wished to settle in Jersey and make a living "... to let lodgings, keep a coffee house and teach children" was not at all confident of business success. To quote: "What encouragement I can give you to come to Jersey is a very difficult thing to give since it is but the tyme that can discover whether you'll doe well or not and upon such an uncertainty if your coming over prove not to your satisfaction I might justly be blamed."

The arrival of the Huguenot refugees at the end of the seventeenth century, however, had an impact in a number of ways. To quote Nicolle in his book on the town of Saint Helier: "A large influx of French refugees occurred between 1585 and 1588. Most of them flocked to St Helier and the Court in consequence deemed it expedient that the rent



of houses and the price of food should be regulated. In 1603 it was found necessary to have an extra market day."

Many of the Huguenot refugees used Jersey as a staging post on route to England but Falle, in his history of Jersey, referred to a sufficient number remaining to completely transform the island by their industry.

My introductory remarks on the enterprise of immigrants are eloquently reinforced by de Faye in the *Proceedings of the Huguenot Society* in 1954 when he says "The distinctive marks of discipline and self reliance born of privations and suffering so characteristic of the refugees have been handed down through the ages and account, I think, in no small measure for the sound foundation on which a large number of local businesses rest to this day."

The impact of the Huguenot refugees on the fortunes of the traders in Saint Helier was remarked upon by many observers. The refugees' occupations — wool-comber, weaver, soap-maker, silversmith — were also reflected in many subsequent business developments. To the Huguenots we owe much of the Jersey silver now much sought after. The names Sinel, Guiton, Hemery, Voisin and Jeune all have strong links with the Huguenots either in the seventeenth century or before. A grandson of a Hemery was a founder member of the Chamber of Commerce and many other Huguenot names appear in the list of founder members of the Chamber in 1768. That they were so included is a reflection of the extent of their involvement in trade, and reveals another aspect of immigrant stock that is worth mentioning. Not only are immigrants often enterprising, but also they tend to be outward looking. They tend to be less trapped by their environment, being less rooted to the soil than the native stock.

The enterprise of the immigrants did not always work in positive directions. Many of Huguenot extraction were said to have taken part in the 'sou' riot in 1730, and one observer at the time exclaimed how wrong it was that those who had so recently been given refuge should participate in such commotions. The arrival of the Huguenots was not welcomed by all, and one such refugee complained that he had been threatened by the inhabitants of Trinity and told that as 'étrangers' they should get out of the island, for were it not for the French refugees who came and took their houses and land 'afin d'héritage' they, the inhabitants, would have them at a much lower price. That sentiment has a familiar ring to it.

Indeed the natives were often not well disposed towards the immigrants. Earlier in the seventeenth century various merchants petitioned that foreigners were setting up shops for the sale of merchandise "prejudicial to His Majesty's Service and tending to the disheartening and discouraging of His Majesty's subjects the natives there, in the way of their trade and young beginners who set up shop when they discern strangers who bear no burden in taxes or like public payments, and enjoy equal privileges with themselves". The outcome of that protestation was that the Lords of the Council by an order of the 28th February 1660 directed that no stranger other than a British subject should be allowed to set up shop in the island.

By 1734 Jersey's population was said to have grown to 20,000 but while there was continuing trading activity, as and when wars would permit, the economy did not prosper greatly. The supply of food was not always sufficient for the population and in many



years the poor suffered deprivation through not being able to afford the price of flour, inflated because of shortages. On the 18th September 1769 the *Salisbury Journal* reported "There are great disturbances in Jersey on account of the exportation of corn". It is of interest that those who joined in the revolt at that time included in their demands not only a reduction in the price of wheat, but also the banishment of all aliens. However the islanders appeared to have enjoyed life. According to *The English Traveller* in 1749 "... cider was so plentiful in the Island that no place in the world is thought to equal it, of this extent; it being reckoned that 24,000 hogsheads are made here yearly of which very little, or none being exported, it must be a great occasion of excess, especially since it is as rich as the best Herefordshire cider and might vie with it, if it was as well managed."

Certainly individual families prospered from privateering but, according to Nicolle, the population of Saint Helier — which at that time and thereafter reflected the fortunes of the economy — remained stationary until the French Revolution when prosperity received a fresh impulse from the advent of the political refugees. One estimate speaks of 3,000 to 4,000 refugees which for a population of 20,000 was a significant number, and since the British Government also sent a greater number of troops as its relationship with France further deteriorated, the increased trade for local businesses must have been welcomed.

At this time we again come up against an example of how later writers tended to present a somewhat brighter picture of events than was the case. Nicolle suggested that nowhere was more kindness and hospitality shown to the refugees than in Jersey, but this does not sit well with the proposal, put to the States, that all Frenchmen be expelled. The Chamber of Commerce protested against that proposed measure and pointed out that the immigrants brought large sums of money to Jersey, employed labour, bought provisions and therefore their residence in Jersey was very beneficial. Substitute wealthy immigrants for the French and the arguments advanced are equally relevant today.

#### **The early nineteenth century**

With the onset of the Napoleonic War the island moved into a period of relative prosperity. The build-up of defences, the splendid opportunity war presented for privateering, trade and the good prices fetched for produce of the soil combined to increase prosperity, although the estimated population in 1806 of 22,855 was not that much greater than the 20,000 thought to be in the island in 1734.

Following the war prices fell sharply, and the post-war depression in England was also experienced in Jersey. In 1816 the Chamber of Commerce presented a petition which stated that "The money expended on Public Works in the Island during the past 20 years and the maintenance of troops has proved an uninterrupted source of prosperity to the inhabitants," and the Chamber expressed concern that if the then trade restrictions were continued industry would be checked and pre-war poverty would return.

Not long after those views had been uttered however Jersey experienced a combination of favourable economic forces and entered a period of extremely rapid growth of business and of population. Robert Mudie in a guide written in 1839, commenting on the fact that in 25 years the population had grown by 60 percent from 22,855 in 1806 to 36,582 in 1831, said "This increase in population is almost unprecedented



except in single manufacturing towns under very extraordinary circumstances". Seeking to answer the question "Why Jersey has so great a population" he went on

It cannot be the fertility of the surface; because, although the entire extent were under crop, according to the best system of husbandry for producing all the necessities of life in fair proportion, Jersey could not supply food for its present inhabitants; and then, there are many articles, such as coal, and everything formed of metal, which have to be brought from very long distances. As little is it the extreme cheapness of living, which has drawn a vast population towards it, at least in so far as that living is the produce of the Island; because, if the population of Jersey was solely confined to what grows there, provisions would be higher than in any part of England. The perfect freedom of trade; the plentiful supply of provisions from the French markets, of good quality and moderate price; the abundance and cheapness of colonial produce; the fact that living among a people who are, and who have always been, their own governors in all local matters; — and above all the high and independent spirit, and the great industry and enterprise of the people themselves; must be the chief causes of the extraordinary prosperity of this interesting Island.

And later he returns to the theme:

The increase of population, and all its concomitants, which are at present so striking in this Island and its capital, are not of that mushroom kind which depends upon the caprice of fashion or anything else; but substantially and naturally involved in the physical and municipal state of the place; and the channels of trade already opened, or opening, show that there is little to be apprehended from the failure of any one trade. Amid the uncertainties of the commercial world, it has been found by experience, that places which depend almost solely upon any one single branch of trade or manufacture, unless physical circumstances are unconquerably strong in their favour, have their fluctuations, and we may add, their waxings and wanings — their rise and their fall, not so speedily, perhaps, but in the end as certainly, as those mushroom places of resort, which fashion raises up or casts down, according to the caprice of her votaries.

A very sound statement of the advantages of a balanced economy, and one that remains as valid today as then.

For thirty years or more the island benefitted from a combination of factors which in terms of the pressure on the economy might have been better if they had come separately. However, many had a common source in the absence of taxation and import duties. Privileges that Inglis in his guide written in 1834 states are necessary to the prosperity of Jersey. Without them, he says, the population would dwindle away and trade would languish, property would fall in value.

The cheapness of timber and other materials was a key factor in the success of the ship-building industry which emerged rapidly after the war — prior to the war, as Jamieson points out in *A People of the Sea*, most Jersey ships being built outside the island; cheap imported materials such as leather from France and free trade generally boosted the



trade in shoes, garments, and other items for settlers in the British colonies; cheap imported goods and the absence of income tax made Jersey an attractive place in which to live and drew in many army and navy officers retired on half pay; and cheapness of living and the attractions of the island to labour meant cheap labour which served to reinforce the advantages for ship building and the other export trades. Buoyant trading conditions meant pressure for improved harbour facilities, and the population growth produced a demand for houses, and together these activities led to increased production of building materials, including the making of bricks, which were also exported. Add to this the boom in the oyster-fishing and little wonder that the period from 1821 to 1851 were years of great economic expansion — although the cheapness of labour meant that when prices rose the poor were much disadvantaged, as occurred in 1847 when there were bread riots.

The level of economic activity in this period could not have been sustained without immigrants, and as already noted immigrants were themselves a direct contributor to the level of economic activity. Therein we have a set of factors equally applicable to the period of population growth that has occurred since the Second World War. There is a temptation, seldom resisted by historians, to seek parallels between past and present events. While there are many differences between the periods 1821 to 1851 and 1951 to 1986, there are also common elements in the influence of favourable taxation, and also the influence of immigrants in what might be described as both a proactive and reactive form.

Let me touch first on the proactive. The influence on the Jersey economy in the early nineteenth century of immigrants drawn to the island by a favourable climate favourable in terms of cheapness of living and favourable also through the relative absence of diseases that were endemic in the towns of England — was well recognised at the time. In a tract written in 1840 supposedly by a 20-year resident, entitled *Queen of the Isles*, reference is made to the fact that "Persons having incomes from £50-£100 per annum will save on average at least 30% and those having greater incomes and who consequently consume more luxuries will save more in proportion." English money also had a premium over Jersey currency. £300 in English money would fetch £325 in Jersey money, the £25 premium paying the rent of a 'genteel villa'.

Inglis in his guide refers to little price advantage for fresh foodstuffs, but there was considerable advantage in the excisable commodities, with tea and sugar being half the price it was in England. Furniture was cheap because timber paid no duty, but because of the pressure of population rents were higher than in England. In this last statement we have again a parallel with recent times.

Other features that drew immigrants were the climate, good transport links with London and Southampton, British protection and the fact that "... it was more English" — elements which also weighed heavily on those returning from the British colonies in the 1950s and 1960s in their decision to take up residence in this island.

Inglis remarks "... it is certain that there is no colony or dependency of Britain in which there are so many resident English, as Jersey — meaning by the term those who reside in a place without tie or employment". It was estimated that there were 3,000 English residents, exclusive of the trades people, settled in the island, and three-quarters of whom were Officers on half pay of the army or navy, together with their families.



As might be expected, and as is reproduced in part today, the English resident community and the natives lived somewhat separately from each other. Or as Inglis put it "... the mere fact that Jersey derives advantage from the English who spend their money in it, is no good reason for expecting unwanted civilities". He also went on to say "I will admit that there is not a perfect cordial feeling between the natives and the residents."

No doubt there were exceptions to this, but it is a fact that in communities subject to a high level of immigration some feeling of antipathy towards those immigrants is often to be found. The pressure on housing reflected in higher prices is one feature about which the native will feel keenly, and the fact that immigrants by their nature are often enterprising will frequently lead to their stealing a march on the natives in business affairs, to the chagrin of the latter.

The impact of immigration is also to be found in what I will describe as the reactive form. Business opportunities having been identified, they cannot be exploited to the full without considerable augmentation of local labour in terms of numbers and skills. This is the more so because the events giving rise to those opportunities are often largely outside Jersey's direct control, and they differ in form through time. It is not surprising that as one particular area of activity picks up it calls on immigrants to fuel the expansion, and only gradually does the introduction of local labour give that industry a more indigenous feel.

Another feature of the early nineteenth century also to be found today is the tendency for local labour to take advantage of the better employment opportunities to leave the more menial tasks to be filled by immigrants. In the 1830s, as now, the surplus labour required by farmers was immigrant — then English, Irish and French — now increasingly Portuguese. According to Inglis in 1834 "Jersey labourers are not to be obtained for hire". The same can be said of the building of Saint Helier harbour and subsequently the building of Saint Catherine's breakwater — neither possible on the back of island labour alone.

An analysis of the 1841 census of population serves to reinforce this point. But first a few facts about the level of economic activity. Between 1820 and 1824 there were 21 vessels built in Jersey shipyards totalling 1,710 tons, whereas between 1835 and 1839 the number of ships totalled 91 with a tonnage of 9,467, and between 1855 and 1859 the number of ships built was 115 of 16,743 tons. Between 1809 and 1813 there were 134,341 gallons of cider exported; between 1828 and 1832 the figure was 564,768 gallons. In the latter period too there were 55,112 pairs of shoes, 1,679 woollen jackets, 2,705 woollen trousers and 14,549 cotton shirts exported.

This activity called on immigrant skills, and for the most part those concerned took up residence in Saint Helier. The more affluent found refuge from the unsavoury conditions that then prevailed, in the new residences in Almorah Crescent and Rouge Bouillon. For the working man Saint Helier was his home and here we find in the 1841 census an interesting range of occupations for immigrants. From France there are caulkers, ships' carpenters and shoe-makers; from Ireland, labourers and shoe-makers; and among the more numerous from England, boot-makers, dressmakers and stay-makers, carpenters, quarry workers and masons, and inn-keepers. Also of interest are the number of wives of seamen, born in England, living in Saint Helier, presumably



awaiting the return of their husbands helping to crew the many vessels trading out of Saint Helier. Also there are listed many Chelsea pensioners, large numbers of whom have their place of birth in Ireland. Other occupations to appear are printers and engravers. Almost without exception all are listed as lodgers.

There is in this last statement an interesting difference between the period of rapid population growth between 1821 and 1851 and that which occurred between 1951 and 1986. Between 1821 and 1851 the population increased by 28,555 and of this Saint Helier town and parish accounted for 19,410. Between 1951 and 1986 the population grew by 23,000 and Saint Helier accounted for less than 3,000. The contrast can be further presented by referring to the number of dwellings. Between 1821 and 1851 with a population growth of 28,555 the number of occupied dwellings increased by 3,850; between 1951 and 1986 with a population growth of 23,000 the number of occupied dwellings increased by 11,600. Put another way, in 1851 the number of persons per dwelling averaged over seven; in 1986 the number was three.

Whilst referring to the 1821-1851 period, reference should be made to the oyster fishing which at its peak in Gorey led to some 4,000 being resident there, embracing the fishermen themselves and their families. Gorey was like a frontier town and from a few huts a town sprang up quickly and a Church was built in 1832 to provide services in English for the English families.

Other evidence of the influence of the immigrant is to be found in Beth Lloyd's book on the history of A. de Gruchy where reference is made to Abraham de Gruchy advertising in the *Constitutionnel* on 24th September 1826 that he now employed Mr Fisher, one of the best master tailors, and five of the best London dressmakers. There is no record of whether at that time local voices were raised in protest as to why he was not employing Jersey tailors and dressmakers. Another example of immigrant influence is the opening of Clare Street Brewery by Mr Turner in 1819, and Mr Robert Randall, who officiated as maltster at Minden Place Brewery, came to Jersey from Yeovil as a small boy with his father.

#### **The late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries**

After 1851 economic conditions deteriorated somewhat with the decline of the ship-building industry, the oysters were over fished, and periods of trading difficulties were reflected in a number of bank collapses in the 1870s and 1880s. The island's tourism industry continued to develop through the second half of the nineteenth century and there was a steady stream of English residents settling in the island, but Jersey now moved into a period of net emigration as her sons and daughters found it necessary to leave their native land to find fame and fortune. The land of opportunity was elsewhere and many Jersey men and Jersey women joined other immigrants in their journey to North America and Australia. As a result the population of 57,155 in 1851 had fallen to 52,445 by 1881 and was not to be equalled again until 1951.

This is not to say that the island did not remain influenced by immigrants in this period. In the 1880s, for example, anti-clerical laws in France led to the arrival of a number of teaching and nursing orders. These refugees of religion brought a number of benefits — De La Salle College, FCJ School, St Augustine's Home for the Aged and



Infirm, and the contribution to scholarship from members of the Jesuit community of whom Père Burdo and Père Rey were prominent members of the Société Jersiaise.

Towards the end of the nineteenth century agriculture flourished on the back of the new potato with 67,000 tons exported in 1891 and 81,500 tons exported in 1907, but in spite of the fact that the population was declining through emigration the agricultural industry, then as now, was unable to achieve this performance without the help of immigrant seasonal labour. In 1851 the census shows 2,017 with a place of birth in France; in 1901 the number was 5,836.

The influence of immigrants on the hotel industry has already been noticed in referring to the number of inn-keepers of English origin who appear in the 1841 census. Many of the hotels had strong immigrant influence in their ownership and management. For example, the Grand Hotel was built by an English company; and the Pomme d'Or Hotel in 1844 was under French management. The Royal Yacht was owned by a Mr Lowe and known as the London Hotel, ownership in 1833 passing to a Mr Miller, in 1855 to a Mr Chase and in 1896 it was sold by a Mr Parkinson to a Mr Loseley of Islington. The Peirson in the Royal Square was managed in 1875 by Mr Parris who was born in Honiton and married a Cornish lady and who came to Jersey in that year. Apart from the management, the seasonal demands of the tourism industry also called upon immigrant labour.

After the First World War the attractions of Jersey's low taxation led to an influx of wealthy settlers of whom the Boots family is perhaps best known. In 1927 the Channel Islands joined with H.M. Treasury in a conference to discuss means whereby the islands would co-operate with the United Kingdom Government in dealing with tax evaders. The debate on the introduction of income tax in Jersey in 1928 was full of fears that the tax would lead to the emigration of wealthy residents, but note was taken of the fact that no such effect had occurred in respect of Guernsey where the tax had been introduced a year earlier and where, it was stated, United Kingdom expatriates were more numerous.

The island continued to need new skills from outside. Thus the JEP reported on 4th November 1922 that Mr F. M. Burrell, Resident Engineer and Manager, Mr L. G. Hall, Mains and Contracts Manager, and Mr C. S. Fisk, Chief Clerk had been appointed as senior officers of the Jersey Electricity Company and had taken up permanent residence. Jersey was in no position to produce electricity without outside help. Indeed it is a narrow community that does not recognise and appreciate the benefits that can come from tapping the experience and skills of those resident beyond its frontiers.

But overall the period 1851 to 1931 saw a relatively limited influence from immigration. In 1851, of those aged 20 and over, 57 per cent were Jersey born, and for the population as a whole the proportion was about 67 per cent. Those born in England, Wales and Scotland accounted for 20 per cent, Ireland accounted for five per cent and France some 3.5 per cent. By 1901 the proportion of Jersey born had increased to 73 per cent, those from England, Wales and Scotland had dropped to 11 per cent, those from Ireland had dropped to one per cent but those from France had increased to 12 per cent, reflecting the greater dependence of the agricultural community on immigrant labour from that country. That picture remained little changed as far as the Jersey-born proportion was concerned in 1931, but the proportion of those born in England, Wales



and Scotland increased again and the proportion of those born in France declined.

Following the Second World War, the position again changed dramatically, and after a period of sustained population growth fed by immigration the 1986 census showed that of the 80,212 residents 51.5 per cent were Jersey born — or only 43 per cent of the population aged 20 and over — 38 per cent were born elsewhere in the British Isles, nearly two per cent were born in the Republic of Ireland, 1.5 per cent in France and 3.5 per cent in Portugal.

#### **The post-war period**

Looking at the period since 1945 we find again the proactive and reactive elements that were to be found in the early nineteenth century. A large influx of immigrants occurred looking for a place in which to live with lower taxation and a more congenial climate than that of the United Kingdom. Initially after the war the majority came from the United Kingdom, but in the 1950s and 1960s a high proportion were those retiring from former colonies. In the 1970s and 1980s those who have taken up residence as wealthy immigrants again have been drawn mainly from the United Kingdom.

As in previous times it was not only the tax level that was attractive. Proximity to the United Kingdom, the British way of life, and the services provided on the back of a successful tourism industry also had a bearing. The benefits are those also experienced in the past — the expenditure on local goods and services, and the employment of labour — but today the contribution takes a more tangible form in the contribution made by the wealthy immigrants to tax revenues. Given the affluence of the wealthy immigrants of recent years, immigration for four years at the present rate of five a year would produce additional tax revenue which would just about support the present total grants and subsidies paid to the agricultural industry.

The business expansion of the past 35 years upon which the increasing affluence of the population, and the standard and range of public services, has depended could not have been secured with the resident population alone. Tourism could not have supported the economy, as it did largely until the end of the 1960s, with a doubling of passenger arrivals between 1951 and 1961 and doubling again by the early 1970s, without immigrant labour, and in its continued support of the economy that industry remains equally reliant. Initially Italy was a major source of labour; now it is Portugal. In large part the immigrants were transient but many enterprising members of the immigrant community remained and developed business enterprises in which restaurants figure prominently and which residents currently enjoy.

With the emergence of the finance industry in the 1960s Jersey again faced a business opportunity that could only be tapped successfully, at the speed at which business developed, with outside assistance. The island had accountants and bankers in 1961 but not sufficient to support the growth of finance business that was to occur. What can be seen from the census data is a picture to which earlier reference has been made. In 1971 there were 858 males engaged in insurance, banking and finance, and of those 26.6 per cent were Jersey born and 23.5 per cent had been resident for more than 10 years; by 1986 the number had increased to 2,367 and the proportion of Jersey born had increased to 33.2 per cent and those with more than ten years residence had increased to 32 per cent.



And so this trend can be expected to continue, particularly if the growth rate of employment moderates and the skill requirements remain broadly unchanged. I mention the last because if a new skill requirement is called for to sustain the industry, again this is only likely to be met in the quantity called for, by immigration. An obvious example at the present time is the need for persons with experience in computer-related skills.

Alongside this expansion of the finance industry and the affluence associated with it has gone a demand for a wide range of support services. Over the period 1971 to 1986 the population grew by nearly 8,000; over that period there was an increase of some 7,000 in employment of which the lion's share was accounted for by the finance industry. The affluence of which the finance industry had been the main provider also shows up in the increase in employment in retail and wholesale distribution, and miscellaneous services such as garages and restaurants; and in the increase in employment in public services, and health care and education in particular. As in the early part of the nineteenth century both the skills required, and the basic employment needs, could not be satisfied from local sources alone. Local residents — particularly those with the advantage of residential qualifications — seek employment in the higher-paying finance sector, a fact reflected in the 40 per cent of those leaving school going into the finance industry. This, together with the overall level of economic activity, leaves gaps particularly at the bottom of the jobs ladder which can only be filled by immigrants who for the most part find accommodation as lodgers in the built-up area of Saint Helier, like their counterparts in the early nineteenth century. There is, however, a difference from the earlier period. In the early nineteenth century those who were moving to the island were drawn from communities where their standard of living would have been little if any better than that to be found in Saint Helier. There were limited opportunities even for those with skills in the land of their birth. Today the accommodation available to many immigrants is significantly less attractive than that which those with ability and skill can expect to enjoy within the United Kingdom and elsewhere. This has an obvious and expected influence on the nature of the immigration flows.

It is perhaps attractive to think of Jersey without immigration pressures, but no one appears ready to forego the benefits of the level of economic activity that those immigrants have supported. In the 1930s little investment took place in education or public health facilities and in 1931 there were only 800 more occupied dwellings than in 1911, and the average number of persons per dwelling was nearly five. Many young Jersey men and women had to emigrate and, although a time of peace and plenty in conditions of price stability might be recalled by the haves, the many have-nots did not feel the benefit. During the 1920s the States found themselves faced with a cash shortage and in 1928 income tax was introduced at a rate of 2.5 per cent. The last 30 years, by way of contrast, have seen substantial investment in education and health facilities, considerable improvement in the housing accommodation available to local residents, and a significant increase in the material standard of living reflected in the ownership of refrigerators, freezers, motor cars and in the taking of holidays.

It is often suggested that Jersey could obtain all these benefits and more to come without continued immigration, and comparisons are drawn with countries in western Europe which have seen similar improvements in living standards without population



growth. But in those countries the forces of industrial change are coped with by major shifts in population between regions, or by major shifts of employees from one industry to another. In a small island, as the industrial changes take place, the opportunity for regional or industrial shift is limited. The history of Jersey suggests that the development of new industries of any scale will rely on a strong immigrant input. However, the evidence of the past is that periods of economic success and population growth do not necessarily have to continue *ad infinitum*; pauses do intervene. Who is to say when that pause will come in the future.

The past not only reveals the effect of change in economic circumstances on population levels. It also suggests that only through the free movement of people has the island been able to exploit new business opportunities as they have arisen. New enterprise, new skills, are to be found in an immigrant community and joined with local business acumen and established enterprises, can foster a prosperity from which the majority can benefit. There must be a real danger, if doors are too firmly closed, that the business developments upon which the future economic welfare of the island may depend will be stifled at birth. It is right that there should be a concern for immigration, but it is not without accident that the times when Jersey has been most buoyant have tended to be those when it was attractive to business and to people. The problems of success in the form of the motor car and the development of the countryside need to be tackled constructively, but care should be taken in curing the problem not to produce a situation where the verdict of future generations will be that the cure was worse than the disease.