

Document #1: Yes Restrict Immigration

SENATOR REED, 1924

The following passage features the reasoning of Senator Reed (R-Pa), one of the authors of the Immigration Act of 1924.

This Act was an attempt to limit and exclude certain groups of immigrants who were not from Northwestern Europe. Excerpted from "Our New Nordic Immigration Policy," Literary Digest 10 May 1924: 12-13.

“...There has come about a general realization of the fact that the races of men who have been coming to us in recent years are wholly dissimilar to the native-born Americans; that they are untrained in self-government-- a faculty that it has taken the Northwestern Europeans many centuries to acquire.

America was beginning also to smart under the irritation of her 'foreign colonies'-- those groups of aliens, either in city slums or in country districts, who speak a foreign language and live a foreign life, and who want neither to learn our common speech nor to share our common life. From all this has grown the conviction that it was best for America that our incoming immigrants should hereafter be of the same races as those of us who are already here, so that each year's immigration should so far as possible be a miniature America, resembling in national origins the persons who are already settled in our country. . . ."

"It is true that 75 per cent of our immigration will hereafter come from Northwestern Europe; but it is fair that it should do so, because 75 per cent of us who are now here owe our origin to immigrants from those same countries. . . ."