

*Immigration Act*

that, where there are mines, forests and many other great natural resources. I was in hopes that at the session of parliament which closed in 1946 the government would have come forward with a national immigration policy, vigorous, all Canadian, along the lines which I have been advocating. I urge the government to do so immediately, because we have today a piecemeal policy which is practically no policy at all, and it is going to cost the country a lot of money. No doubt there have been applications from others throughout the world for local residence in Canada to engage in agriculture, lumbering, mining and in industry. That would be a good thing for some of the industries that are now clamouring for labour.

I want to point out in connection with the immigration policy of the government in Bill No. 10 tonight, as the hon. member for Vancouver South (Mr. Green) said—and he is a lawyer with a very fine experience in the drafting of these bills—that sections 1 and 3 amend the general Immigration Act. Section 2 and section 4, deal with the repeal of the Chinese Immigration Act passed in 1923, and contained in the Revised Statutes consolidation of 1927. They deal with two different matters. Sections 2 and 4 of the bill deal with the Chinese Immigration Act, and the government has already stated that it is in favour of the repeal of that legislation. I am not opposed to any reasonable number of Chinese being allowed to come into Canada, after the three cardinal principles I refer to have been effected. I have very few Chinese in my riding, so it is not a matter that concerns me personally, though I never consider matters like that. It does seem to me, however, that before the announcement was made on February 5 that the doors would be opened for the benefit of these industries, logging, lumbering, mining and agriculture, which are suffering from lack of labour, the government had plenty of time to prepare a national policy on immigration into this country, in view of all our resources, in view of our transportation systems, with 22,000 miles of single track in one railway system and 25,000 miles of single track in the other, with the vast amount of money that has been spent on our canals, and with the developments that have taken place in connection with air travel. I say, bearing all this in mind, the government should have come along with a forward-looking aggressive immigration policy.

What have we in regard to the present policy? Last year I urged that during the recess the government should draft some scheme which would enable us to bring to this country from the old land large numbers of people who

have been displaced by the totalitarian policies adopted over there in regard to industry. Take the textile industry, coal and electricity, the cotton industry and many other industries which have been affected in the old country, with tens of thousands of people out of work, with no coal, no cheap light and fuel, with transportation services choked and all the rest of it. How can any man conduct his business over there at the present time? So I say that this is the time we should have a forward British-looking immigration policy.

Last year I called the attention of hon. members to what the people of Australia and New Zealand had done. They adopted a policy of British immigration, in connection with which they laid down three cardinal principles which I urged should be made the backbone of the whole immigration policy in this country. What were those principles? The first had to do with migration within the empire, and I referred to England, Ireland and Scotland in that connection. It was announced by the transportation companies that one hundred thousand people were waiting at the immigration offices, desiring to go to the dominions. We had no immigration reception offices at Glasgow, no office at Belfast and none at Liverpool. Some additional offices are to be opened soon, I believe, and they may be open now. I do not wish to contradict the minister, because I have a great deal of regard for him and for the patience he has shown in this debate. The fact is, however, that away back last September there were more than one hundred thousand people waiting to come here at the immigration offices in the old land. Should we forget all about those people and bring in others from off the seven seas? Should we forget the people who saved us in the darkest hours of the war, when they were all alone except for a few dominions, when the curtain of Europe was about to be pulled down, when we had the enemy at our gates? How could we forget about them? So I say one cardinal principle of our immigration policy should be proper treatment for the people of Great Britain and Ireland, who did so much for us during the war; not the south of Ireland; they did not bear a very large share during the war, but certainly we should remember what was done by Great Britain and Northern Ireland. People there by the tens and hundreds of thousands are seeking to get to this country.

Another step taken by Australia and New Zealand was to provide assisted passages for soldiers and skilled workers, and they are getting the cream of them. Would it not be a good thing for some of the large department stores and many of the minor industries in

[Mr. Church.]