

Supply—Citizenship and Immigration

Mr. White (Middlesex East): I too want to say a few words on this question this afternoon. It has been many a day since I have listened to as many worth-while speeches and contributions as I have heard in the debate that has taken place today. I am not going to take very much time. In my opinion the hon. member for Kootenay West, the hon. member for Kamloops and the Leader of the Opposition presented the views of most Canadians today so far as immigration is concerned. I do want to say something about the question raised by the hon. member for Kootenay West with respect to the treatment that traitors to the cause of freedom have received and also the two cases that the Leader of the Opposition presented. They certainly seem to hurt. I do not think Canadians generally like that attitude and the way things were handled in these instances because on the other hand they see that it is very difficult for deserving people, sometimes relatives of people already in Canada, to get into this country because of one reason—I was going to say excuse—or another.

I know of one particular case. This man was turned down and there were questions asked and answers given. I made some inquiries in the country in which he lived. I had been led to believe by the immigration department that he was ill and not able to work. I found out that he was holding down two jobs in his own country, and when he finally arrived here he made a very good citizen. Maybe he was too good a worker and someone here was afraid that he was going to hold down two jobs. Maybe that is the reason someone did not want him.

I think it was the hon. member for Kootenay West who mentioned the matter of relatives of Canadians whether they be Chinese Canadians or others. It was pointed out that these people are prepared to provide for their relatives if illness should overtake them. I think we are sometimes a little bit sticky about that although I do know that if such people fall ill and have to be hospitalized at the expense of the state the department is criticized because they allowed these people to enter the country. Several members have mentioned the relatives of Chinese Canadians and I will not dwell on that. I think the minister has already made up his mind what he is going to do about that situation. I hope he will deal with it in a Christian, democratic and humane way. I know that he will.

Some mention has been made of the rosy pictures of life in Canada that is given to citizens of other countries. I have a case in hand right at the moment. This man was

[Mr. Knight.]

coming to this country and was desirous of purchasing a farm. A certain figure was named and he was told that if he had that much money he could establish himself quite easily on a farm in Canada. That amount might have been all right back in the thirties but it was only about one-third of what is needed today. Having come to this country, having severed all his connections in the old country, he now finds having bought a farm that he does not have money for seed, machinery or livestock and that he also has a good-sized mortgage. He is going to be an old man before he gets out of the hole he is now in. Probably that amount of money would have been sufficient in some hinterland location but not in the settled parts of Canada.

I know of a German citizen who was denied access to this country. He looked around in his own land for a position and he now is harbour master of one of the great harbours of Germany. Why should he have been turned down? It was not because of the screening that is done. I have never been able to find out the reason. He was well educated and a very able man. When he was a prisoner of war in this country the farm people he was with thought a great deal of him. After he had returned to Germany and got this job he sent money back to the family with whom he had worked and paid for their trip to Germany and back out of his own pocket. He thought so much of that farm family with whom he worked during the years he was a prisoner of war, he did that for them.

Injustices do seem to occur in the department of citizenship, but at the same time I suppose we in this country have to treat everyone alike. This couple wrote me a letter after becoming Canadian citizens. In writing the letter to me the lady said:

At the age of 17 my husband joined the imperial army and fought in world war I, and then served 9 years in India. Then he came to Canada and years later, at the beginning of the war in 1939, he joined the Canadian army and served in the Canadian army until his discharge at the close of the war. It was not until he decided to visit some friends in the United States, he found out he was not a Canadian citizen.

It was at the last court held in London, Ontario, that he and his wife received their Canadian citizenship. It seems to me a peculiar thing that a man who served the cause in the two world wars would need to go through the process of getting Canadian citizenship.

I want to deal next with the Indian affairs branch. Indian affairs is one of those things for which I suppose there is