

*Oriental Aliens*

racés of the Orient; the two will not assimilate. We wisely recognize that, we realize that if the question of oriental immigration ever became one of any considerable magnitude, we would be face to face at once with the loss of that homogeneity which ought to characterize the people of this country if we are to be a great nation. From that point of view we have to assume responsibility in this matter.

There is one other aspect which I think we cannot consider too seriously, and that is the obligation that exists at all times to avoid as far as possible the danger of social and industrial unrest, to say nothing of the vaster possibility of international strife. It is futile to contend that that danger is not pregnant where the oriental races are brought into competition to any great extent with the white races. Some fourteen or fifteen years ago I had the privilege of investigating the causes of Asiatic riots on our Pacific coast, and in the light of what I learned at that time, it would be impossible for me to do other than assert that that danger is existent wherever these two different competing industrial standards make their effect felt the one upon the other.

So, Mr. Speaker, from the point of view of the maintenance of our social and industrial standards, from the point of view of the desirability of maintaining a homogeneous population, and from the point of view of avoiding social and industrial unrest and the possibility of international strife, I feel very strongly that this matter of the restriction of immigration from the Orient must be dealt with, and dealt with effectively. I believe strongly in the restriction of oriental immigration, and I think it is the duty of the Government to do all in its power to make that restriction as effective as it can be made, maintaining the good-will as far as it can be maintained of all the peoples that go to make up the vast human family.

Now, let me say a word in regard to two classes of oriental immigration which have been referred to this afternoon. I think the mover of the resolution has very wisely made no mention of the immigration from India, because there are special reasons which should incline us to take up that problem with the greatest possible care. But in the last analysis we must remember that the arguments which apply in the case of immigration from China and from Japan are applicable also, when it comes to matters of industrial competition, to the population from India; and for

[Mr. Mackenzie King.]

that reason I think any position which we take on this question with respect to Japan and China should be regarded as being equally applicable to peoples from other parts of the Orient because we will have that question as well again to deal with sooner or later.

In regard to the Chinese, it has been mentioned this afternoon that the restriction sought in that connection was effected by the imposition of a head tax, at first fixed at \$50, then at \$100, and now and for some time past at \$500. That that has been insufficient and ineffective is perfectly plain. The figures speak for themselves. The numbers of Chinese coming into this country despite the \$500 head tax are very considerable. I think we might well say that the imposition upon the peoples of another country of a head tax by a nation professing a christian civilization is somewhat of a contradiction in terms. Something has been said tonight about the heathen and the pagan. Certainly the heathen and the pagan mind must find itself somewhat confused when it seeks to appreciate the Christian ethics that lead a Christian people to make money for their country out of a tax imposed upon persons coming from another country to follow a livelihood in the country which is to profit by them. I would favour the elimination of this head tax altogether and the substitution of a method that would be not only less objectionable but also more effective.

Some years ago the Liberal government of the day sought to bring about just such a change in the method of restricting immigration from China. In 1908 I had the honour of representing this country at an international conference at Shanghai. Before going to the conference, Sir Wilfrid Laurier mentioned to me that it was his desire to do away with the head tax, if possible, and bring about an arrangement with China whereby immigration from that country to Canada thereafter would be restricted by the adoption of a system of passports over the numbers of which our government would have control. He asked me, while in China to take up this matter with the Chinese government. I did so, and as a result of the negotiations an agreement was drafted between the Government of Canada and the Government of China, doing away with the head tax and substituting therefor a passport system, with the restriction of numbers in the hands of the Canadian Government. At the time that this matter was under con-