

*Immigration Act*

as one of the united nations accepted responsibility that no legislation would be passed by our parliament which would discriminate against any person on the basis of race, sex, language or religion.

A bill of rights internationally is today being prepared and drafted by a committee under the chairmanship of Mrs. Franklin Roosevelt. On that committee eighteen nations are represented, each serving for a period of three years. A resolution was prepared giving the powers of the commission. These powers are set out in the following words, under the commission that was set up on June 21, 1946:

The work of the commission shall be directed toward submitting proposals, recommendations and reports to the council regarding:

- (a) the international bill of rights;
- (b) the international declaration or convention on civil liberties, the status of women, freedom of information and similar matters;
- (c) the protection of minorities;
- (d) the prevention of discrimination on grounds of race, sex, language or religion;
- (e) any other matter concerning human rights not covered by items (a), (b), (c), and (d).

What is the situation today? The law is set forth in the Immigration Act to which there are appended regulations. In so far as any person other than a Chinese or an Asiatic is concerned, P.C. 695 applies. Originally passed on March 21, 1931, it has been amended over the years. Of recent amendments one was passed on June 30, 1944, another on May 28, 1946, and still another on January 30, 1947, on the eve of the opening of this parliament. These regulations provide that persons may enter Canada on the terms set out in the regulations, namely, that they are:

the wife, unmarried son, daughter, brother or sister, the father or mother, the widowed daughter or sister with or without unmarried children under eighteen years of age . . .

And so on.

an agriculturist having sufficient means to farm in Canada.

an agriculturist entering Canada to farm, when destined to a father, father-in-law, son, son-in-law . . .

And so on.

a farm labourer entering Canada to engage in assured farm employment.

a person experienced in mining, lumbering or logging . . .

And so on. In other words, that is the law which applies in regard to immigration, except to Chinese and to Japanese. What we are doing here today is setting up a different basis from the general one upon which immigrants are admitted to this country. What will the position be? We have accepted our responsibilities under the charter. We have agreed to discriminate against no one. What the minister is asking parliament to do today is to

[Mr. Diefenbaker.]

approve, first, the continuance of the orders in council instead of submitting the whole question of immigration to the consideration of parliament. Second, he is placing the Dominion of Canada in the position that when we pass this law we thereby discriminate against the Chinese, and will find, by so doing, we may destroy our entire immigration law by having under our united nations obligations to restrict immigrants from all parts of the world to those who are able to qualify under order in council No. 2115. In other words, you say to the Chinese that they may come in only on the basis that they are the wives or unmarried children of Canadian citizens legally admitted to and resident in Canada, who are in a position to receive and care for their dependents. Having regard to our responsibilities under the united nations charter, we may thereby be placing ourselves in the position of saying to the rest of the world that we will have no immigration here, except to the extent of those desiring to come from other parts of the world, being in the same position as the Chinese.

That is not an overstatement of the situation; that is my view of the responsibilities Canada accepted under the united nations organization. That indicates something of the hodge-podge which has resulted from the fact that this government has no unity on its own benches in regard to the immigration policy Canada should have. This is a matter so important and so fraught with international considerations that if ever there was a subject that should be submitted to a committee of the house to hear all sides of the matter, to have brought before it representatives of the external affairs department and also those who have attended international conferences, it is this question with a view to assuring ourselves that parliament does not place this country in the unenviable position of passing this legislation and then, an appeal being made to the united nations, being forced thereby to restrict our immigration policy to all parts of the world in a similar manner.

That is the first point I make. The second is this. What is the immigration policy of this government?

Mr. HOMUTH: Nobody knows.

Mr. DIEFENBAKER: Nobody knows; and that applies with unusual force to the members of the government. If ever there was a lack of unity it is in the government ranks on the matter of an immigration policy. That is not the only policy as to which there is lack of unity, but it is the only one I dare deal with today. What about the Polish immigrants? Does it not reveal the wonderful