

Supply—Citizenship and Immigration

The hon. member for Melville (Mr. Ormiston) asked me under which section of the Immigration Act two persons had been admitted in order to carry on their trade in Toronto in relation to trade union activities connected with Toronto's two main daily newspapers. I must tell him that it is under paragraph "H", section 7, of the Immigration Act that those two individuals have been admitted on a temporary basis, in order to perform a specialized trade, recognized as an unprohibited trade, under the Immigration Act.

Mr. Chairman, a few minutes ago, the hon. member for Comox-Alberni (Mr. Barnett) asked me what the present situation was with regard to India, as far as immigration is concerned. Here is the answer. In 1963, 860 citizens from India came to Canada, that is an increase of 575 compared with 1962.

As far as sponsorship is concerned, immigrants from India are in the same category as those coming from several Asiatic countries where the extension given to bring relatives over here is more limited than in the case of other countries.

On the other hand, special arrangements have been made with India which provide for the coming to Canada of a certain number of relatives, outside the general established rules.

Now, I shall say to the hon. member that I received recently a group of Hindus from British Columbia who submitted to me a report on the immigration problem in their country. I will look into this problem very carefully.

[Text]

Mr. Winch: Can the minister comment about the last intervention I made, concerning an allegation of an endeavour to import cheap labour?

[Translation]

Mr. Tremblay: Yes, Mr. Chairman, as the hon. member for Vancouver East said, we did receive requests from a group of British Columbia farmers to bring over Chinese workers without applying our usual selection standards.

After giving serious consideration to the proposal made to us, I replied a few days ago to the promoters of this project that, while we recognized the real difficulty they encountered in recruiting personnel to operate their various farms, on the other hand, we did not feel justified to make a special exception and lower our selection requirements in regard to that particular group of workers. As you know, Mr. Chairman,

although we are willing to assist all particular groups who are in need of manpower, we have always insisted that such workers should be sufficiently qualified to be able to find jobs in other places besides the one from which the request originated. Adequate training is essential because they might have to take on a new trade or adapt themselves to new ones, if need be.

Therefore, we felt that this particular project did not deserve special attention and that, if some Chinese people could come, under present regulations, and were interested in working on those farms, they could always do so. But we did not think that we had to give special attention to this request.

[Text]

Mr. Orlikow: I wonder if the minister would give consideration to the suggestion which implicitly I made earlier, but which explicitly I shall make now, that he meet with the premiers of the West Indian members of the commonwealth to explain Canada's immigration policy with respect to immigration from the West Indies?

It creates a bad image for Canada when the premiers of other commonwealth countries, like the one I mentioned previously, have the impression and belief that it is easier for people from southern, eastern and central Europe to come to Canada, even though they are not citizens of the commonwealth, even though in many cases they do not speak English, even though they have not lived in a democratic society, than it is for people from the West Indies.

In my earlier speech I said I was satisfied that the attitude of the department is now much better than it was previously, but it is a serious matter that the political leaders of West Indian countries believe this country still discriminates against them. I do not suggest that the minister meet with these premiers tomorrow, or next week, but maybe this house will have a recess some time, at which stage the minister could make a trip to the West Indies and explain our immigration policy to political leaders there.

[Translation]

Mr. Tremblay: Mr. Chairman, I think this suggestion is most interesting, so much so that I have accepted to have lunch next week with the high commissioner of Trinidad, for the exact purpose of discussing the special immigration problems which this particular area of the commonwealth may present, with the idea that, on both sides, better