

As far as British Columbia's standing on the oriental immigration question is concerned, it is nothing new. We have felt this way for forty years. It cannot be laid to war hysteria, and despite the objections of the Minister of Immigration, we have never separated the Chinese question from the Japanese problem, for the same reason that we have found during our experience that they cannot be assimilated or blended into the national life as other groups—Caucasian groups—have been in the past.

Undoubtedly the Chinese have been much more hardly treated by this country than the Japanese. The Chinese were brought out in the first place as coolie labour in 1780 by, I regret to say, British men o' war to work in the gold fields on the west coast of Vancouver island, and they were left there, when the British left, to be butchered by the Indians. Again they were brought out as coolie labour at the time of the gold rush in the Fraser river, and once more by the C.P.R. Their womenfolk were not allowed to accompany them, and for the most part they were brought as contract labour and had the humiliation of paying a head tax as though they were imported goods or cattle. All these things were done to them in an effort to stem immigration from China.

Although the people of British Columbia were no more enthusiastic over Japanese immigration than over Chinese immigration, similar obstacles were not put in the way of Japanese immigration, despite the opposition of the British Columbia legislature and of the people of that province, and the reason was easy to find. China was a weak and divided nation and Japan a powerful nation, and so we had the farce of a gentleman's agreement with Japan which allowed practically uncontrolled immigration of men and wives from Japan to this country.

These things, however, are all water under the bridge. I believe that those of us who voted for the citizenship bill last session did vote to give all people in this country today certain rights as Canadian citizens, and I believe the time has come to give the Chinese now in Canada those rights. But before we go farther with the bill, we from British Columbia want to know how far we are going when we give these Chinese who are here in this country these rights. Certainly it is an unnatural way to live, as these men have been forced to live, away from their wives. The fact that in twenty-three years so few of them have intermarried shows the difficulty of ordinary biological assimilation.

The hon. member for Comox-Alberni (Mr. Gibson) made the point that no other immigrant group who came without their womenfolk failed to assimilate with women of the country. The other point, which was touched on by the hon. member for Spadina (Mr. Croll) and the hon. member for Rosetown-Biggan (Mr. Coldwell) is the fact that so few of the Chinese not born in this country have become Canadian citizens—some 2,000 out of 26,000, according to the minister's figures. It is true that there was a certain disability because of the understanding with China in 1931; nevertheless that is much the lowest record of any immigrant group in Canada, far lower than even the Japanese.

The British Columbia legislature is taking a forward step in giving Canadian-born Chinese who have been through our school system the vote. They are doing so at this session—at least that is expected—and the people of British Columbia would not object to Chinese, scattered across the country, having the same rights as other Canadian groups as regards enjoying the comforts associated with their wives and families. We western members of parliament who spend half a year each year away from our families will sympathize with the Chinese in that respect.

Before I vote for the bill, I should like the minister to give the house, and the British Columbia members especially, some indication of what our immigration policy will be as far as other Chinese are concerned. The great majority of the people of British Columbia today are prepared to give the orientals now in this country citizenship rights; but, after long experience with them, we do not want more oriental immigration, apart from the families of these men, from either Japan or China.

In conclusion, I feel obligated to make some remarks about the Poles. I had the great fortune and honour to serve with some of them in the middle east. The story of the Poles is not as well known in Canada as it should be. Many friends of the Labour-Progressive party and the Communist party have taken a delight in smearing them as fascists. They forget that when Poland fought against Germany, Russia had attacked Poland from behind; and Poles fought against Russia as well as against Germany in defending their native land. They forget that the Poles who were captured by those Russians were taken back into Russia as forced labour and put into concentration camps. Those are these same Poles whom today the virile and healthy members of parliament, who never saw a shot fired, such as the hon. member for