

some approach to decent wages, and even when many are tramping the streets in vain search for work. When labour sells, it is not merely in a free trade market, it is in a market with competition intensified by your immigration policy.

For the labourer you have an immigration policy which compels him to sell cheap, and which enables the capitalist to buy cheap. When the labourer goes to buy, you raise the market against him, you make his market dear, and you help the capitalist to sell dear.

The immigration policy must be examined with the tariff policy. They are but two parts of the same system, and they are most ingeniously devised to swindle the workmen for the benefit of the rich every day in the year. . . . Whether it is the intention of the government to right these wrongs, or at least to seriously grapple with them with a view to a remedy, we do not profess to know, but we do know that justice demands the abolition of the present immigration policy. It is no more, the duty of the government to seek cheap labour for capital than it is to seek cheap goods for labour. What is clearly the duty of the government is to seek to maintain in every possible way the material prosperity of the people, which will be simply impossible as long as one class of society is enabled on every hand to rob the other.

In these letters the Trades and Labour Council of Winnipeg state more fully than the Trades Congress of Canada the position of the labouring people on the immigration policy of the country as it has been operated in the past.

Coming to the immigration department as we have it to-day, I may state that it was with considerable regret that I saw that the same amount of money was being asked this year as was asked last year for the maintenance of that department. I quite understood from the remarks of the hon. Minister of the Interior last year that high water mark had been reached, and that we might look for some reduction in this respect. I think the time has come when the expenditure and the scope of the immigration department might begin to be gradually reduced. I must say that I view with some alarm the growth of the different agencies and the machinery of that department. At some time this government will pass away and another will take its place, and if this machinery then continues to be in existence, though its parts may be changed, it will be set at work again and probably increased. We have seen by the reports from the various officers that there is now a limit to the immigration which can be expected from Great Britain and the northern countries of Europe. The officers themselves report that it matters not what effort is put forward, there is a limit to the immigration which can be expected. Therefore, our efforts and our increased expenditure are being directed to southern Europe; and while I would not at any time or under any circumstances underrate or put a stigma upon my nation or class of people, yet we must recognize that some immigrants are desirable and that others

are less desirable. We know that the most desirable immigrants come from the north of Europe, Great Britain and the United States; and I think we are making a mistake, and even practically committing a crime against the people in the sparsely settled portions of the country who have to live with those people, in bringing such large numbers from southern Europe. As the hon. member for Alberta (Mr. Oliver) said, we should not extend our operations there, but should watch the immigration that comes from there. We have already so considerable a population on the prairies from southern Europe, and there are such large reserves yet to be drawn upon, that without the immigration department spending a cent, it may be expected that that immigration will continue in the natural course, as in the United States, where, in spite of all their restrictions, immigration still continues, because people will go where their friends are. It seems to me that it would be wise to take note what class of immigrants we are getting from those countries; and instead of spending more money, we should curtail the expenditure as far as possible and as quickly as possible, reduce the number of our immigration agencies, and get the department down to something like respectable limits, where it would no longer be looked upon as a place where room can always be made for one or two more appointments. We should begin by lopping something off. This is what the country expects; at any rate, it is what we expect in the west. There is no doubt that our immigration policy has been successful in that it has brought immigrants into the country; and I quite agree with what was said by the hon. member for Selkirk (Mr. McCreary) that it is recognized by people belonging to both political parties as having been a success. He told us, for instance, of the resolution of the Winnipeg Board of Trade and about their saying that if that was the immigration policy of the government, they hoped it might continue. That may be so. The Winnipeg Board of Trade is a very honourable body; but at the same time it is a class body; it represents the wholesalers almost exclusively. I remember when the hon. Minister of the Interior was speaking in Winnipeg on this question in the fall of 1899, when it was not a very popular question, he showed us the effect of the policy, and like the hon. member for Selkirk pointed out to-day that it was building up the city; but the sum and substance of his remarks was this, that in five years there would not be a wholesaler in Winnipeg but would say that this policy was the best. Granted that the wholesalers may say so; but we want some attention paid to the settler and the labourer. We feel that a government which can spend so much money on a matter of this kind, which is looked upon as outside the regular