

The problem for us arose over sixty years ago. The first influx of Chinese into British Columbia was in the Cariboo gold rush back in the early sixties. But the first real rush came during the building of the Canadian Pacific railway early in the eighties; and from that time on the question has been of great concern to all the members from the province of British Columbia. At the time of the 1901 census there were 17,312 Chinese in Canada. Between 1901 and 1907 only a handful came in. Then from 1907 to 1910 there were 5,927; between 1910 and 1915, 25,740 came; between 1915 and 1918, the war years, only 1,250; from 1918 to 1919, in one year—as from March 31, 1918 to March 31, 1919 4,333 entered Canada; from 1919 to 1920, 544; from 1920 to 1924, 5,566. Of course the Chinese Immigration Act was passed in 1923, and for all practical purposes that ended the immigration.

I am not going to discuss at length the difficulties in connection with the immigration. There has been difficulty in assimilation. Also Chinese labourers coming into Canada have had a far lower standard of living than our own people, with the result that there has been great competition with our own people. Even today in British Columbia there is a minimum wage for Chinese, and I think also for Japanese and East Indians. Mind you, although it used to be written right out in the regulations, now it is not put so plainly, but with regard to saw mill workers, ten per cent of the employees may be paid less than the minimum rate of 50 cents an hour, but not less than 40 cents an hour; in box manufacturing, twenty per cent may be paid at a lower rate; in household furniture manufacturing, fifteen per cent may be paid at a lower rate. As I say, there is no specific mention of any races, but as I understand it the purpose is to enable the payment of a lower rate to the Chinese, Japanese and East Indians.

Always underlying the public uneasiness and unrest has been the threat of a large influx. With that threat removed in 1923, the friendly feeling for the Chinese people steadily increased in Canada. The Chinese are scrupulously honest; they are loyal friends and are very well liked in my own province of British Columbia and, I think, in other parts of Canada as well. I am sure that every hon. member of this house has the greatest admiration for the way in which the republic of China stood up to the Japanese aggressor, took a pounding such as no other nation has taken in modern times, and came through successfully. The feeling has improved to such an extent that in British Columbia at the coming

session of the legislature, which opens today, it looks as if the vote will be given for the first time to the Chinese and the East Indians. I suggest that it would be unwise to destroy this good relationship and opening the gates to an influx would probably do that.

I suggest this course to the government. I suggest that Canada negotiate a treaty with China—and negotiate across the table on a man-to-man basis, each side treating the other as a full equal—restricting the Canadians who can settle in China to those whom the Chinese government want to settle there and letting Canada do the same thing with regard to the Chinese. For example, I think we could very well have many more Chinese students come to this country than we have had. There is no reason why many of them should not be studying in our Canadian universities. They would make a great contribution to our universities, and, I think, to our people. Possibly Canadians would benefit too by studying in Chinese universities. Let us treat this question on a friendly, man-to-man basis.

So much for the question of Chinese immigration. There is a broader issue, quite apart from Chinese immigration, which the minister brought up this afternoon, and I was surprised to hear him make the statement he did. It is another issue on which we are entitled to a statement from the Prime Minister. Have the united nations any jurisdiction over immigration into Canada, or have we the right to decide who is to come to our shores? That broad question was raised before the united nations trusteeship committee last fall when some of the countries took the position that Australia and New Zealand had no right to have exclusion laws. It has also been raised in Canada by some groups which are using it to further their own arguments and trying to bludgeon Canada with the threat that the united nations will do this or that if we do not let them run our business for us.

Mr. LOW: It should have been considered last year.

Mr. GREEN: Right here in Canada today we have a responsible minister of the crown making the same statement. Their argument is based on chapter 1, article 1, paragraph 3, of the united nations charter, which reads thus:

The purposes of the united nations are:
3. To achieve international cooperation in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural, or humanitarian character, and in promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion . . .