

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE

THE SENATE

WEDNESDAY, March 26, 1947.

The Standing Committee on Immigration and Labour, which was authorized and directed to examine into the Immigration Act, met this day at 11.00 a.m.

Hon. Mr. MURDOCK in the Chair.

The CHAIRMAN: Honourable senators, I think we should first put on the record the motion that was made by Senator Roebuck and which is our authority in this matter.

That the Standing Committee on Immigration and Labour be authorized and directed to examine into the Immigration Act (R.S.C. Chapter 93 and Amendments) its operation and administration and the circumstances and conditions relating thereto including:—

- (a) the desirability of admitting immigrants to Canada,
- (b) the type of immigrant which should be preferred, including origin, training and other characteristics,
- (c) the availability of such immigrants for admission,
- (d) the facilities, resources and capacity of Canada to absorb, employ and maintain such immigrants, and
- (e) the appropriate terms and conditions of such admission;

And that the said Committee report its findings to this house;

And that the said Committee have power to send for persons, papers and records.

Senator Roebuck brought about the convening of this committee again this session, and I think perhaps he might go ahead now and tell us what he thinks we should undertake to do.

Hon. Mr. ROEBUCK: Mr. Chairman, as sponsor of the motion, I suppose the finger does point to me when we assemble. The committee did a great job last session and undoubtedly had a very great effect on public opinion, and I rather expect, also on official action. There have been two revisions of the regulations since our committee was appointed at the last session, and there seems to be an impression abroad that another revision will be made.

We are a fact finding body more than anything else, though we have the right to make recommendations, and do; but our main function is that of finding the facts.

At the last session we had before us quite a large number of very interesting witnesses. They made a great contribution to this most important subject of immigration. I suggest that we follow somewhat the same plan, but in addition we issue today a general invitation to anybody who has information or who wishes to express views that do not just affect his own case. Of course his own case should go to the Immigration Department; but if he has general views, to come here and tell us what he is thinking.

It is important to note that since the last session we now have offices in Europe. During the last session there was only one immigration office for that area, and it was in England. It had not been closed during the entire war period.