

tion by those who will represent Canada around the international table dealing with the problems of the united nations. I cannot imagine that anyone from Canada would want to feel that this country could be properly criticized for that particular failure or limitation in our democratic principles.

The hon. member who just took his seat spoke about the number who would be involved if all our citizens of Chinese origin were permitted to send for their wives. It is not a matter of a thousand or two that must be taken into consideration; it is a matter of principle. We are either going to extend the principle or we are not, and the matter of a hundred or fifty or two hundred or a thousand or five thousand does not come into the picture at all. I do not see that there is a shred of argument in favour of stopping short of giving Chinese residents of Canada exactly the same treatment that we give all others who come from other parts of the world.

As to the main immigration policy I have not very much I want to say. As I have said, I think the Prime Minister's statement was timely. I believe in the main it has met with favourable response from the house.

I have just listened to an hon. member who, speaking on this phase of the discussion, made reference to Great Britain. He said that Britain is an occupied country—occupied by an alien government. Mr. Speaker, that statement will stand on the records of this parliament as a monument to the ignorance of that Conservative member. I am prepared to leave it at that. I believe future history will give my hon. friend the answer. To say that a government that has been elected by the British people in a democratic way, a government that has not lost a by-election in two years, is alien, is not only to express abysmal ignorance, but to offer insult to the British people. I hope the leader of his party will apologize for him before the discussion closes.

This I want to say, that while there is great room in Canada and while there are great resources in Canada for a great many more people, and while in that regard most of us are in agreement with the Prime Minister (Mr. Mackenzie King) when he says that we should seek to gain a greater population, still I question whether we could carry out such a policy at the present time. I question whether we could get the immigrants. For from all northern and eastern Europe, including Russia—from all that vast territory—there will be no immigrants. And there will

[Mr. Irvine.]

be very little immigration from those other countries such as Norway, Sweden and Britain for some time at least.

Great Britain is not refusing to send immigrants to Canada because there is an alien government there, as was suggested by the previous speaker; but, because in her tremendous rehabilitation programme she needs all the workers she has. She cannot afford to send them out to another country. The same is true of such countries as Sweden, Denmark and Norway, and those other democracies from which, as I have said, we have in the past received such excellent citizens.

So that I think the thing for us to concentrate on at the present time—and I believe the Prime Minister said this—is that of giving priority to the refugees, of whom I understand there are between 800,000 and one million in Europe. They are homeless; they are pretty well helpless, and they are driven to the point of starvation. If we can accommodate more people in Canada at the present time, if we can fit them into our economic system and give them employment and some assurance of being able to find work by which they can live, then I think we ought to make it our first effort to take as many of them as we can. And we can afford to leave the other phases of an immigration policy for future consideration. Not only do we want to have those people from the point of view of our own population, but we owe it to them and to humanity to do our best to absorb as many of them as we can.

In this regard I would say to the Prime Minister that I think we might do more than we have done. It is true, as he pointed out, that one of our great difficulties has been to have shipping sufficient to carry them. But I think an effort might have been made to get some shipping, and I still think something ought to be done in that regard. People who are in the condition of many of the refugees in Europe are not looking for first class passage on the *Queen Elizabeth*. They will be glad to get here on more modest transports. We might very easily have used some of our cargo boats temporarily fitted up to carry a considerable number of those refugees from Europe.

Somehow or another Australia managed to bring in 50,000 children in one year, and has undertaken to take 70,000 immigrants each year. If Australia can do that, then surely Canada ought not to be behind in a programme of that kind.

Next I say that with regard to the whole oriental question I must agree with the Prime Minister that this country, like every other