

Immigration Act

As I said at the beginning, I agree with the hon. member for Vancouver South, who eulogized the Chinese of British Columbia. It is a well known fact that when you speak to anyone—and I am saying this now not because the war is finished; it was true long before the war started—and ask them which of the two races they preferred, the Chinese or the Japanese, they will answer, "I will take the Chinaman any time against the Japanese". That is the general point of view of the people of British Columbia. The Chinese in British Columbia generally speaking have been found to be people of honesty and integrity, which is something different from the Japanese. It is a well-known fact that when the Japanese first came to British Columbia they bowed lowly, but as soon as we reached the years 1937 and 1938 and they thought Japan was going to conquer the world, one could hardly speak to them, they were so proud and arrogant.

May I pass on to some of the other remarks I have to make. Here is one of the things we fear in British Columbia. I looked up the reference in the "Canada Year Book" of 1940. If hon. members will look at page 162 they will probably see something that may not have come to their attention, namely, that the Chinese are the only race coming to this land who have contributed money to the public exchequer. Over the past years they have paid a total of something over \$23 million as head tax for entry into Canada. I think the hon. member for Vancouver South was not exactly correct when he said that they came to Canada in 1860, because there were Chinese in the gold mining camps in British Columbia away back in 1845.

Mr. GREEN: I mentioned the early sixties.

Mr. REID: It has been stated that the Chinese were brought to British Columbia entirely at the request of the Canadian Pacific Railway Company and certain other employers. It is true that in years later than 1880 they did come to British Columbia to work as labourers and were brought in by certain large industrial concerns including the C.P.R., but when immigration really started you will find, if you look over the data on page 162, that the first poll tax placed upon them was \$10, the second \$50; as they were found to come in in great numbers the head tax was increased to \$100, and still the influx continued. Then it was increased to \$500 after a royal commission set up by the parliament of Canada had investigated the entire situation. This tax was paid by all Chinese immigrants except consular

[Mr. Reid.]

officers, merchants, clergymen and their families, tourists, men of science, students and teachers; and note what is set out in this volume:

In spite of this restrictive legislation, the number of Chinese enumerated at the decennial censuses rose from 4,383 in 1881 to 17,312 in 1901, to 27,774 in 1911, to 39,587 in 1921 and to 46,519 in 1931.

Mr. KNOWLES: What are the figures now?

Mr. REID: Something like 34,000.

Mr. KNOWLES: There has been a drop.

Mr. REID: There has been a drop because many have died and many have returned to China to end their days. But there is another factor contributing to the decline. Of the last number I mentioned, 43,051 were males and only 3,468 were females. Had a policy been carried out similar to the Japanese one, the policy of a Chinese woman for every man, the population would have been up to well over 100,000 in Canada. I do not think that statement can be seriously refuted. That is what makes those of us in British Columbia fearful of the open-door policy.

I agree that on moral grounds we have no argument against the introduction of wives, but we are fearful in British Columbia that if the doors are opened to admit not only the wives of those who are at present Canadian citizens either by birth or by naturalization but later the 26,000, and on top of that this is to be regarded, as the minister said, as a first step toward opening the door wide, then we may again see a great influx similar to that which took place between 1886 and 1930.

That is what we fear, and we sincerely believe that, if that occurs, most of them will remain in British Columbia, just as they are today. I maintain that British Columbia took the sensible, I will say the intelligent view back in 1904, because the provincial legislature of that day wanted to eliminate racial hatred and discrimination. They wanted the doors closed and so they passed an act prohibiting their entry. But the dominion government overrode that statute and the dominion government's views have since prevailed. I repeat that we in British Columbia have had more experience with both the Chinese and the Japanese, of which we shall probably have a little more to say in another debate. I say to you, Mr. Speaker, that we have not heard enough from the Minister of Mines and Resources (Mr. Glen) as to the intention of the government. We in British Columbia are particularly anxious to know whether this first step is the beginning of a wide open-door policy. I wish also to go on