

Supply—Citizenship and Immigration

Many of them are in business, and if wives or sons were brought in there would be no displacement of workers. The children brought in would be able to carry on the business of their parents. I might say in passing that before 1949, when we entered into confederation, no Chinese women were allowed into Newfoundland. They always had to go back to China to get married and their children had to live there, as no children were permitted into Newfoundland. But that situation was changed under the new regulations which came into effect after confederation.

A committee of members of the other place has been discussing this subject. I note from the remarks of the hon. member for Nanaimo and the hon. member who preceded me that this same problem has arisen in different parts of the country. There seems to be a generally sympathetic attitude towards the Chinese. The deputy minister has admitted in the committee of the other place that they make good citizens.

It seems to me that although these people of Chinese origin have lived in pagan communities their outlook is much like our own. They look upon the family as the most important social unit, and they consider the land as the only place where people can be brought up to be good citizens. While ethnically they may be difficult of absorption, because they have a similar attitude to our own, from political and other points of view they can be absorbed advantageously into the community. They seem to be able to fit into the community with no dislocation whatever.

This is all I wish to say, and I apologize if I have delayed the committee.

Mr. Coldwell: Mr. Chairman, I intended to raise a matter on item 60 of the immigration estimates, but since it is unlikely that I shall be here when we reach that item I hope the minister will not mind my raising it at this stage.

Before I do so I should like to say something generally regarding immigration. I have noted the differences of opinion across the chamber with regard to the number of immigrants who can be received and absorbed in this country, where they can be placed and all the rest of it. But I think it all depends on how you look at it and where you come from. If you come from an industrial centre where there is unemployment, you do not want to see immigration. If you come from an area where employment is high and where there are opportunities for settlement, then of course you can see the possibility of absorbing immigrants in quite large numbers.

It is natural that in a discussion of this sort we should have a good many different opinions expressed, even by members of the same political party. What I intended to say in that regard is that what we need in any immigration policy is a plan to settle people. I remember when Miss Margaret Bondfield came over here in 1924 and went across the country to see how British immigrants were being received. She told us in Regina that when these people come into the country there should be someone who had the kettle on to invite them in and give them a good hot cup of tea. That reception, she said, would do more to settle them than almost anything else that could be done for them.

There is a great deal in that. I was an immigrant. I came to this country in February, 1910, and in the years that followed I saw people being brought in by the transportation companies and dumped by the wayside. Fortunately there were free lands in those days that could be homesteaded. We do not have those free lands today, notwithstanding what the hon. member for St. John's West said. We do not have unlimited land on which to settle people. In those days we had large quantities of land, but even then people who came to this country were dumped by the wayside and suffered severe hardships for many years, although ultimately many of them became good citizens and good settlers.

I listened this afternoon to the plea of the hon. member for Vancouver East with which I have the greatest sympathy, as I have for the plea for coloured people made by the hon. member for York South and the plea made by the hon. member who has just discussed the problem of reuniting Chinese families in this country. I noted that the other day we received His Imperial Highness the Crown Prince of Japan with a good deal of honour, and that was the proper thing to do. I recollect that in 1937 we received Prince Chichibu, I think it was, with the same kind of honour when on his way to the coronation of George VI. I believe he was the most expensive guest ever entertained in Canada. We took him all over the country. Four years later we were at war with Japan, but when we came to the war many humble citizens of Canada of Japanese origin were treated in a manner which is a reflection upon the Christian spirit of the country in which we live today.

I think we should rectify that situation, and wherever there are young Canadians who, owing to the prejudice against them, were forced out of this country during the war years and went back to Japan because of the feeling of antagonism engendered against them, we should be prepared to take them back. I doubt very much whether under our