

*Supply—Citizenship and Immigration*

I pointed out what in my opinion was necessary in order to get the kind of immigration into Canada that the country needed and was capable of absorbing. I tried to show the minister that in my judgment immigration, housing and employment are closely related, and that if our immigration policy is to be successful and in the best interests of the country it is necessary for resources and development, labour and immigration to work very closely together in planning immigration so that we will bring in the people we need and can use and so that at the same time there will be housing for them if and when they arrive in the communities to which they are allocated.

I was developing the point that I thought we were wrong in 1952 in that we imported a larger number of unskilled immigrants than could be absorbed. Figures for April, 1953, the latest that I have seen, show that there were 184,000 unemployed in Canada, and I am reasonably sure that if you take a look at the unemployment insurance offices across the country you will see that the great majority of unemployed in Canada today are unskilled workers. At the same time in all unemployment insurance offices throughout the country you will find that there are vacancies for skilled labour. Therefore it is my view that our planning was bad in 1952 in that we brought in people who aggravated the problem already existing in the country of the large number of Canadians who are thrown into the employment stream without vocational or any other kind of training which would enable them to make a contribution.

I know that a figure of 184,000 unemployed is considered normal. In fact there are people who use the argument that it is necessary and normal in a capitalist economy to have about that percentage of unemployed. The late Lord Bennett used to refer to that army of unemployed as a shifting mobile labour reserve that could be moved around where they were needed. I have always looked upon them as a threat outside the factory gates to the employed person so that he would be easier to handle and so that his demands with respect to wages and working conditions would not be so great knowing that people from this shifting mobile labour reserve could be moved in to replace him. So much for the question of employment and immigration.

The second point I should like to make has to do with housing. The government's own experts on the Curtis committee put the shortage of dwellings at the end of 1946 at 648,000. In the six years from 1946 to

1951 inclusive net new family formations were about 513,000 and total housing construction amounted to about 496,000. There were probably 50,000 houses lost by fire, demolition and collapse from old age. Certainly the housing shortage must now be somewhere around 700,000 dwellings. Last year construction lagged behind and we have not caught up with the shortage.

In view of the housing shortage and our inability to catch up on the backlog, I suggest that the department of immigration is justified in these circumstances in slowing up on immigration and taking a look to see whether there is somewhere to house the people we are bringing into the country. In my opinion those who advocate a wide open door and unplanned immigration on the assumption that Canada is a great big country and can absorb all the people whom we can bring in and put them to work on our unlimited resources are unrealistic. I think that one of the first things the minister's department must do when considering immigrants is to make sure there is a place for them to live, and in that connection the department has to work closely with the Department of Resources and Development.

You will get the rugged individualist—and there are many of them in the house—who will say that our forefathers came to this country when it was a primeval forest and they did not hesitate. They built their own homes. Certainly, and at that time that was possible. People coming to this country could get grants of land. They could hew their own homes from the forest and build them. They may have been log cabins but nevertheless they were places in which to live. But the immigrant coming to the industrial sections of Canada today does not know whether he is going to get a job and he does not know where he is going to live. He cannot just step off the train, pick up an axe, knock down a tree and build a log cabin. Circumstances have changed. We are not living in the kind of world that existed when our forefathers came to this country and hewed their homes out of the primeval forest, as a lot of rugged individualists like to remind us today. Those days are gone.

Housing as related to immigration is a very important problem. I know that the minister must receive reports from time to time from the industrial sections of the country with respect to housing. It is a pretty discouraging proposition for an immigrant to come here with his family and find himself in a city like Montreal, Toronto or Windsor where, if he can find a suitable