

Manpower and Immigration Council

Africa, I urge them to do so as it will open their eyes as to the manner in which the immigration department operates.

• (8:50 p.m.)

The article talks about how this couple left Capetown, South Africa. They worked their way through nine countries in South Africa and eight in Europe. They worked their way to The Hague where they applied at the Canadian immigration office for entry into Canada. The article says that Mike did a stint as a deckhand on a Rhine river barge, with his wife as barmaid; then he got a construction job; that he worked in a candy factory and she waited on tables in a college dining hall. Everywhere they paid their way. They came to Canada by air line, again paying their own way. But when they got here they were told that they had misled the immigration department because they were not tourists, but would-be immigrants. The article says:

Immigration officials in Halifax believed the Neills had tried to trick them—and nothing makes civil servants more angry. The Neills, they felt, had wilfully misrepresented themselves by claiming to be tourists when they had every intention of remaining in Canada; they were not tourists at all but immigrants without visas. Said one official: "If the Neills had only told the truth when they arrived, instead of trying to put one over on us, we might have been able to help them."

I am happy that one official in the immigration department knows what is the truth. Pilate asked: What is truth? And human beings ever since have been trying to find the answer. But this immigration official knows the truth; oh yes. If they had only told him the truth he would have known it right away.

Then the article contains this interesting statement:

Then Canadian immigration ordered the couple deported. And the bitter part of deportation is that once the offenders are sent out of Canada they are seldom permitted to return.

I have already said how ridiculous it is to tell people, "You have no medical certificate with you, therefore you should be sent back to the land from whence you came." In the name of heaven, why can't they be examined in this country? We claim to have the finest doctors in the world. Even if there is some brain drain to other nations, I do not for a moment admit that the general average of medical practitioners in this country is lower than the general average of medical practitioners anywhere in the world. If doctors in Europe, Africa or South America can issue medical certificates that the immigration

[Mr. Cowan.]

department will accept, surely to heaven the immigration department of Canada will accept a medical certificate that is signed by Canadian doctors who have examined the would-be immigrant here. I think that the proposed manpower and immigration council would make such a recommendation the moment they were asked for an opinion on the matter.

I have appeared with immigrants before these so-called special inquiry officials or officers, and before the Immigration Appeal Board. I regret to say that I am not 100 per cent happy with the qualifications of the special inquiry officials and I am not happy with some members of the former immigration appeal board. I remember a case in point, which involved a Jamaican who was refused landed immigrant status here. He started off in the regular way by making an application, and he was sent to be examined by a special immigration officer—the term may be "special inquiry officer" because the initials are S.I.O. I went to the hearing with the Jamaican and I was disgusted at the way one official of the immigration department plied the would-be immigrant with questions, just as if he were a crown attorney questioning the accused in a court case.

A stenographer was there taking down the replies and questions. After finishing the questioning the special inquiry officer disappeared, and while he was out of the room he changed from his role of crown attorney, which he had taken up while examining, to the role of judge. He sat in judge's chambers for a while, came back in about 15 minutes and said, "Oh, we have considered the matter and you are not a suitable person to be in this country. You will have to get out." You have all heard the expression judge, jury and executioner? Well, the immigration department have a crown attorney and a judge, all in one person. I do not believe that these functions should be carried on by any one official of the department of immigration.

In one recent case that I had, not being a lawyer I could not collect; had I been a lawyer I would have expected to collect from the immigrant.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Cowan: The special inquiry officer asked a number of questions.

Mr. Woolliams: Perhaps I ought to raise a question of privilege.

Mr. Cowan: The immigration official asked this fellow from Jamaica a trick question in