

Supply—Citizenship and Immigration

which is to be responsible for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation's international service.

My third point is that while I do not want to impute motives to my hon. friend, I do suggest that he has not read the full text of Mr. Desy's speech. I am sure that if he had done so he would not have made the remarks he did, and I am sure that he will not succeed in the implication that he has tried to make. If that implication is there, then it is the responsibility of the hon. member for Broadview and not that of Mr. Desy.

Mr. Robichaud: Mr. Chairman—

The Chairman: If the hon. member intends to make lengthy remarks perhaps we should call it one o'clock.

At one o'clock the committee took recess.

The committee resumed at 2.30 p.m.

Mr. Robichaud: Mr. Chairman, immigration is not a problem of major importance to my native province of New Brunswick; hence my remarks before this committee this afternoon will be brief. In answer to a question which I placed on the order paper the minister of immigration informed me that during a period extending from 1949 to 1952 inclusive only 3,888 immigrants to Canada gave New Brunswick as their destination. How many actually stayed in our province we do not know and apparently cannot find out as I am informed statistics are not available.

I was interested this forenoon listening to the remarks of the hon. member for Saint John-Albert when he deplored the little use that was made by the department of immigration of the excellent facilities of the port of Saint John for immigration purposes. I am happy to be able to say to the hon. member for Saint John-Albert that, on this occasion at least, I am in complete agreement with what he said.

I realize that the hon. member for Saint John-Albert was in a rather delicate position this morning as he did not consider it advisable or wise to appear to be critical of the department of immigration. I will venture to go one step further this afternoon than the hon. member for Saint John-Albert and assert that in my submission there has been apparent discrimination against the port of Saint John, New Brunswick, by the immigration authorities.

In answer to a question which I put on the order paper in February the minister of immigration stated on March 11, as reported in *Hansard* of that day, that from 1949 to 1952, out of a total of 255,344 immigrants who entered Canada through the ports of Halifax,

Nova Scotia and Saint John, New Brunswick, 241,792 entered through the port of Halifax, Nova Scotia, as against the pitiful number of 13,552 who entered through our port of Saint John, New Brunswick. If my mathematics are correct, that means that 93 and a fraction per cent of those immigrants entered Canada through the port of Halifax, Nova Scotia, while only 6 and a fraction per cent entered Canada through our good port of Saint John.

I submit that this is something which should be looked into. I submit respectfully to the minister and his officials something which was pointed out this morning by the hon. member for Saint John-Albert, that we have very excellent facilities in the port of Saint John.

With the exception that I have referred to, as I said, immigration is not a major problem for the province of New Brunswick and I would not participate in this debate were it not that I wish to consider the problem of immigration objectively for a brief time and on a purely national level. My remarks will be directed first to the moral aspect of the problem and before I conclude my remarks I propose to bring to the attention of the minister and the committee recommendations that have been made by a recognized body of businessmen in connection with certain social and economic angles of the immigration picture.

The 1952 annual meeting of the leaders of the Roman Catholic church in Canada held in Ottawa last October decided in favour of a program to speed immigration. The archbishops and bishops of the church were of the opinion that countries, such as Canada, with unoccupied land should open their doors to people from overpopulated countries. In a prepared statement which was reported in the Canadian press of October 9 last, they said:

Immigration is a social question with many aspects. The church does not wish to pass judgment on the details of policy regarding immigration, but does point out to all that immigration is a moral question, subject to moral laws which should direct and inspire those whose duty it is to determine a policy of immigration.

The policy that governs the flow of immigration should be truly democratic and any regulations that would restrict, in an arbitrary manner, the emigration of people from an overpopulated country, or of refugees from persecuted lands would be contrary to the fundamental principles of justice and true peace.

The prelates went further and urged that action should be taken to see that families were not broken up by immigration, and their statement on this point contained the following:

Broken homes constitute a deplorable and disastrous problem, particularly when the head of the family is separated from wife and children; public and voluntary agencies should make an immediate and determined effort to reunite these families whose members already have permission to enter the country.