

is owing to the manner in which the government and its agencies worked in getting the Japanese people to go into the sugar beet fields in Manitoba, Ontario and Alberta. Of course, we have the Japanese building roads in British Columbia and we intend to use them for the cutting of wood.

An hon. MEMBER: Oh, oh.

Mr. MITCHELL: Yes. My hon. friend can laugh. It may be that the Japanese in British Columbia will make it possible for him to keep warm this winter. We are setting in motion a policy whereby we hope—I would not say expect, but hope—to have them cut 100,000 cords of wood for use in British Columbia next winter, and if we are successful I hope that the complaints that came to my department last winter owing to the shortage of fuel in that province will not occur again this winter, so far as wood is concerned.

I should like to pay a tribute to the hon. member for Vancouver South for the contribution he made with respect to the historical background of the Japanese problem in British Columbia. I think it all adds to the sum total of the knowledge which the members of this house have of the problem. I would also thank other hon. members including the hon. gentleman representing the Okanagan district. I know something of the difficulties of the people there and something of their background, and I hope that we shall be able in large measure to meet their wishes. He knows, as I do, something of the complexities of the problem in that part of British Columbia, although numerically it is not a big problem. There is a difference of opinion as between certain sections of the Okanagan valley.

My hon. friends said something about government policy and asked what we are going to do after the war. I think this matter will be settled on an international basis, irrespective of our own personal opinions, irrespective of my own personal opinions, in regard to the matter. We know that eventually, when victory is assured or is ours, there will be a peace conference. No doubt the question of racial minorities in other countries will be dealt with at that conference, not only by Canada but by the major powers engaged in the present conflict. I assume that what will be the agreed policy of all the powers at the peace conference will be the policy of this dominion.

At the moment the policy of this dominion is, first, to keep the Japanese out of the protected areas in British Columbia or in any other province. Second, to find useful work

for them so that they will be self-supporting. I think that is a sound policy. While it is not a glamorous policy and one cannot make emotional speeches about it, it is a constructive policy. I think all hon. members will agree that we have been reasonably successful in that direction. Third, as far as possible reduce the concentration of these people in large groups. I think that is a sound policy. When one considers the size of Canada, 23,000 people on a continent—Canada is part of a continent—are hardly more than pebbles on the beach. If there can be that degree of decentralization or dispersal, I do not think even my good friends in British Columbia will worry. Fourth, to see that the Japanese behave themselves, but to treat them fairly if they carry out the regulations as laid down by the government. The next is the international aspect, but I have dealt with that already.

In conclusion, I wish to thank hon. members for the contribution they have made to this debate. I appreciate that in attempting to formulate and undertake a policy as involved as one dealing with the Japanese problem it is a good thing to have suggestions and criticisms from members of this house and from people outside of the house through the members. Hon. members can rest assured that the labour department will do all in its power to face up to the problem in a common-sense, practical and humane way.

Mr. FRASER (Peterborough West): In referring to cordwood, the minister said ten hundred thousand cords; was that what he meant.

Mr. MITCHELL: I am sorry; it should be one hundred thousand cords.

Mr. REID: I am glad I gave way to the minister a few moments ago, because I believe he has given the lie to the statement made by Mr. Trueman who said that the removal of the Japanese had been demanded as a result of mass hysteria and of agitation by some members of parliament. The minister has pictured the situation as he saw it when he went to British Columbia. It was serious and the government acted wisely. It was not on account of mass hysteria. While the danger to-day on the Pacific coast may not be as great, when Pearl Harbor fell no one in this country knew what might happen in British Columbia. Here were 23,000 Japanese, hundreds of whom had bought new trucks which they had filled up with gasoline and loaded with gunpowder. They had the finest maps of the coast and they have eleven hundred fishing boats. Is it any wonder that the people of