

Supply—Justice

British Columbia, and that in dealing with the whole aspect of the problem something be done to correct this situation.

The provincial elections act says that no Doukhobor can exercise the franchise. Let me read briefly the definition of Doukhobor:

Doukhobor means a person, male or female, exempted or entitled to claim exemption or who on production of any certificate might have become or would now be entitled to claim exemption from military service by reason of the order of the governor in council of December sixth, 1898; and every descendant of any such person, whether born in the province or elsewhere.

I know of a man who has had nothing to do with a Doukhobor community for years and years. He has carried on and accepted the responsibilities of citizenship. Yet, according to the law as it stands at present, neither he nor his children for all time to come would have the opportunity to exercise the franchise.

Section 14(1) of the Dominion Elections Act has this to say:

In any province, every person exempted or entitled to claim exemption or who on production of any certificate might have become or would now be entitled to claim exemption from military service by reason of the order in council of December 6, 1898, because the—

The Chairman: Order. It seems to me the hon. member is out of order in discussing the franchise on this item.

Mr. Herridge: I think I am in order. I am making a suggestion in connection with the administration of justice with a view to a solution of the Sons of Freedom problem.

The Chairman: But the hon. member's suggestion is out of order.

Mr. Herridge: Very well. I was asking the government to give the matter serious consideration, that it be brought to the attention of the provincial government, that positive action be taken to give these people the feeling that they are recognized as Canadians, and to encourage them in greater numbers to accept the full responsibility of Canadian citizenship.

An hon. Member: Amen.

Mr. Herridge: I thought I heard someone say "Amen". I shall conclude in a few moments.

Mr. Cruickshank: It was said behind the curtain. He would not come inside to say it.

Mr. Herridge: In conclusion—and I have hurried through this as rapidly as I could; but I do feel keenly about it, and in what I have said I have been expressing the majority views of the people in my constituency—in conclusion let me say this again: punish the criminals; punish them according

[Mr. Herridge.]

to law, as an object lesson and as a deterrent to those who would continue to do likewise. Establish a policy of re-education for the mentally ill and unbalanced if necessary, through special legislation. Then, there should be citizenship training for the whole of the Doukhobor community, and for the younger people particularly, so that they may soon fit into the Canadian economy and into the Canadian social pattern.

I emphasize again that we must do something positive, and one of the things we should do is to extend the franchise to all those who are willing to accept the responsibilities of Canadian citizenship.

Mr. Fulton: Mr. Chairman, I should like to say a word on a question of particular importance to the Minister of Justice; I refer to the problem now confronting the British Columbia authorities of providing prison accommodation for those who have committed offences.

Just before going on may I say that this is a special and particular problem which concerns the hon. member for Kootenay West in whose constituency these Doukhobors reside almost exclusively. I urge upon the government as a whole and upon the Minister of Justice in particular the most serious and favourable consideration of the point of view just advanced by the hon. member for Kootenay West.

The problem which confronts the British Columbia authorities in connection with the offences which have been committed by these Doukhobors appears to be one of providing prison accommodation. According to the press articles it would seem that the Ottawa authorities are unable to understand why the British Columbia courts are imposing such severe sentences upon Doukhobors for the nudism which has been going on. According to a dispatch which appeared in the Vancouver *Sun* of June 14 the authorities at Ottawa would appear to be annoyed or irked at the sentences being imposed upon Doukhobors.

I think it is felt by all citizens of British Columbia that that attitude indicates an incomplete understanding of the problem which faces the authorities in British Columbia. Although the Doukhobors are being brought into court charged with nudism the background of the whole situation is that this particular sect of about 2,000, the Sons of Freedom, have been indulging in a campaign of terrorism and violence and arson and other things which constitute a complete defiance of the whole system of law and order in the section of the province in which they reside.