

Immigration to the United States reached its peak in 1907, the figures showing for that year 1,280,000 immigrants. For a period of ten years the immigration figures of the United States were between 800,000 and a little over a million. The war showed that in the United States—and I say this from the study I have given to the matter—they had a large percentage of population they could not depend upon in a national crisis; in other words, they found they had a considerable percentage of population which had not become Americanized. That fact was so thoroughly impressed on the United States during the war that it led them to adopt a quota system the basis of which was three per cent of the census of 1910; later the basis was the census of 1890 and the quota was two per cent. I will not give figures as to just what that meant in the way of reduction in the number of immigrants coming from certain parts of Europe into the United States. The quota system was adopted with the idea of lessening the immigration to the countries from the south and south eastern part of Europe, and giving such encouragement as they could to immigration from the northern part of Europe and the British Isles, from that part of Europe which in our immigration regulations is specified as area No. 1, so far as Europe is concerned. I would like to quote here from a statement made by President Coolidge to Congress on December 6, 1923, in regard to this matter. He emphasized the view that the United States should adopt a policy of numerical restriction based on a census prior to 1910. That was carried out on the two per cent quota of the census of 1890. I quote a paragraph from President Coolidge's message which I think we, as Canadians, would do well very carefully to consider in regard to our attitude towards immigration. President Coolidge said:

America should be kept for Americans. For this purpose it is necessary to continue a policy of restricted immigration. It would be well to make such immigration of a selective nature with some inspection at the source, and based either on a prior census or upon the record of naturalization. Either method would insure the admission of those with the largest capacity and best intention of becoming citizens. I am convinced that our present economic and social conditions warrant a limitation of those to be admitted. We should find additional safety in a law requiring the immediate registration of all aliens. Those who do not want to be partakers of the American spirit ought not to settle in America.

That paragraph in the statement of President Coolidge might be paraphrased by inserting the word "Canadian" where "American"

is used, and may with good judgment be accepted as the policy we in Canada should adopt. I believe we are rapidly nearing the time when we must, to a greater or less degree, accept that as the logical position for us to take in our immigration policy. That is to say, that we should have in mind, not merely the getting of so many tens of thousands of people to come to Canada as immigrants, but we should also consider the possibility and the ease with which these immigrants can be Canadianized and converted into Canadian citizens, as we want them to be. I make that statement and I wish to justify it by showing in my estimation the plan we ought to follow. If Canada were to adopt the quota system on the three per cent basis, in proportion to our population, we would be taking in as immigrants each year from 15,000 to 20,000. That is in proportion to our population as compared with that of the United States, we would be taking in 15,000 to 20,000 each year. That is to say, if we accepted the United States position as sound, that the United States, with a population of 120,000,000, can only—and this is exactly what they say—Americanize a certain number of people from foreign countries within a year, and therefore they restrict their immigration to that figure, then in proportion to our population as compared with theirs, we would only be able to take in from fifteen to twenty thousand immigrants from continental Europe. Manifestly we cannot place this restriction in immigration, and no one would think of suggesting its being put into force.

But I want to submit a suggestion in regard to juvenile immigration. We are told in this report, and we have every reason to accept it as absolutely correct, that every year in the United Kingdom some five or six thousand boys and girls leave school without any job to go to. We are also told that we might reasonably expect to bring a large proportion of those boys and girls to this country under some plan of juvenile immigration. The report, in referring to a number of organizations engaged in immigration work, mentions the British Immigration Aid and Colonization Association, with headquarters at Montreal, as the only purely Canadian organization engaged in bringing boys to Canada. The organization has only been active since 1924. I might point out that of the 1,862 boys and girls brought to this country by the various agencies during the year ending March 31, 1926, 446 boys were handled by this organization. The next in the list was the Salvation Army, which brought out 464, of whom 379 were boys.