

*Immigration Act*

After all, it must be realized that the immigration we now take into Canada will have a great effect on the destiny of our country; therefore we must be sure that our ground is sound before we proceed.

Many have expressed the view that the Chinese Immigration Act is detrimental to the interests of the Chinese in Canada, and that in view of our position in the united nations and the democratic way in which we live, we are not justified in maintaining it. Therefore it was felt that as a first step toward an ultimate policy of immigration we ought to repeal the Chinese Immigration Act. We have come to the conclusion that that act should now be repealed. The consequence of its repeal will be that Chinese, citizens of this country, who have resided here will be able to bring their wives and children to this country. Shortly that is what it means. What the effect will be in numbers of those admitted cannot be definitely stated at the moment. The information I have is that there are Chinese born in Canada to the number of 6,694, and naturalized subjects to the number of 2,055, making a total of 8,749. The remainder, approximately 26,000 Chinese in this country, are not in that position, and many thousands of them are over forty years of age. They may have wives in China, but they are not citizens of this country.

The effect of the legislation which the house is being asked to decide upon would be that Chinese who are not citizens of Canada would not have the rights conferred upon those who are Canadian citizens to bring to this country their wives and children under eighteen.

There are several other questions which can more properly be raised when we are in committee dealing with the clauses of the bill. I know that many members of the house will wish to have further particulars, which I need not go into at the moment. We are taking this first step towards the removal of the discrimination against the Chinese. I do not say that it is the last step, because, as I have already said, it will be a matter of serious consideration for this parliament and the people of Canada to deal with the whole question of persons of the Asiatic race which will be acceptable not only to Canada but to the other countries concerned.

Mr. CRUICKSHANK: May I ask what the minister means by "not citizens of Canada"?

Mr. GLEN: Chinese who were born in Canada are citizens, and those who were naturalized are citizens. All others are not.

[Mr. Glen.]

Mr. CRUICKSHANK: But they may become citizens of Canada?

Mr. GLEN: Oh, yes.

Mr. H. C. GREEN (Vancouver South): Mr. Speaker, this bill, No. 10, entitled "An Act to amend the Immigration Act and to repeal the Chinese Immigration Act" deals, as the title indicates, with two separate matters. One is the entry of dependents of members of our forces. As I understand the minister, the bill merely replaces an order in council providing that these dependents may come into Canada. I do not think anyone in the house would quarrel with that provision—which, by the way, is in line with the type of legislation we were supposed to be considering during this two-week period. If hon. members will turn back to *Hansard* of February 4 they will find that at page 82 the Prime Minister (Mr. Mackenzie King) said:

The government will introduce about fifteen bills which, if adopted, will replace by legislation a number of orders in council which it is considered should in the national interest be placed on a more permanent footing.

The provision in the bill dealing with dependents of men in the armed forces falls into that category, but it is going pretty far to drag into this bill also a matter which has no connection whatever with orders in council or with the war.

The part of the bill which deals with the question of Chinese immigration is not replacing any wartime order in council. It is repealing an act of twenty-three years' standing. I suggest to the minister that regardless of whether the provision is a proper one or not, that part of the bill should have been brought down, as a separate measure, later in the session when it could be discussed by itself without being involved with dependents of the armed forces. This is the type of sharp practice in legislating that should not be approved by the house. I suggest that the government withdraw the bill and bring in a measure replacing the order in council dealing with the dependents of members of the forces. Let it be considered, and then later in the session, when we have disposed of the address in reply to the speech from the throne and are dealing with the ordinary legislative programme, bring in a bill dealing with Chinese immigration. Let us not try to get it rushed through the house as is being done now.

In any event we insist that we should have a statement from the Prime Minister outlining government policy on future Chinese immigration. Today we have had an explanation from the minister which he gave in seven or eight minutes. There we have the government's explanation of this important measure.