

Mr. W. A. TUCKER (Rosthern): I do not intend to detain the house more than a few minutes, but there is one aspect of this situation which I wish to bring to the attention of the government and of the house. Before I do so I should like to express great appreciation of the part taken by the Canadian government in regard to assisting in the problem of refugees at international meetings. We were certainly pleased to see that at the meeting which set up the international refugee organization, the present Minister of National Health and Welfare (Mr. Martin), on behalf of Canada, took such a leading part in urging that the nations of the world as a whole take some interest in these most unfortunate people. That attitude was approved throughout western Canada. I am sure too that the statement made by the Prime Minister yesterday, in which he indicated that the problem of displaced persons was to get special consideration at the hands of the government of Canada, was greeted with a great deal of relief and satisfaction by many people in Canada who have relatives who are refugees and displaced persons in Europe. They will be very thankful for that statement.

I have heard people who came from Europe, because of policies adopted by the present government after the first great war and just before the start of the recent war when part of Czechoslovakia was overrun, state to the Prime Minister that if it had not been for action taken by the present government they would not be alive today. I have heard others say that they never went to bed at night without getting down on their knees and thanking God that they had the privilege to come to this free country. Therefore I do not think that members of the house can have any complete understanding, unless they know personally people who feel like that, of how much this statement of yesterday's will be appreciated by many people in Canada with relatives in these camps and among the refugees and displaced persons in Europe today.

Yesterday the Prime Minister said at page 2645 of *Hansard*:

The resettlement of refugees and displaced persons constitutes a special problem. In the intergovernmental committee on refugees, and in the discussions in the united nations leading to the establishment of the international refugee organization, Canada has taken an active part.

As I say, I am pleased that that attitude has been taken by the government.

There is, however, one matter which I feel I must bring to the attention of the government. I hope that I am not properly informed on it, but if I am, it is a matter which should receive attention at once. In the mandate of

the intergovernmental committee which was adopted on August 17, 1944, the following appears:

The mandate of the committee extends to all persons, wherever they may be, who, as a result of events in Europe, have had to leave, or may have to leave, their countries of residence because of the danger to their lives or liberties on account of their race, religion or political beliefs.

That is a statement which is in accordance with the most humanitarian traditions of our country—that if anyone has to leave his country on account of his race, religion and political beliefs we should be ready to extend to him a helping hand. Unfortunately that was not carried forward into the international refugee organization. I understand this was largely due to the pressure of the Soviet Union and the states under its influence. That is what I understand; but I may be wrong in this but I do not think I am. In any event, section (d), part II, of the constitution of the international refugee organization reads as follows:

Persons who will not be the concern of the organization:

4. Persons of German ethnic origin, whether German nationals or members of German minorities in other countries, who:

- (a) have been or may be transferred to Germany from other countries;
- (b) have been, during the second world war, evacuated from Germany to other countries;
- (c) —

This is the part that is important.

(c) have fled from, or into, Germany, or from their places of residence into countries other than Germany in order to avoid falling into the hands of allied armies.

The part that has particular reference to the people I am going to speak about is this:

Have fled . . . into Germany . . . in order to avoid falling into the hands of allied armies.

The only substantial group that applies to are the people who lived in the Baltic states, in parts of Roumania, in Czechoslovakia, parts of Poland, Russia, and the Ukraine. Those people, because of their known anti-communist attitude, fled before the advancing Soviet armies into Germany. Where it was known particularly that they were of German ethnic origin they felt that it was safer for them to find refuge in the hands of the British and Americans than to fall into the control of the advancing Soviet armies. I take it from this that the international refugee organization does not take any interest in anyone who is of German ethnic origin, where for example he and his ancestors may have lived in the Baltic states for several generations, perhaps for a hundred years. If he is of German ethnic origin and was known to be anti-