

Supply—Citizenship and Immigration

names of those who have been naturalized during the year 1952-53. I notice that there are 103 from Canada, by far the largest number from any country; 43 from England and a similar number from Germany, and several hundred altogether in the list.

They had a program which included the grand entry of colours; pledge to the flag—we might be under some difficulty in Canada deciding which flag we were to use; however, perhaps that will be straightened out one of these days—the national anthem—where we again might have some difficulty—invocation by a leading clergyman; official welcome and response by one of these new citizens who is described as of the class of 1952. Then there are selections by a choir, presentation of banner to the city of Portland, the acceptance, tribute to the flag; then an address by a former dean of the college of law; a song “God Bless America”, then the benediction and the retiring of colours. That program was recorded and broadcast over several radio stations.

On the back of the program we have a list of organizations which belong to this Portland Americanization council. It is a long list and I shall refer to only a few in which I think hon. members would be more likely to be interested. There are the American Legion with about 30 branches; the American Red Cross; the archdiocesan organization of Catholic women; Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks; B'nai B'rith; Boy Scouts of America; Canadian Legion and auxiliary—and I would ask you to note that; this is a welcome in Portland, Oregon—Catholic Daughters of America; central labour council; council of churches; council of parents and teachers; Fraternal Order of Eagles; federated Jewish society; Independent Order of Odd Fellows; junior chamber of commerce; Kiwanis Club; Multnomah bar association—I presume that is the legal bar; Portland chamber of commerce; Portland police department; Portland Lions Club and auxiliary; Rotary Club and so on. There are dozens of these organizations belonging to this Americanization council.

Is there not some way in which in Canada we can work out some friendly welcome of this type which includes representatives of all the leading organizations of the city? Perhaps we are too phlegmatic. I do not know why it is that we have hesitated for so long to do things of this type. Millions of Canadian citizens have become such by naturalization, I think a larger number than in any other country of the world except the United States. It is of such tremendous importance to make these new Canadians feel at home, feel that they are accepted as such; and I cannot think of any finer way to do it than by some such scheme as this.

[Mr. Green.]

At the present time in Vancouver, thanks to the efforts of one outstanding citizen, Will Walton, who unfortunately has passed away, the Canadian Club is doing great work in this connection. He was assisted by immigration officials, some of the judges, and various other clubs. There we do have a fine welcome given in the courts when people are naturalized. I think we should go farther and have something like this plan of the Americanization council of Portland. I presume that is happening in every large city in the United States every year, and it is no wonder that you get such a remarkable national spirit in that great country. I do hope that Canada can adopt some such method. I am sure it would help to strengthen the spirit of this nation. Can the minister tell us whether an effort of that kind would be possible?

Mr. Harris: The Canadian Citizenship Act has been in force now for only six years plus a few months. We have been experimenting with the business of the form that will be followed before the courts and the reception that shall be given to immigrants by welfare groups before that, and I must confess that to my knowledge not much is done in the way of a reception afterward, except in the city of Vancouver, as my hon. friend has mentioned. On the other hand, I have attended similar small receptions in several towns and small cities in Ontario, but as a rule they are the tentative beginning of something that should grow and be accepted more from time to time.

Nothing but good can come from a reception of that kind. It is a public acknowledgment, in addition to the legal one which is made on the occasion of their taking the oath of allegiance after they have been granted their citizenship. That is something that must be done, but this is something that will bring to the immigrant, the new Canadian, the sense of an interest in him by the other members of the community, and we are hopeful that, as I mentioned in my earlier remarks, we can find a good solution to it which would be a dignified public reception with sufficient solemnity to be impressive and at the same time friendly enough so the people would not be backward about attending.

Mr. Mott: I should like to say a few words on this matter at this time. First of all may I say I do appreciate the remarks of the hon. member for Vancouver-Quadra and of the minister who mentioned that he knew that Vancouver was doing a wonderful job—

Mr. Harris: I should have included New Westminster.