

*Immigration*

have come to this country, received assistance for a few years until they could qualify to enter the United States, and all of this takes place at great cost to Canada and a certain loss of much needed population.

Another criticism, of course, on the part of Canadians just as soon as we begin to step up immigration, is that these immigrants take the jobs of Canadian citizens and crowd Canadian citizens out of their housing accommodation. There are those who maintain that every new immigrant who comes into this country creates a demand for consumer goods, and some of them bring capital which they invest in Canada, thus helping to increase our national production. We must keep in mind that more than human need is necessary to build a strong Canadian society. It is not enough to bring in a million people, all of whom must eat, all of whom must secure clothes to wear, all of whom will need some kind of shelter, unless at the same time we provide jobs whereby these immigrants can earn the money with which to buy those necessities. There is not much gained by having hungry people in this country. Provision must be made for these hungry people to secure the means with which to buy food, clothing and housing accommodation.

I suggest to the minister and to the government that, first of all, there is needed in the department of immigration some over-all plan. Apparently the department plans from year to year. They try to estimate this year how many immigrants Canada can absorb next year. I suppose that under this government's policy that is about all any minister can do so far as planning is concerned. Surely, if Canada needs, as we all agree she does, a large number of immigrants, then it should be possible to plan our economy so that there will be employment for those immigrants without replacing some of our own employed who would become unemployed when the immigrant gets the job. It is that problem to which we must face up, and one for which some over-all planning is required.

There should be some over-all planning to provide housing accommodation. There is still a shortage of homes in Canada, particularly for those in the lower income groups. I have been in houses in my riding in which as many as 30 immigrants were housed, with whole families of immigrants living in one room. The government accepts no responsibility for those conditions, so far as they relate to immigrants the government has brought to this country. I submit, Mr. Speaker, it is the government's responsibility to make low cost housing available to these immigrants as well as other Canadians, so that they can find shelter that is not a slum.

What we are doing today under our present housing legislation is bringing immigrants into the industrial centres of this country to create slum conditions. I suggest to the government that steps be taken to ensure that our standards of wages, our standards of living, are not undermined by an influx of immigrants into this country. It should be possible to bring to this country the immigrants we need to build our economy, without at the same time lowering the standards which we have reached after years of struggle.

My third suggestion is that our selection of immigrants be on a non-discriminatory basis in so far as race, class, colour and creed are concerned. I have had occasion to raise in this house before, as the minister well knows, the case of immigrants from the British West Indies. I cite that as only one example of the discrimination that is practised by the department today. If we are to build a democratic society in Canada, then we can ill afford to shut out from our country immigrants purely on the basis of their colour, creed or race.

The fourth suggestion I make is one that has been made by trades and labour congresses, and one in which trade unions particularly and other organizations are interested. It concerns the setting up of a permanent advisory council for the assistance of the minister and his officials, a council that will be made up not only of government officials representing federal and provincial governments but of representatives of labour, management, farmers and social service organizations who are interested in immigrants.

This permanent council will give labour an opportunity to learn what the farmers' views are on immigration and vice versa. It will give the government an opportunity of learning what ideas the various groups, which constitute a cross-section of our population, have on the subject of immigration. I should like to see included on that advisory council some representative of the departments of education across this country, because I think much more should be done for the education of the immigrants whom we bring to this country than is being done at the present time.

Right here I want to pay tribute to the department on this point. I have followed with a great deal of interest the booklets they have prepared for the education of immigrants, and the assistance which the federal government renders to boards of education in centres such as Toronto and I presume other metropolitan areas for the education of immigrants, particularly in night