

cussion to the provisions of the bill, and leave a general discussion of immigration to a later date.

Mr. GREEN: May I point out, Mr. Speaker, that surely it is not a question of what we agree to do as members. Either we have the right now to discuss this question fully or we have not. Those of us who are objecting to the minister's objections say that there is the right to discuss this immigration question in its broad implications. If Your Honour is going to rule against us on that, of course we have the right to test the opinion of the house as to whether your ruling is correct. I submit that we should not be put in the position of being told: Oh, you have agreed that you will only discuss (a), (b), (c) and (d). Either we have the right to discuss the immigration policy in its broad implications or we have not that right.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I stated previously that there had been only one agreement reached in the house and that was with respect to Japanese immigration.

Mr. GREEN: There was no agreement on that.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I understand that the members are not going to discuss Japanese immigration at this time.

Mr. FRASER: Why not?

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I am not going to rule and I have not ruled out of order a discussion with regard to the immigration of other peoples, but I have suggested that such a discussion might take place at a later date when the minister's estimates are before the house. All I am doing at the present time is to suggest to the house that they do not go into a full discussion of immigration now.

Mr. GREEN: Then am I to understand, Mr. Speaker, that you are not making any ruling but just giving a gratuitous suggestion?

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I do not think I can make myself more clear.

Mr. THATCHER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I shall take only about five minutes to discuss one or two aspects of immigration which I believe are important. Time and again the government has expressed concern about refugees and displaced persons in Europe. Yet the words of the cabinet ministers and the actions of the immigration branch are strangely contradictory. On January 30, 1947, the government passed an order in council, P.C. 371, adding certain admissible classes. I welcome those additions, but we must realize

that we still have no solution of the over-all immigration problem. The government has simply yielded a little more to public pressure and added another patchwork measure. It is like the doctor who puts salve on a sore. He eases the pain but does not get to the crux of the disease.

I criticize Canada's present immigration policy and our immigration laws in general for two main reasons. First, we still have no permanent long-range policy, and second, as a nation we still have refused to recognize the seriousness of the refugee problem. Last session an hon. member of the other chamber gave this description of our immigration policy:

Canada's present immigration policy is a policy to keep people out, rather than to bring them in.

I think that statement is a correct one. The government of Canada, despite its fine words from time to time, has displayed an appalling lack of humanitarian interest in the displaced and starving peoples of Europe. The war resulted in millions of these people being dislocated, uprooted, scattered far and wide. Many have been unable to return to their homes, and most of them are living in abject poverty. Almost two years after the crushing of the nazi power, there are still some 800,000 persons who are forced to live in concentration camps in Europe, exclusive of the Russian zone. They are living under military guard. It is true that these camps do not fly the swastika, nor do they practise torture, but they are concentration camps nevertheless. The only crime of the inmates is that they have no passport and no country to which they can go.

The most shocking fact about the plight of these displaced persons is not that they are interned. It is the fact that the allied nations, including and particularly our own, have the means to open the door for many of them, but have refused to do so. We seem to be getting used to these concentration camps. With hundreds of thousands throughout the world being starved, mentally tortured and beaten, Canada is standing complacently,—idly by. Although we have thousands of square miles of territory which are not being used, our nation stubbornly refuses to give sanctuary to any number of these people. Our harsh and inhumane treatment of these people is inexcusable. Thousands of persons who have sought sanctuary in Canada over the past fifteen years are today dead because that sanctuary was not granted. Surely this is something the department should act on, and act on soon.