

Supply—Citizenship and Immigration

However the question raised in my mind is this: What is the long-term policy with regard to immigration. Is there a long-term policy that bears any relationship to the question of racial origin? Or should a policy bear any relationship to the question of racial origin? Those are questions that puzzle me. I notice from the table from which I have just quoted that in this last year for which the department is reporting, the largest racial group entering this country was German, the second largest was Italian, the third largest was Dutch and the fourth largest was Polish.

Mr. Harris: I wonder if the hon. member would be completely fair and not class the English as a group, but rather class those from the British Isles as a group.

Mr. Churchill: Oh, I think the minister is becoming unduly disturbed. I am not attempting to be unfair at all.

Mr. Harris: The hon. member made that statement on a former occasion, and I believe I corrected him at that time. I pointed out that when he used the word "English" he was referring to English people, and not to Scottish, Welsh or Irish. Whereas, for our purposes we lump them together; and I think most people do that in Canada. The people of Canada think in terms of the British people, people from the British Isles. And I am sure if my hon. friend would use that classification he would not be indicating, as he is about to do now, that people of British origin are about fifth in order.

Mr. Churchill: No, by no means; I had no intention of saying that at all. These groups I am speaking of are exclusive of the ones I mentioned earlier. I am speaking of the 39 different groups, other than English, Irish, Scotch, Welsh and French, who have entered this country. And I was giving the four, in their order of importance. I was not attempting in any way to indicate that the people from the British Isles did not exceed any one of those groups.

Mr. Harris: I am sorry if I misunderstood my hon. friend.

Mr. Churchill: Perhaps the minister should attempt with me the same type of softening up process the hon. member for Saskatoon has reported. I have not had the pleasure of that treatment.

The conclusion I draw from my remarks so far is that there appears to be something in the nature of a policy—or is it just accidental?—whereby some groups appear here in larger numbers than do others. Is it important that we should give our attention to this particular question? I am not certain that the minister has gone into this problem and thought it out

[Mr. Churchill.]

as to the various racial bases for these particular countries. But it may well be that we should give some consideration to it. If Mr. Gurton's forecast is accurate, showing that within another 50-year period people of British stock, who comprised 57 per cent in 1901, by the end of this century will comprise only 32 per cent, it is obvious that there will be a considerable change in the nature of our people.

Whether that change is desirable or not, I am not questioning at the moment. I do know from practical experience in life that the process of assimilating immigrants to the Canadian way of life is not the easiest thing in the world. I spent a sufficient number of years in the field of education to know the difficulties that confront the Canadian people in assimilating even the best of immigrants to the Canadian way of life. And as I have said on other occasions in the house, that needs to be taken into consideration when you are dealing with the question of immigration. Immigrants are brought in here and distributed across the country. The municipalities then must assume the burden of assimilating them to the Canadian way of life, and making them good Canadian citizens. And the greater part of that burden falls on the shoulders of those who are in the field of education. It also falls upon the shoulders of the taxpayers who support the school system.

I am not at all certain that the government in formulating its policy with regard to immigration, if it has one, has taken that into account. I think it is a vitally important matter. We are concerned not only with the numbers of people who enter this country, it is not a question of whether we will have 15 million or 30 million; rather we are concerned with the type of people who are here, and the type of citizens they may become.

Now, to complete my statistical survey. I gather from these figures in the departmental report that a major change in policy occurred in 1949. Up to that date the British nationals coming to this country numbered over 50 per cent of the total number of immigrants who came here annually. In 1949 the situation changed. Let me place on *Hansard* the figures as they appear in table No. 1 at page 28. People coming from the British Isles, including all those other areas in Great Britain I mentioned earlier, totalled 42,830 in 1949. Others, from overseas—not from the United States—totalled 75,467. Then, in 1950 there were 20,062 from the British Isles and 58,700 others. In 1951 the figure for the British Isles is 17,161 and for the others it is 60,187. In 1952 there were