

*Immigration Act*

done. I believe what he said covered most of the points members from British Columbia would need to discuss.

I also most heartily endorse his observation that he is disappointed at the statement made by the Minister of Mines and Resources (Mr. Glen) upon introducing the bill. I consider that the minister should have made a statement which would have clarified the government's position in respect of Asiatic immigration. The house was entitled to that, and I agree with the hon. member when he says that to have tacked on to this bill the Chinese Immigration Act is unfair to hon. members, not only those from British Columbia but to all hon. members, because this is something of vast importance to the country at large. It is not a subject affecting British Columbia alone.

With all the power at my command I would urge that the minister withdraw sections 2 and 4 in the bill, and that he bring them back to the house as a separate measure. When he does that I believe the Prime Minister (Mr. Mackenzie King) should give us a definite statement on what the government's policy will be in respect of Asiatic immigration. The brief statement made by the minister this afternoon, to my mind did not sound like a statement at all. It sounded more like a petition in bankruptcy. Probably there was a certain bankruptcy of ideas.

Surely the government must have some ideas as to what it intends to do so far as immigration from all sections of the world to Canada will be. The statement made this afternoon by the minister is unfair to hon. members who are charged with the responsibility of trying to formulate policy in Canada.

There was some discussion this afternoon about the first Chinese immigrants to Canada. They happened to come to my constituency in 1788—many years ago. So far as I know, that is the first record of complete oriental assimilation we have ever had in Canada. They disappeared into the wilds of the Gold River valley, and have never been seen since.

What worried me particularly was that, while the minister could not give us any definite figure, he did indicate that probably somewhere about 8,000 wives would come to this country under the present legislation. So far as I can ascertain, there are 29,713 males who either have wives in China or have not wives but who no doubt would go back to China to get them. I feel that, while at the present time there are only 8,000 who may be entitled to bring their wives in, there is certainly nothing to stop the other 21,000 from becoming eligible for Canadian citizenship. In such event they would be able to

[Mr. J. L. Gibson.]

apply to have their wives brought to this country, too. I see no reason why they should not do so, if they feel so inclined. So far as I can see, there is nothing under the present legislation by which we could stop them.

When we bring in 30,000 wives to this country we see at once the situation that develops. The Chinese is a good family man. Each wants a son. So, to be fair, giving each of them three children we have a total of about 90,000 children.

Some hon. MEMBERS: Oh, oh.

Mr. GIBSON (Comox-Alberni): To tell the truth, I do not think it a matter for laughter to accept into this country 120,000 citizens of one nationality.

As a matter of fact, the Chinese have had a poor record from the point of view of assimilation in this country. The very fact that there have been almost no Chinese marriages with people of other races in Canada would indicate that there is not much chance of their ever being assimilated. When one considers the fact that they have been isolated from Chinese feminine companionship for twenty-three years, and that there has been no assimilation in that time, despite what one might consider provocation or urge, this would seem to indicate that if they have not been assimilated during those twenty-three years there is not any great chance of this happening in the future.

When the English and French settlers came to this country they did not have their wives with them, either. Despite that, however, I understand that the history of the Hudson bay was founded on mixed marriages. Probably that is why there are so many Mackenzies and MacTavishes in the far north.

The Chinese exclusion act was, of course, always wrong. My predecessor in the house, Mr. A. W. Neill, introduced a measure which had it been accepted, would have obviated the present difficulty. He wanted the exclusion act to apply to all Asiatics. To pick out the Chinese who, as the hon. member for New Westminster (Mr. Reid) has said, were probably our best Asiatic immigrants, was unfair and unjust.

I was rather concerned when I listened this afternoon to the hon. member for Moose Jaw (Mr. Thatcher). While I would not say that he gave an undertaking for his party, he did say, "We approve this bill". I am amazed that any hon. member would rise in his place in the house, after the statement the minister did not make this afternoon, and say that he approved the bill. I do not know whether the