

*Immigration Act*

I believe many hon. members hoped that last session we would see definite action in connection with immigration. But what happened? On May 29 the cabinet nibbled at the issue by passing orders in council under which, theoretically, Canadian citizens in the future could bring in some of their near relatives. No one will deny that this order in council was definitely a step in the right direction, but I believe that even the minister will admit that the directive was little more than a gesture.

According to newspaper reports—I do not know how authentic they were—it was indicated that officials estimated that at the outside about 5,000 people a year would be affected by the order in council. What is even more disturbing are the difficulties and red tape which the immigrants meet in trying to come to Canada, even though they qualify under the order in council.

Mr. CRUICKSHANK: Speaking to a point of order; the hon. member for Vancouver South who, I thought, was following the regulations strictly, was called to order. If what the hon. member who is now speaking is saying has anything to do with the bill before the house, I should like to have a ruling to that effect.

Mr. COLDWELL: I understand he was not called to order, but the house asked him to refrain from discussing the Japanese question and other matters.

Mr. CROLL: I have before me the words used by the minister when he spoke to this matter. He spoke of the general policy of immigration, and used the words, "slowly and steadily"—I wrote them down—and opened the subject for discussion at that time. Consequently the hon. member is quite in order.

Mr. COLDWELL: That is right; the hon. member is in order.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I thought it was agreed by both sides of the house that the subject of Japanese immigration should be left in abeyance, because the Japanese were alien enemies.

Mr. COLDWELL: Silence gave consent.

Mr. THATCHER: I was saying that I find it disturbing that immigrants who have qualified under the order in council passed last May are still having difficulty in coming to Canada. At least a dozen persons in my constituency have asked me to help them bring their relatives to Canada. On each occasion I have checked with the immigration branch and have learned that these people have met the required qualifications. So far, however,

[Mr. Thatcher.]

none of them has been allowed to come to Canada. I do not know whether this is because of a lack of transportation, or what it is, but they have not yet arrived here. I believe dozens of other members have had similar experiences.

Mr. GLEN: Mr. Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The hon. member is now introducing a discussion on general immigration policy, which is already set out on the statute books. When I made the statement to which reference has been made by the hon. member for Spadina I was referring to the general policy that would be evolved. When my estimates are before the committee there will be opportunity to discuss those matters, and that is the time when they should be discussed, namely when I am asking for money to carry on the immigration policy of the government.

At the present time, however, we are dealing only with two items, namely those of dependents and the Chinese Immigration Act. I suggest that those are the only subjects before the house, and they alone should be spoken to. The general argument upon which the hon. member is now embarking is one which can be offered when the estimates are before the committee. Meantime I am stating that what he says does not fall within the four walls of the bill before the house.

Mr. COLDWELL: I wish to disagree with the minister's interpretation. If we look at the bill we shall see that it deals generally with immigration. It deals in particular with transportation and admission of persons under bond, and a number of other factors which come under our Immigration Act.

I suggest to the minister that the debate is one on the provisions of the Immigration Act, as implied in the sections of the bill. I submit, further, and with all due respect, that Mr. Speaker should not support the minister's contention, although I frankly admit that if his advice were taken the debate would be considerably shortened.

I must say, however, that I do not agree with the point raised by the minister. In my view hon. members must act according to their judgment in the matter, because I believe the bill opens wide the door for discussion.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I do not think it is the wish of the house to have a general discussion on immigration at this time. The minister has pointed out that it would be more appropriate to have a general discussion when his estimates are before the committee. The bill does allow considerable latitude, but I hope the house so far as possible will limit dis-