

Supply—Citizenship and Immigration

through the co-operation and co-ordinated efforts of local community groups.

I am sure that if that were done the absorptive capacity might be expanded even as far as the hon. member for Moose Jaw has mentioned, to nearly 300,000 instead of making calculations based on 150,000 or 200,000 as has been the annual average since world war II. If we are going to deal with the urgent Canadian need for an increase in population the whole matter has to be viewed not from the standpoint of flexibility or the vague principles of policy that have been enunciated thus far, but from the viewpoint of necessity. We hear people express the opinion repeatedly that the next 25 years in Canadian development is going to be the important period. That the twentieth century belongs to Canada is a sentiment that has been expressed many times. But with 14 or 14½ million as our population we are hardly going to be able to exploit the rich resources of the north and the rich resources that are only now coming to light in the western part of Canada. If we are to realize the golden age of Canadian development and progress, it will depend largely upon the launching of a comprehensive immigration program operating to bring in many more people than have thus far arrived in this country.

Mr. Herridge: Mr. Chairman, I do not intend to speak at length because I think the policy for this group was well presented to the house by the hon. member for Cape Breton South who, in my opinion, gave a comprehensive, all-inclusive review of the immigration situation and of the general point of view of this group.

I fully appreciate the difficulties the minister encounters. I am sure the question of immigration produces for the minister many problems that are not apparent on the surface and do not meet the public eye. Personally, from the general comments I have heard throughout the country, I think it is generally conceded that the minister has done a fairly good job in connection with an extremely difficult matter.

I must express my appreciation of the courtesy of the officials of the minister's department. When I have had occasion to bring various cases to their attention, I have always found them to be most courteous and willing to go to a great deal of trouble to get files, to supply me with information and so on.

I am rising to speak, Mr. Chairman, because this is a subject which is causing serious concern among quite a large number of my constituents, especially those people

who are organized in trade unions. I have had considerable correspondence from a number of trade unions in my constituency and from the interior of British Columbia on the question of immigration. I know the Canadian Congress of Labour and the Trades and Labour Congress of Canada are quite concerned about immigration policy. They are both in support of a planned immigration policy, but are greatly concerned that immigrants should not be brought into this country during periods of unemployment, particularly the winter months.

In addition to that, Mr. Chairman, I might say that a good number of unions in British Columbia are opposed to immigration entirely under present circumstances. That opposition seems to be somewhat unusual, but it is occasioned by a fear on the part of the loggers and the miners that they are going to be unemployed in the year ahead. It is occasioned by quite a large amount of unemployment among miners owing to the closing down of some base metal mines, and the closing down of a considerable number of operations in the logging industry. It is expected that quite a few thousand loggers will not return to work this summer as usual because of the restriction of overseas lumber markets and the lessening of activity in the lumber industry. Hence it is natural that these people should want to protect their livelihood and not want people brought to Canada to fill jobs while they are seeking employment.

In that connection I want to read from a news release issued jointly by the Department of Labour and the dominion bureau of statistics. It is marked "For release 11 a.m., Wednesday, April 22, 1953." From that we can see that it is fairly well up to date. This is April 24, if I can see the calendar correctly. This is what is stated on page 2:

The balance of the labour force consisted of 172,000 persons who did not work during the survey week and were looking for work. These, along with 12,000 who worked part of the week but also looked for work, make a total of 184,000 who were actively seeking jobs or more work during the week.

And again:

Applications for employment on hand at national employment service offices on March 19 totalled 407,742, an increase of 6,000 over the figure for February 19 and an increase of 25,500 over the total for March 20, 1952. Although the Canada total increased by 6,000 during the past month, three regions had fewer applications on file at March 19 than on February 19 (Atlantic 400, Ontario 4,300 and Pacific 6,200) while two regions experienced an increase in applications on file (Quebec 16,000, prairie 1,000). Compared with the situation a year ago all regions except Ontario have a larger number of applications on file although the increase is more marked in Quebec