

*Chinese Immigration*

I have tried to approach this subject from a non-political standpoint; I think we have all done that. We are not trying to make political capital out of it. On various occasions I have even gone to the extent of making excuses for the Minister of Immigration by pointing out that he had a very difficult duty to perform. I have also on many occasions stated my belief that he was approaching this question in a conscientious way and was trying to do his very best to keep the orientals out of this country. Perhaps I went too far in that direction. Possibly I have been blamed to a certain extent for the want of initiative on the part of the minister, but I still believe that he is really trying to do something in this important matter.

I have in my hand a telegram from the secretary of the Retail Merchants' association of New Westminster dealing with this particular bill. It is dated April 24 of this year and is addressed to myself:

Being advised from Ottawa that the government will not eliminate or change the word "merchant" in bill No. 45 we the Retail Merchants Association of New Westminster notwithstanding your assurance of the fair-mindedness of the Minister of Immigration—

I would draw the minister's attention to that statement and remind him of my previous remark, that I have always endeavoured to point out that he was fair-minded on this question and was trying to do his best:

—cannot but feel that Department of Immigration in proposing to allow Chinese merchants to enter into this country do so as a direct reproof to the great body of retail merchants of Canada for their concerted action last year on the oriental question, and as free Canadian citizens we resent and protest with all our power this aggression on the part of the government. However we still hope and pray that the government will see fit to change this act so that the menace to the retailer and to the people of Canada of an ever increasing army of Chinese merchants will be eliminated. Feeling very intense here. We feel every effort should be exerted now. Wire us our expense if there is anything further we can do we have also wired Premier and the Minister of Immigration as follows:

"We the Retail Merchants Association of New Westminster with a membership of 102 employing upward of 900 wage earners as a class resent the action of the government in drafting a Chinese immigration bill that will allow Chinese merchants to enter Canada to open up business in direct competition with Canadian merchants and we respectfully implore that the word 'merchant' be changed to the wording submitted by the Retail Merchants Association of Canada".

I have here that proposed amendment and I intend to suggest this amendment to the committee:

That section 5 be amended by striking out subsection (c) (1) and substituting therefor the following:

(c) (1) Trade representatives—

It replaces "merchants" by "trade representatives"—

[Mr. McQuarrie.]

Trade representatives shall include sales agents and purchasing agents while representing bona fide Chinese exporters and importers carrying on international trade between Canada and China, buying from or selling to persons, firms, or corporations in Canada. No trade representative shall conduct any retail, wholesale, or jobbing warehouse or shop in Canada.

I suppose we are all agreed that trade between the countries should be encouraged, but the objection which I have is this: If the bill goes through in its present form we will have a further influx of Chinese merchants. They will not come for the purpose of doing business with their own people because there are enough Chinese merchants in the country now to attend to the wants of the Chinese who are here, and as we are not going to allow any more Chinese to come into Canada we cannot expect that there will be an additional growth of business for Chinese merchants. So that there is really no necessity for that class of merchants in this country. If the Chinese merchants are confined to international trade then, of course, it will be quite in order to allow them to enter Canada.

In this same connection I have a statement which was made by the late Theodore Roosevelt dealing more particularly with the Japanese, because the Chinese have been excluded from the United States for a great many years. To-day they have no Chinese question there. They have a Japanese problem which is very serious, particularly in the Pacific states of Washington, Oregon and California. That situation was brought about by the restriction of Japanese immigration as against the exclusion of the Chinese, and it is a very clear and convincing demonstration of the utility of the two methods. Now, Theodore Roosevelt was a friend of the Japanese. He was a student and was one of the greatest Americans of the present generation. In a letter written on the 11th of February, 1909, he expressed himself in a very fair-minded manner when he declared himself as follows:

Let the arrangement between Japan and the United States be entirely reciprocal. Let the Japanese and Americans visit one another's countries with entire freedom as tourists, scholars, professors, sojourners for study or pleasure, or for purposes of international business—

That is what my amendment suggests, for the purposes of international business.

—but keep out labourers, men who want to take up farms, men who want to go into the small trades—

I call particular attention to that.

—men who want to go into the small trades, or even in professions where the work is of a non-international character; that is, keep out of Japan those Americans who wish to settle and become part of the resident