

*Deportation. Cases*

ing the law to be here and there all over Canada, as occasion might arise, when the men were detained for investigation. The department—I believe they adopted the proper course—considered that these men, in having their conduct reviewed, should be brought before a board of inquiry composed of three persons, men who were well acquainted with the law and with what the law contemplates, rather than being taken before an officer not qualified to make a decision of this kind. I do not say that disrespectfully of these officers, because of necessity they are located at places in Canada where a close investigation of the effect of this law is not necessary in order that their duties may be properly discharged. Had they been brought before the nearest board of inquiry of one, then it would likely have been very incompetently considered from the standpoint of the alien whose case was under review. I agree with the stand taken by the officers of the department that there is necessity for uniformity in connection with these cases.

It has been suggested by some newspapers, and I think by some hon. members, that these men are not being given a fair trial. They are not on trial. The hon. member for Lisgar (Mr. Brown) does not agree with that, but the fact is that they are aliens whose conduct and whose right to be in Canada is merely under review. If, on the one hand, it is found that they have the right to be here, they are immediately returned to their homes, as I believe one or two have been. If, on the other hand, it is found that they are here wrongfully or illegally or, being here legally, have transgressed our laws or are bent on stirring up distrust or riot, are bent on breaking our laws, then, so far as the officers of the department are concerned, after that has been made clear proceedings are taken in connection with deportation. These men are not precluded from the right to resort to habeas corpus and for some unaccountable reason they seem to be better fortified with money to carry on defence than even our own citizens are when they fall foul of the law.

There is another aspect of this matter upon which I think I should comment. There are many tens of thousands of law-abiding well-ordered citizens of foreign countries living in Canada. These people desire to obey our laws and are appreciative of what is offered to them in this country. But they suffer from the actions of the very indifferent percentage who will persist in waging war against our institutions. British subjects in Canada and

[Mr. Gordon.]

Canadian born people are prone to class all people from foreign lands as undesirable. They do it unconsciously but it is very unjust and unfair to many of these people. My association with many thousands of them who come from parts of the world other than the British Empire, mainly Europe, has convinced me that they are being penalized by the actions of their compatriots. These people are wholesome, upstanding and decent citizens of this country and they are being penalized by the actions of a small percentage of those who want to stir up difficulties and distrust of our institutions. I do not propose to administer the affairs of this department in such a way that those who are endeavouring to obey our laws and who are proud of their right to be in this country are to be penalized because of the actions of some of their countrymen who do not seem to realize or appreciate the advantages afforded them by reason of the right given to enter Canada.

As time goes on it becomes more obvious that the last place on earth to which these men want to be sent is to their country of origin, and that is the place where they should be sent if they are not appreciative of the advantages and the rights conferred when they were allowed to enter Canada and live among the British and native born people of our country. I do not like to dwell too long on this matter but I assure the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Woodsworth) that these men are being denied no right to spread their case upon the record. They are given the right to appear before me on appeal; they are given ample time and opportunity and are advised that they can appeal to the courts under habeas corpus proceedings. Not one word of evidence is taken down in any one of these cases until the person whose conduct and right to remain in Canada is under review is advised that he has the right to retain competent counsel. And these men do procure counsel, at times very expensive counsel, and their cases are determined fairly and justly as contemplated by our laws. If it is found that they have no right to remain in Canada, then I assure hon. members that I propose to carry out the duty cast upon me to invoke this law just as vigorously and fairly as I know how.

Mr. WOODSWORTH: Before the minister concludes, may I ask—

Mr. SPEAKER: This matter is not the subject of debate.

Mr. WOODSWORTH: I was merely asking a question.