

*Immigration Act*

Peterborough West (Mr. Fraser), describe as disease-ridden. When Russia entered the war, she turned around and asked these Poles to fight with them. They were a little disappointed that these Poles who had been so badly treated by the Russians did not show very much enthusiasm for fighting with the red army. But the British offered to take them and the Poles wanted to fight in the west, and so made a long trek through Russia, through Georgia into the middle east. The British had to set up rehabilitation camps in which to doctor and to feed these men after the treatment given them by the Russians, so that they could build up their physiques and pass the entrance examination for the army and the air force. Pathetically few of them were able to reach the air force standard of physique. Most of them were really unable to meet what we would regard as Canadian standards for the army; but they were anxious to fight against nazism and despite their condition, they fought very well and bravely through Libya and Italy. Now the time comes when they are asked to return to Poland, to go back under the thumb of the same people who put them in concentration camps from 1939 to 1941. Why should they go back? But where can they go? I say that, as allies of these men, we have an obligation to take them, and to take not just the hale and hearty ones but some of the sick ones too, because their sicknesses are a result of what they have endured.

Mr. L. W. SKEY (Trinity): Mr. Speaker, it was with great pleasure that I just now heard the hon. member for Vancouver North (Mr. Sinclair) speak so well of our gallant allies, though I regret, with some other hon. members that perhaps all of them were not as fit as they might be. I agree with him when he says that there is an obligation on Canada to keep on supporting our fighting allies such as these Polish soldiers and airmen were.

But in this selection of four thousand of them to come to Canada there were other features that were imposed in the department's effort to produce farmers for our country and to recognize that obligation. One of those features is that there were a great many Polish soldiers and service men in Italy who had relatives in Canada, but a large number of those men were transferred to England shortly before the selection was made. Someone may have known that this selection was to be made. Someone in their army may have known that there were a number of volunteers. Perhaps some of them wanted to keep that army in being. But in any event,

[Mr. Sinclair.]

instead of there being a two-pronged selection of men and instead of taking in the United Kingdom forces as well, our selection committee went to just one section of the Polish army and made their choice there; whereas in England there are thousands of Polish soldiers with relatives in this country to whom they can go with assurance that they will receive a warm welcome, sustenance, encouragement and work.

Amongst those soldiers in England there still remain a great many who are engaged to Canadian girls, and they have been engaged for many years. The government still refuses to recognize the heartache that it has produced for the young girls in Canada who became engaged to these Polish soldiers and airmen while they trained on our soil. There is a solution to this problem, a solution which the United States government have already produced. It is that we should pass a bill such as the congress of the United States passed and which is popularly known as the sweet-hearts' bill. This allows an allied airmen or soldier to go to the United States for a visit of three months; and during that visit, if the serviceman or servicewoman, as the case may be, should marry a United States citizen to whom he or she is engaged, then that allied serviceman or woman becomes a naturalized United States subject. I think it is time that the Canadian parliament took such action to assist the Canadian girls who have been doing everything possible to have their fiances brought to this country. Some of them have even tried to marry by telephone, which is a very unsatisfactory thing to do.

There are still others whom we should think of tonight, and they are the members of various European countries who have relatives in Canada, which relatives have already applied to our immigration authorities, have had the entrance of their relatives in Europe approved, and are waiting, and have waited for many many months for some action to be taken toward bringing them to this country. They are still waiting, and for all we know perhaps a year hence they may still be waiting. That is something the government should deal with as soon as they possibly can, because those people in Europe today are living with the hope in their hearts that they may be delivered from the displaced persons' camps or a life which is certainly not a free one.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, may I say that I feel it is time that the minister answered the many questions which have been put to him tonight, and in particular the one put by the hon. members for Vancouver North and