

The Economic Club of New York

Our Immigration Problem

February 16, 1921

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Introduction

Mr. Wickersham, President

Ladies and gentlemen, I have been asked to say a word about the new Town Hall. I was asked as to who built the hall. The answer is Mr. Ely. (Applause) How he did that I have no idea. A moment ago I was asked what capital it started with. Again I said, "Mr. Ely." (Applause) But there it is, one of the most useful and important contributions to the life of this city, a beautiful hall, with an auditorium seating 1500 people, decidedly the best place to speak in New York, the acoustic properties are so perfectly well arranged, admirable designed for meetings and discussions of all sorts and kinds. And then above the Town Hall there are rooms for meetings of committees and one thing and another, an office for this club, an office for the other affiliated clubs, and at the top there is to be a large, well-equipped club, to be used by a large number of people for a very reasonable fee.

Now, the money that has been provided so far, aside from the loans, well, aside from the mortgage loans, has come largely from members of the League for Political Education. The title to the building will be vested in that organization, and that organization and the Civic Forum and this club will be the principal direct beneficiaries of that building.

There is quite a tidy sum of money yet to be provided to clear off the obligations on that building. My recollection is that about \$400,000 is required to pay the indebtedness on the

building as it now stands, and to complete the interior of the two floors above the auditorium, and then there is \$700,000 in mortgage debt.

Up to the present time only 183 members of this club have contributed towards that cost and I am asked to say that contributions, in money or in Liberty Bonds, will be received with appreciation, and I would ask every member of the club who has not done so, to stop and look at that place, see what an excellent institution it is, and then if he feels so disposed, contribute towards removing the debt on that building.

Ultimately when the debt is all paid, it is the intention that that shall be a place where meeting may be held of all sorts and kinds that re respectable, whether they are cranks or not, without cost, except for the cost of service and light, and if that shall be attained, it will be a notable institution in the life of this city.

Now, so much for that. The subject of the meeting this evening is one of those topics which has been forced to the front as a result of the war, perhaps a little more acutely than at any other time in our history. For generations, America has stretched out welcoming arms to the oppressed and to the aspiring war victims. We have welcomed them from every part of the globe. Perhaps we were a little too liberal in the early days, especially respecting contributions from Africa. But we had held out our arms and we only began to draw them back when the Asiatic problem forced itself upon our attention from the Pacific Coast.

The result of the war has satisfied a great many of our people that the process of assimilation was not proceeding with sufficient rapidity, and that we had in this country a great many undigested lumps of foreign elements, which would require some time to assimilate and become a part of our American body politic. Hence the various plans which have been so much discussed recently, of Americanization and the awakening consciousness of many of our people to the fact that each one of us, who had come here a week or a century before the newcomers, was under obligation to do what he could to instruct the newcomer in the meaning of American institutions and American life.

With the close of hostilities and with the imminence of a technical as well as an actual case, we have been confronted with the probability of a very large number of people from the other side of the Atlantic Ocean seeking to better their fortunes here, and that has given rise to the question whether or not we should still further restrict the admission of aliens to this country before the process of Americanization of those already here should have had an opportunity to go further and become more effectual.

The discussion this evening will deal with various topics of that problem. You know there are bills pending in Congress now. What the probability of the passage of any one of them before the expiration of this present Congress may be I cannot say and I doubt if even the leaders can at the moment, cut a great deal will depend upon the expression of public opinion, informed public

opinion on that subject, and we have tonight four gentlemen, each very well qualified to discuss the subject, who will speak on it from different angles.

Our bill of fare was rather short his evening, nonetheless good, but we got through sooner than we usually do, and therefore we shall have to change somewhat the order of the speakers as shown on the printed program, and I will first call upon one of our fellow citizens, well known to us all, a professor, research professor of government and public administration in the New York university, for three years a member of the United States Immigration Commission, who will put one angle of this problem before us, and I ask Jeremiah Jenks to speak to us now -- Professor Jenks. (Applause)

First Speaker

Professor Jeremiah W. Jenks

New York University

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen: The subject of immigration, and especially the experience of those who have to do with the administration of the immigration policy of this country is one that touches so closely human interests that in the discussion of such a problem one is tempted always to spend his time in telling touching stories, comic or tragic as the case may be, of those who are coming from the other side of the world to make their homes with us.

Although I have never been an administration official at all, it has nevertheless been my experience to witness some very tragic cases and some that have had, at any rate, the element of joy and happiness in them. I recall that at one time in Seattle I was the chief witness to a marriage ceremony of one of the picture brides from Japan. A marriage is supposed to be, of course, a time of joy, but I am not quite sure whether the young woman marrying offhand in the cabin of a ship a man whom she had never seen until five minutes before, was one that should be congratulated upon the joyous occasion or not. At any rate, the captain did his best with what in those days it was possible, a bottle of excellent champagne to cheer her on her way.

I also had the experience about that time of witnessing a situation very materially different from that, when in the City of Winnipeg I witnessed the examination of an incoming immigrant family, consisting of a husband, his wife, two little children and the father of the wife, who was so afflicted with tuberculosis in an advanced state, that it was deemed best to reject all of them. The result was that that night in the railway station after midnight, the old man, with only a few weeks left for his life, was abandoned by daughter and family and left to the care and the charity of the City of Winnipeg.

One might spend a whole evening with such experiences, but I suppose that with pending legislation such as we have now, it is much better that we confine our attention, rather strictly, to the principles which should guide us in helping formulate an immigration policy.

Before people think of the details of laws, they should attempt to see what the underlying principles are, what results they wish to reach by legislation. Before the Immigration Commission, to which reference has been made, attempted in any way to formulate this policy, it drafted some of these principles, and one of the most fundamental, it seemed to me, was this: the welfare of a country or the progress of a country is to be measured, not necessarily by the total amount of wealth or the rapidity of the production wealth, by the extend of the country's imports and exports, by the growth of the amount of production in the country, but rater by the welfare and the standard of living of the great masses of the people in the community; that is to say, the welfare and the improvement in the standard of living of the great wage-earning classes in the community.

It may very well be that wealth might be produced more rapidly at the expense of the poorer classes in the community that would not be best for the community as a whole. It is the maintenance of the standards of living of the great masses of people in the community that we should expect as our standard.

The Immigration Commission was composed of none members, three Senators, three members of the House of Representatives, and three members appointed by the President. Part of those were Republicans, part Democrat; they represented every section of the country, and at the beginning of the investigation they certainly represented difference opinions as regards the question of further restrictions of immigration or of a more liberal policy. There is reason for

believing, although no vote was taken, that at the beginning, the majority of the members of that Commission believed that the policy would be a very liberal one, with certainly no added restrictions.

At the close of their investigation, after the results were in and after the economic conditions of the country had been most carefully studied in detail, with a force of more than 100 men in the field for not merely months but years, with a thorough investigation of the twenty leading industries of the country, of agriculture, of the living conditions in the great cities, an investigation covering also all standards of livings and the way in which people were being cared for and were attempting to care for themselves in the great colonies of immigrants of different nationalities and races in the country, the Convention reached the unanimous conclusion that at that time, in time of peace and in time of progress, that there were so many immigrants coming into the country that the tendency was very strong towards lowering the standards of living of the great masses of people in the community, and though in many instances those standards were distinctly lowered, they clearly had been checked so that they were no longer advancing.

As a result of that proved experience, proved to men whose views to begin with had been of the opposite side, as a result of that proved experience, the Commission unanimously recommended further restriction of immigration.

There were differences of opinion among the members of the Commission as to what the better method of restriction would be. The only method that at the time it was certain would pass Congress was the application of the literacy test, and so as a measure of expediency, not because it was always just, not because in every case it would be wise, but it was essential in order that the standards of living might be maintained, that there might be restrictions, they recommended as an immediate policy restriction by means of the literacy test.

There were various other elements that came into the question, however, then, and that especially need to be considered now. The statement is often made and very properly made that the welfare of this country, until within a few years, at any rate, was largely dependent upon immigration. It is, of course, true that we could never have had the marvelous development of our Middle West had it not been for the large numbers of diligent, trustworthy, able immigrants that came into this country in the early days, took up the land, made themselves prosperous and made the country prosperous by their labor.

But there have come very decidedly changed conditions within the last ten or fifteen years. Up to 1880 to 1885, the large majority of the immigrants that were coming in to this country were people from the northern and western parts of Europe, a very large percentage of them especially in the early days, of course, were those who spoke the English language. They were from Great Britain and her colonies and those who did not speak the English language, those coming from Scandinavia or Holland or the other sections in the northern and western part of Europe, were

people whose traditions at home, whose forms of government, whose ways of looking at life were very much more like those of the Americans than those who began coming in large numbers in the later years. In those early days of which I am speaking, more than 80% of those who came were people from the northern and western parts of Europe, but in the eight or ten years that preceded the outbreak of the war in 1914, the change had been so great, the largest numbers coming from the southern and eastern parts of Europe, from Italy, from Austria-Hungary, from Turkey, from southern Russia and Elsewhere, that those percentages were largely reversed and the very large majority, amounting at times to more than 80% of all of those that were coming into the country, were coming from the southern and eastern parts of Europe and not from the northern and western parts of Europe.

Now, I suppose we would all agree from the industrial viewpoint, to begin with, it is much easier for us to assimilate, if you wish to use the word, or if you wish to speak in any other way, to make of greater use in industry those who can speak the English language than those who cannot speak it. We all know that in our great industries the number of accidents is very greatly increased among those who do not speak the English language as compared with those who do speak it.

So again when it comes to assimilation into the body politic, if people coming here cannot speak the English language, it is very natural that they should associate themselves in groups with those who can speak the same language, that they should in many cases be held together in those groups

by leaders among their own people, often for purposes of personal profit, often again for purposes of political influence, so that they form in our body politic groups that cannot be assimilated immediately. It takes two or three generations of ten, not nearly so rapidly as those who do speak the language, and they become a source of danger and at any rate a source of trouble.

With this change then in the nature of the immigrants as well as in the very large numbers that were coming, it became desirable that there that there should be a change in our immigration policy. As has already been intimated, in the earlier days we welcomed all with open arms, and this country became and very properly became a refuge for those not merely who were oppressed either by religion or by politics, but besides this, for those who wanted to escape from poorer economic conditions into a country where the economic conditions were better.

But with this change in the character of the immigration it was natural enough that there should come a change in the immigration policy and when the facts became evident, as they did become evident in this investigation -- in 1910, that there already were coming in so large numbers of those of this class that relatively speaking were difficult to assimilate, it became evident that we should set some restriction upon those that were coming in, so that we might have more time to bring them into our country, into our body politic, into our social institutions, before we let them come in so great numbers.

There are still other ways, however, in which we should change our policy if we are going to succeed in building our country up into a harmonious whole. It is not merely a question of the numbers that we can take in from year to year, but of the way in which when they are brought in here, we can take measures that will tend to make them American citizens of the right type in a shorter period than would otherwise be possible, that we can bring them into our industries in ways that will make them helpful instead of dangerous in a shorter time than would otherwise be possible. We should have then not merely a question of temporary restriction but we should have in addition to that a policy of selecting those that are coming.

Now, bills that are now pending in Congress, especially in the so-called Dillingham Bill, that has just been presented to the Senate by the Senate Committee, this policy of selection has been applied to a considerable degree.

You will recall that the main provision of the Dillingham Bill is this: that there should be admitted into this country in any one year from any one nationality only 5% of the total number from that nationality who are already here. The purpose of that selection is, of course, this: those who cannot speak the English language find themselves naturally drawn to those who do speak their own language; those who have been here long enough so that they have become American citizens and have learned the nature of our institutions are the ones who will have the most influence upon the ones who come after them, to build them over into Americans and to fit them into our institutions. In consequence, if the number that comes in in any one year is relatively

limited to a small percentage, like 5%, it will be seen that the influence that can be brought to bear will be likely to work with considerable rapidity.

Some of the other plans that have been proposed instead of limiting it to 5% of those who are already here from their own nationality suggest that the test be a different one, of taking in also the question of the sources of nationality and taking also not merely the adults that come in, not merely the immigrants who come in but the immigrants and their native born children, because, of course, the influence of children upon the new immigrant is often large and some think that the percentage should be a certain small percentage of those who are here and also have shown that they are American in intent by having become naturalized, but whatever the method made be among these three that I have mentioned, the principle is the same, that we should restrict the number to a certain small percentage of those who have already become Americans and who therefore can exert a considerable influence upon those who come after them.

I think no one in discussing the principle of Americanization could question at all or could successfully question the soundness of the principle of bringing to bear upon the new immigrants that come in influences that will tend to build them over into American citizens, who will live up to the American principles.

Aside, however, from this question of assimilation comes this question of selection. I have already called attention to the fact that in the earlier days the bulk of our immigration came from

northern and western Europe, that those who were coming in at that time did speak our language and were more familiar with our institutions in the case where they did not speak it.

But another factor that is perhaps of even greater importance is this: in those earlier days we had opened to our immigrants large stretches of land that they might occupy, and so a very large percentage of all of them went to the agricultural regions in the Middle West and the Far West and took up land, making their homes there. In certain cases they might colonize, it was true, in the rural districts, but not to so great an extent and by no means so large colonies as in these later days have been made in our great cities. The immigrants that have come in the later years from southern and eastern Europe have drifted, not into the agricultural districts except in very small percentages, but mainly in our great industrial centers and into our great cities, and this tendency, we find, is lasting even to the present day.

Take, if you like, the immigrants that are coming in at the present time, within the last three or four months, and study the destination of those that are coming. We find those that are coming from Holland, let us say, from Great Britain, remain only in very small percentages, 10, 12 or 15%, in New York, whereas if we take those who come from the southern and eastern parts of Europe, to name, for example, the Italians, the Spanish, the Jews, pretty largely from eight Russia, or especially Poland of late, and one or two other races, the Greeks, one or two others of that type, we find the percentages are very much larger, that remain in the great City of New York and in the other industrial centers.

In the State of New York alone, for example, instead of the percentage being 10, 13 or 15, the percentage runs to 25, 30, 35 and forth in some cases, so that there is this difference in economic habit, as well as in their social habits, and their ways of looking at life, between the northern and western immigrant from the north and west of Europe, and those from the South and east of Europe.

Everyone knows that the demand at the present time for labor is not merely so great to what it has been the last few years. I think we should, in the main, except the war period because conditions were so abnormal from 1914 up to 1919, that we can gather no general principles from that experience at all. We will all agree that in those periods there was a dearth of labor in the agricultural districts and here and there were certain industries that needed more. There were times, of course, when there was a scarcity of labor in many of our great industries, but at the present time, according to the best minds that we can get, there is a large amount of unemployment in all of our industrial centers. The figures vary somewhat in our different centers and in our great cities, and the estimates vary from two million to three million, as I heard a well posted man say, there are four million at the present time of men unemployed, practically all of them in our great centers. It is under those conditions that it is felt that at the present time we may well make a selection, if we can do that in any reasonable way, in favor of the immigrants from the north and west of Europe and against those from the southern and eastern parts of Europe, and that again is one of the purposes that is in the minds of the Senate Committee in this

percentage test for adults. That bill, if it becomes a law, would put no restrictions upon the numbers of those, if we can judge from past experience, upon the number of those that will come from Great Britain, Scandinavia, from any of the northern and western countries of Europe, whereas, on the other hand, it would cut down the number of those that come from Italy, let us see, by probably two thirds, and the same percentage or larger ones in some cases would hold as regards, we will say, Turkey, Greece, Bulgaria and so on, so that the test, if applied, is a selective test, in favor of those who normally go into the agricultural districts and moreover who, when they come, come with their families with the intention of staying and making this their home and against those who normally drift into our centers and into our smaller industrial communities where the conditions are very much worse.

We have a large percentage of immigrants that are coming in with no intention of making this their home, that come, leaving their wives and families behind them in Europe, that expect to stay here four or five years or six years, and to earn as much money as they possibly can during those years, much of it being sent to Europe, and then they expect to return. A great deal has been said within the last month before committees of Congress about the large numbers that last year and this year have been returning to Europe, as it was a great tide that was going out. Those were men, to a very considerable extent, who had been here with the intention of going back, to make their homes in Europe with money that they had earned here but could not get away on account of war conditions.

But conditions have already changed. I have the date here, but there is no reason why I should enumerate the figures to you that show that during the last year and particularly during the part of this last year the conditions changed as that now the tide of those that are going out is checking, while the tide of those that are coming in is increasing, showing, as we might have expected, that those people are going back but those that will not return, and are going back to live again at home as they have done before.

Let me then add just a word with reference to this type of immigrant who comes here not to say, but to save money and send it back. I would not charge any of those men with not coming with intentions that are perfectly good and perfectly sound from their viewpoint. It was natural that they should wish to better their conditions, they are loyal to their country and home, and in a good case their government at home also encourages them to come and to follow out the policy that they have followed out, to earn as much money as possible, and they leave here in the result of their labor all they have earned, of course, but the savings that they make by their scanty ways of living are all sent back, invested there. To Italy along, in the years 1908, 1909 and 1910, it was estimated that something like \$250,000,000 to \$275,000,000 were sent back to be invested in Italy that had been earned here.

Would it not have been distinctly better for this country if we had a type of immigrant coming in that had come in with the intention of staying, so that the investment would have been made here? Again, a factor that is much more significant, and that is this: we hear a great deal said

about the very low standard of living that is maintained in many of the industrial centers in the mining district and field district and elsewhere. Those who will submit to those lower standards of living are these men who are anxious to get back home, who save in every way that they possibly can, who are always ready to take any place that is open, it is they who live in the boarding houses where two shifts of men sleep in the bed, one in the day time and the other at night, in order that they may save money to the last degree. They are the ones who more than any others are pulling down the standards of living in these great industrial centers and we ought not to encourage anything of that kind. (Applause)

This bill as proposed by the Senate Committee is intended to work steadily and impartially against that way of coming here, and exploiting, in a perfectly good sense of that word, exploiting our condition for the benefit of their countries at home.

Just a word, also, however, from the international viewpoint. I have said that some of the governments of Europe encourage that type of immigration from their country. In a number of cases they have had their government agents here whose business it is to prevent their citizens from becoming American citizens, who are encouraging them to save their money and send it back and who wish to have them come back, and that policy I have reason to believe is now being taken up again after the war.

On of the most interesting government reports that I ever read on this question of immigration was a government report made in Italy, in which a tribute was paid to their returning immigrants who had spent some few years in America and had come back. The government said that not merely did Italy derive a great benefit from the money that they had sent back and from the money that they had brought with them and were no investing in Italy, but in addition to that and still more than that was the benefit that came from those returning immigrants who had brought back the American spirit of breadth and energy and enterprises, they felt that they were among the best citizens that they had in Italy.

Now, that is a tribute to our spirit that I appreciate very much indeed, but after all when we are having more immigrants come than we can stand or hold down, so much so that they are holding down our standards of living and we wish to make a selection, is it not better to select those enterprising people who will come here to stay and give us the benefit of their enterprise, instead of selecting those of the other type or permit those of the other type, shall we not then change?

Let me add still another word: I think also that it is not a good thing for Europe for us to maintain a policy that will not maintain our standards of living. If they come in such numbers that our standards of living are lowered toward the European standard, it is not a good thing for Europe. It is much better for us to adopt an policy of selection, of distribution, which should go with it, of course, if they come here, on encouragement to those that are coming, after they are here, to bet as rapidly as possible our American viewpoint and build up higher and higher our standards, and

if we do that we shall within a very few years be able to absorb for our benefit as well as for the benefit of Europe much larger numbers than we can continue to absorb if we let them pile in on us now in so large numbers that our standards are driven down.

Let us change our policy from one of simply welcoming anyone that wishes to come and of those who wish to come in so large numbers to a policy practically the opposite of that, in which we shall try. We will select by some form of legislation those who are needed here; we will select them in such numbers and in such method that will tend to build up our industry and cut social status here as highly as possible, and the other shall wait until we call for them. (Applause)

Mr. Wickersham, President: the next speaker, who will, I understand, speak on the other side of the question, represents a class of people who have come here to stay. Mr. Marshall -- Mr. Louis Marshall -- well known throughout -- I was going to say this city -- but throughout this country, a member of two Constitutional Conventions, a member of the Commission appointed by governor Hughes to investigate the immigration question; foremost in many philanthropic works, always an ardent and eager defender of the people from who he comes, is peculiarly well-qualified to put before us the other side of this question. I have great pleasure in presenting Mr. Louis Marshall. (Applause)

Second Speaker

The Honorable Louis Marshall

New York Bar

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen: If the other side of the question is the American side, then I shall attempt to present that view of the subject. (Applause)

Let us engage, for a few moments, in retrospect, in order that we may understand precisely what the problem is that we are to consider. Immigration really began on a considerable scale just about a century ago. In 1820 perhaps the total population of the United States was not much more than seven million, and of those seven million every single man, woman and child was the descendant of immigrants. They were very largely drawn from English, Scotch, and German stock.

In 1820 there began to be a considerable influx of Irish immigrants, and at once we heard the same criticisms of immigration that are being voiced today -- they were not to be easily assimilated. It was all right to take immigrants from England, but not those of the Celtic race. If you have the interest to read "Niles' Register" for that period, you will find that there was precisely the same state of mind on the part of those who were here as that which exists today on the part of those who was now living in our country and are considering the question of admission of those who come from other parts of the world.

Later came a considerable number of immigrants from German especially in 1848, and from those years on, men who had been engaged in the revolution of 1848, and again the press was filled with articles which protested against that class of immigrants, so much so that in 1855 there arose a political party whose slogan was “America for the Americans,” and who have gone down into history with the very appropriate appellation of “The Know-Nothing Party.”

Shortly after that party was defeated and immigration continued according to natural conditions, came the Civil War, and then the country was very happy indeed to be enabled to recruit this army from the immigrants who arrived in this country and from the children of the immigrants who had arrived but shortly before, and those immigrants knew how to live and how to die for the country in which they had taken up their abode. (Applause)

In the 1870's came a new class of immigrants, those from Northern Europe from the Scandinavian Peninsula. They also were ridiculed. There was opposition as to their not being a body of people who could easily assimilate with those who were then residents of the country, but they proved to be of the same value as those who had preceded them, and helped, as Professor Jenks very properly has stated, to build up the great Middle West.

Subsequent to 1880 new lines of immigration arise; from Southern Europe, from Austria-Hungary, from Russia, and there was opposition at first. They were very welcome to our

industries. They became a part of our population. They became incorporated into the citizenship of our country in large number, and that brings us to the beginning of the Great War.

In 1914 immigration practically ceased, and there was little or not immigration until June, 1920. Before 1914 there were years when the number of immigrants equaled nearly one million. There were a few years when the number exceeded a million. There were a few years when the number exceeded a million, but considering those who returned, it is fair to say that in no year did the number of immigrants exceed a million. Was there any difficulty in assimilating, in absorbing those immigrants? Was there any difficulty in their finding employment? Were any of those who had previously arrived here, those of the older immigrants, was there any of them who was willing to work who did not have an ample opportunity to work? The records of our history will show that that question must be answered in the negative.

Now, what have those immigrants done to the country? Have they in any way injured it? Have they prevented it from prospering? Have they to the slightest degree acted as a drag on our progress? Has our industrial development in any way been affected injuriously? Why, everybody knows that it was the immigrants who did the hard, physical labor. Those of the older strains of our population were unwilling to do that kind of work. They entered the professions; they entered commerce in its higher grades; they became employers. They required those men to do the hard work of the country.

Who was it that built our railroads? Who was it that constructed our great public works? Who was it that leveled our mountains? Who was it that built up our cities? Certainly not those who were the descendants of the “Mayflower,” or sons of the Revolution, because they were too few in number to do that hard work. It was the immigrant, and the children of the immigrant.

Let us see what the statistics tell us as to what the immigrants are doing at this very moment in this country. They mine three fourths of all of our iron and our coal. They do the principal work in our steel mills. They do the principal part of our lumbering. They build, repair, and take care of the railroad tracks. They are constructing the great highways which are crossing the country from all sides. They are the builders of our houses. They bake half of our bread. They refine half of our sugar. They prepare four-fifths of our leather. They make one half of all the shoes that are worn. They manufacture 95% of all of our clothing. (Laughter) Those are the facts, and it is necessary to bear them in mind, because I do not wish the idea to go forth that they come here to destroy our country, or to create an idle class, or a leisure class in the United States. This is their contribution to the country, and they are making it without regard to race, or creed, without any selection by nationality, or by any arbitrary principle. (Applause)

Now, these same immigrants, when we entered the war, became part of the great army of defense. There were thousands, and tens of thousands of them who did not become citizens, and who had not even made a declaration of citizenship, who became valiant defenders of our land. Our president, Mr. Wickersham, knows from his experience on the district Board the spirit that was manifested by these immigrants, and sons of immigrants, who considered it to be a sacred

duty to defend our country in the hour of need, and who, as the records show, were cited for bravery and heroism on the field of battle.

Now we have arrived at a period when for some reason or another it is attempted to change the policy according to which we have shaped our course for more than a century; a policy that has resulted in increasing the wealth of the country and increasing its powers, of adding to its industry new industry that had not existed before the arrival of the immigrants.

Now, you will ask as to whether or not I believe that there should be no restriction whatsoever. I say decidedly not. There should be restriction. There is restriction now upon our statute books, all that can be reasonably required or expected, all that is necessary for the welfare of the country. We have a policy of selection now to which no reasonable man can object. No man, woman, or child that is mentally, morally, or physically unfit is to be admitted into our country. The law today is precise in its definition, and is vigorous in its denunciation of any policy that would permit those to come here who, from the very nature of things, would injure the country.

The law also prohibits the admission here of anybody who is opposed to organized government, to anybody who believes in anarchy or in any principles which are injurious to constitution government. The law also prohibits convicts, or those who in any way have been guilty of acts which are illegal in the countries in which they lived from being admitted here. It also prohibits the admission here of anybody who is likely to become a public charge. There has also been

introduced, as a result of the deliberations of the Commission, of which Professor Jenks has spoken, another restriction, namely, of those who cannot pass the literacy test, those who are unable to read forty selected words in any language which may be chosen.

I have no great faith in the efficacy of that test, because the men who com to this country that possess literacy to the highest degree, and can commit forgery in six languages, are not prohibited from coming here, while the poor men who have strong arms and stout hearts are prohibited. But it is upon the statute book. We are not now trying to create a change in the laws that now exist.

Now we come to the period when it is suggested that there should be further restriction.

Restriction for what purpose, I pray? Restriction merely for the purpose of reducing the number of those who are to come to this country. Now, has there been in the last six years such an influx of immigrants such as to create a serious problem? Certainly not. There has been practically none for six years. The number of those who have gone out has been practically as great as those who came in during that period; probably the margin is a little in favor of those who came to this country, but it is negligible. The number has scarcely been appreciated. Why, then, should there be this sudden demand for further restriction?

It is said that there is an emergency. That was the basis on which the Johnson bill which provides that nobody, except a few classes that don't amount to very many, shall be permitted to come

into this country for the next fifteen months. In other words, for the first time in our history, we are to close the door absolutely to immigration!

What is the emergency? It has certainly not been that there was a plethora of labor; that there were more workingmen in this country than our industries required, because the Inter-racial Council has shown, as the result of its investigation conducted under the supervision of Miss Francis Kellor, who probably knows more on the subject of immigration than anybody in this room -- those figures show that about a year ago there was a shortage of manpower in the industries of this country to the extent of between four and five million. That being the case, certainly conditions cannot be much improved by the cutting down of immigration absolutely.

There have, however, been those who have said that we don't want any more immigration absolutely in this country, because they reduce and depreciate the standard of living. Now, the people who have made those claims, so far as my observations have gone, have been the leaders of trade unions who desire to prevent the influx of new labor forces into this country. Now, I am a believer in trade unions. I believe in them thoroughly, but I, nevertheless, believe that even a trade union can be unjust, and I believe that men who themselves were immigrants have no right to ask that others of their own class shall be prohibited from having the same opportunity as they received from this country of thriving and prospering. (Applause)

Now, it is said that at the present time there is unemployment. I very seriously doubt if there is unemployment that is not, to a great extent, voluntary. (Applause) We cannot consider a situation of unemployment as existing when there is a continuous strife, and we cannot, without having real evidence, believe that within less than six months a shortage of manpower to the extent of millions has changed to a surplus of manpower to the same extent. I must be shown by reliable statistics that such is the fact before I am prepared to believe it. At all events, be that as it may, there is no reason, no emergency, which would justify a change in our policy at this time, because since the year 1920 the net increase of our population through immigration has amounted to not more than 425,000, and those numbers have consisted very largely of wives and children who have come here to join their husbands and fathers from whom they were separated because of the war, and who have come here to help their husbands build up the home that Professor Jenks says it is so necessary to have established in this country. (Applause)

Now, we are told that we should not, probably, go the extent of carrying out the policies of the “Know-Nothings” by closing the doors absolutely, but we should have a selective policy of restriction on some such basis as that which is set forth in the Dillingham Bill. Up to the present time we have proceeded according to natural selection. We have selected those who were fit to come into the country in accordance with the definitions which are contained under the statutes. We have chosen the individuals who physically, morally and mentally are perfect and cannot tend to injure the country. Now we, for the first time in this country, are told that there must be legislation on the basis of race or nationality -- here in the United States where we know not

race, creed or nationality. I regard that as a policy which is most dangerous, which is most un-American!

Let us say to every man that he has to come into our country on the manhood test, but let us not say that he shall be excluded or admitted dependent upon the nationality to which he belongs. (Applause) he belongs to a new nation. He belongs to the American people, and he is to be governed by the laws of our country. Let us not tell him when he arrives that he is to be judged not by the spirit, the idealistic spirit which moves many of them to come here, but that he is to be judged by the nation from which he has come, and what is that test? It is that not more than 5% of any particular nationality, based upon the numbers of that same nation who are already in this country, shall be admitted in any year. Immediately we have to consider who constitute a particular nation so as to know on what to base your 5% and thee at once there is the necessity of differentiating between those who are already here.

I do not understand the act; it is not very clear as to whether or not that basis is to be on the nationality of those who are citizens, as well as those who are not. If we are to consider the nationality of citizens, you jump over the period when the man has abjured his allegiance of the nation to which he formerly belonged, and once more are classifying citizens of the United States by the nation to which they no longer belong. (Applause)

It is a policy which leads to injury. God knows that in the last seven years the world has suffered enough in consequence of the contests and the jealousies and the hatred that have been engendered according to racial and national lines. Why shall we contribute to the continuance of that spirit which makes for war? Why shall we not seek to forget all those feelings and recognize a man only for his worth as a man and by what he can do for the country with which he desires to affiliate himself?

There are many who have come to this country and, to use a familiar phrase, have become mere “birds of passage”; men who come here and work, earned honestly what they receive, and then finally go back to the lands from which they came in order to live with their families there. That is charged to be an offense; otherwise the remark would not have been made. It is true that it is said that when they go abroad they have imbibed enough of the American spirit to influence their fellows to higher and better standards of thrift and energy, but, nevertheless, the remark would not have been made if it had not been intended as an argument against immigration.

Let us see what harm these people have done even if they go abroad with the money they have saved. The same question was asked me recently by a member of one of the Congressional Committees. He said, “Isn’t it true that there are a great many men who have come to this country from Italy and other nations, and they have worked upon the railroads and upon the subways, and they have earned considerable sums of money, and saved the money, and then they

took that money out of this country?" I answered, "Yes, that is true, but it is likewise true that they left behind them the railroads and the subways." (Applause)

Now, the subject is very large. It has aspects which we have not as yet touched upon. I have so far merely taken up the question of the principles upon which admission should be based, and have tried to show that no emergency exists for now legislating in this country entirely on the theory of an emergency, as though our Constitution contained an emergency clause. That is one of the most dangerous methods of legislating that men ever invented. You cannot find any branch of law, anywhere, in which emergency does not constitute the basis for violating every condition in the land and provision of the Constitution.

Here is the question of assimilation. I am not one of those who believe that we should not do our utmost to assimilate the immigrants. We should. It is the duty of every man to see to it that he becomes an American in spirit, whether he speaks the language or not. A man can be a good American, even though he cannot deliver a speech in the American language. Perhaps there have been too many speeches delivered in all kinds of languages of late. But our government is ready to spend hundred of millions -- I don't know how many now -- for a new Navy that will be junked in a year or two after it is finished. Why doesn't it try the experiment of using some of that money for the purpose of educating the immigrants who come to this country? (Applause)

Practically nothing has been done in that direction. The Commission, to which your President referred, reported a measure which would deal with that problem. It was passed, but your activities in this country, so far as legislation is concerned, consist of putting laws upon the statute book and then forgetting all about it. The immigrant who comes to this country pays his way so far as the Government is concerned. When he arrives at Ellis Island, or at any other ports, he is manhandled. He is said to be inspected, but the inspection is a very indifferent kind. If there were proper inspection there would be very little of this complaint that has been made that people come to this country who should not come here, but as it is, the Government insists upon every immigrant paying a head tax when he arrives and then it takes the money which is intended to take care of the administration of the law, and to look out for the immigrant after he is here, and appropriates it for other purposes.

In the last two years, even with the sparse immigration that there has been, the amount collected from the immigrants has exceeded by \$11,000,000 all the expenses of administering the Immigration Law, and that money is used for entirely different purposes. No effort has been made to deal intelligently with the subject of distribution. No investigation has been made in regard to that. Let Congress devote some of its thought to seeing that the immigrant is assimilated, and that he is distributed, that methods are devised whereby he can be taken out of the cities and be brought into the smaller communities, or brought back to the land where we all know labor is being clamored by day and night. (Applause)

Then there are also other questions, such as those of the protection of the immigrant against exploitation. There are more crimes committed against the immigrant than are ever committed by the immigrant who comes to this country. He is being exploited and robbed. It was necessary, on account of this exploitation, for the first time to put some check upon private banking in this country. We helped the immigrant and we also helped others.

Then there is the question of naturalization. If I could only tell you of the abuses that take place in connection with that: how that ceremony which should be sacred, which should make the immigrant feel that he is becoming a new being; that ceremony which is to make him a part of the American people has been degraded so that the immigrant feels humiliated and outraged at the very moment when the right of citizenship is conferred upon him.

My time is up, but all that I have sought to accomplish by what I said is to enable us to think sanely on this question; not to let prejudice carry us away. Here in this body of men, of whom two-thirds were either born abroad or are the sons of men and women born abroad, I don't think it is necessary for me to further defend the immigrant. (Applause)

Mr. Wickersham, President: Ladies and gentlemen: the next speaker will be Mr. Elon Huntington Hooker, an employer of labor on a large scale, and a close student of economic problems and their effect upon the welfare of our country. He is very well known in this state, and very well known in this city, and recently, during the primaries, was an aspirant to the

Governorship. He did not succeed this time, but he is young and there will be other campaigns. It is my pleasure to present Mr. Elon Huntington Hooker. (Applause)

Third Speaker

The Honorable Elon Huntington Hooker

President of the Hooker Electrochemical Company

Ladies and gentlemen: I don't think that Mr. Marshall would ask those who take the opposite side from him about the change in our immigration laws at the present time, I don't think he would ask them to define what the immigrant has done in this country in all the years since our first settlers came. Those of us who have had to do with the engineering and construction progress of this country know ell what work the immigrant has done. That is not the question at issue here tonight at all. The question with us is whether, as citizens of this great country of ours, whatever race we belong to, whatever clime we have come from, or our fathers have come from, whether we care more for the future and the present of this great Republic than we do for any of the distinctions of race, or any personal relations among ourselves. Are we not ready to submerge them all in the common good?

I have not found the businessman in this country who was not ready to work against his own pocketbook when a great question of public welfare was at stake, and I do not hesitate a moment to speak out plainly tonight to citizens of New York, knowing that many of you are of races that

have come from various parts of Europe, because I know your hearts are in America, and you are for any program which will build this country up in future in the best possible way, irrespective of its effect upon you. (Applause)

Now, I hold no brief for the labor unions, but I am not against the Labor Union, but in spite of what Mr. Marshall has said, I know there is unemployment in this country. (Applause) I know there are huge masses of men who cannot get a job to save their lives. I am an employer of labor. I am the chief executive of a plant which is only running at 33-1/2% capacity today, but do you think it is because we do not want it to run? We are losing immense amount of money every month because it is not running. Do you think it is because the men don't want it to run? They are without pay. We are putting them on half time; quarter time; anything to keep all of our men at work just as many hours as we possible can.

We are not taking of a year ago. It is of interest to know what Miss Frances Keller said of conditions a year ago. Everybody knows this country was filled up with war plants, enormous plants, built beyond the possibility of operation in peace time. That is the reason we were short of men, but conditions have changed, and we want to get our men back at work.

I have tried to approach this problem of immigration from what I conceived to be its broadest aspect, from the point of view of us Americans. What is the effect of not restricting our immigration further on this Republic?

Lincoln once said: “I hope that the time may come when our country shall guarantee to all an unfettered state and a fair chance in the race of life.”

We live in a great Republic - an experiment in self-government, upon the success of which the eyes of the world have been fixed with hope these many years. There are other Republics - South America has many, but South America does not now enter into our immigration problem. France has carried the torch and it never burned brighter than now, but France no longer sends us her working people.

Our immigration problem, then, involves fundamentally the welfare of a Republic and its contribution to the Society of Nations in a world made up principally of other forms of government.

No nation can exercise a helpful influence abroad which is not on a sound basis at home.

Government with us depends upon the consent of the governed. Its quality responds sensitively to the average intelligence of its citizenship.

America as the asylum for the oppressed of all nations -- our proud boast over many years -- is suffering from racial indigestion. The incoming tide of immigrants is no longer absorbed and assimilated. Moreover, the lower quality of the newcomers after the war exaggerates our

difficulty. The foreign nations are holding fast to all that is good of their nationals and are encouraging the outward movement of the unfit.

There is, as we know, an important element in Europe who does not believe in government and who have advocated the destruction of ours. If we are to surely eliminate this element, our errors must be on the restrictive side.

The lawless element here is largely foreign. Such people should either change their mental attitude and become whole heartedly American citizens, ready to work under our laws, or they should be put out of the country. (Applause) We must squarely face the efforts of a grasping minority to get what they want regardless of the rest of the citizens. It is contrary to every tradition of Americanism and against the essence of our constitution.

The Department of Justice states that fully 90% of the Communist and Anarchist agitation is traceable to aliens. It is among these elements that the propagandists disseminate their messages, either by word of mouth where the alien is illiterate, or visually, by means of newspapers and pamphlets, doctrines such as this:

“You must develop the general political strike against the capitalist government. Out of the general political strike will develop that form of mass action armed conflict between the workers and the capitalist government, through which the struggle between the capitalist robbers and the workers will be finally settled by the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat. That is

the program of the Communist Party. Read it. Study it. Talk to your fellow workers about it.

Once you have control of the power of government, you can deal with the capitalist robbers by taking the industries out of their hands and establishing social ownership and workers' control.

This is the only way to change the present conditions.”

That is the latest proclamation of the Communist Part of America. That is about the first of this year.

Fosdick says - “In 1918 Chicago with a population of 2,500,000 had more murders than England and Wales, with a population of 68,000,000.”

If the true weakness of all Americanization movements lies in their not being official, the principle may be sound that the central government, having let in these aliens, should Americanize them. Under this plan no immigrant, until his Americanization has been certified by proper educational boards could receive his naturalization papers. Upon his neglect or failure to pass such an examination within a certain number of years, he would be subject to deportation.

There are 30,000,000 of foreign-born parentage here out of our total population of 105,000,000, who were sending back recently for foreign countries their savings of \$400,000,000 a year. The main facts are familiar to you all; I need not dwell on them.

We owe it to ourselves and to our future usefulness among the nations to set up a stiff temporary barrier, operative immediately. Behind this shelter Congress should construct a sound immigration policy embodied in legislation selective at the source, and selective in its distribution here.

I very much regret that the Johnson Bill did not pass. The reason I regret it is because while the Johnson Bill was imperfect, it put a practical stop, for the moment, to immigration. The Dillingham Bill now proposed at Washington and reported out of Committee, may be a somewhat slightly better bill, but it is so near the end of the session now, that this morning's accounts indicate that there is great danger of its not passing.

My friends, I tell you that it is highly important that a highly restrictive and prohibitive bill should pass at once, while we take time to prepare a new and just set of immigration laws.

(Applause)

The time has come to shift the burden of proof. The immigrant must show cause why he should come in, rather than that the United States should prove him to be unworthy. Those now coming in are largely a race who are untrained by inheritance to appreciate the institutions, laws, customs and traditions of the United States and the freedom expressed in our Constitution. They multiply our problems unduly, even in comparison with their number. From the ranks come a large proportion of the radicals, terrorists and a number of the criminal classes. The Federation of

Labor estimates 2,000,000 men are out of employment now and idleness needs constructive, not destructive, leadership. The labors of our past, the hope of our future, are involved in the immigration problems.

Let us face the practical situation. Our present laws are none too strict as regards health safeguards and the keeping out of the unfit. They are administered in important places by men -- and don't let's close our eyes to this -- by men who are unsympathetic to a rigid enforcement of the Immigration Law. Let us have, then, immediate legislation the faults of which, if any, lie in the direction of too great exclusion.

Possibly the Dillingham plan to admit yearly 5% of the Nationals here in 1910 may suffice, but give us any reasonable restrictive measure which can pass at once.

Immigration is a most complicate subject, and the final laws should do the minimum of injustice. I doubt if proper legislation can be ready in less than a year and we must not risk the damage of the intervening time.

Only a little over 4,000,000 out of the 15,000,000 of immigrants reaching here in the last twenty years have been of the old type from Northwestern Europe which built up this country. They distributed themselves quickly to every part of the country and into every form of activity.

The great and growing preponderance of immigration has been from Eastern and Southern Europe - a much less desirable stock -- made up largely of single men who flock to the cities and industrial centers. The indication is that immigration for the immediate future will come from that section, and it is significant that in 1920 40% of the immigrants were classified as having no occupation.

For the five year period, 1909 to 1914, the six states of Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Illinois, with less than 5% of the area of the country received 56% of the immigration. In 1907 these states received 69% of the total immigration. In 1907 to 1914 the farm laborers coming in were 25%, while in 1920 they were only 6% of the total. We have now in the United States 24% of all of the Jews in the world; 17% of all the Scandinavians, and 13% of all the Germans.

Do you know that 25% of the drafted men examined in army camps could not read a newspaper or write a letter home? That 51% of them were physically unfit for military service, unlimited military service, and naturally are correspondingly unfitted for our industrial life or the pursuit of a normal life of happiness?

Do you know that there are tens of thousands of children being taught in elementary schools in foreign tongues? There are foreign settlements in our great centers of population which are larger than the greatest cities in their homelands.

The census shows that the native born of native parentage are less than one-quarter of the population of New York, Chicago, Boston, Cleveland, Detroit and Milwaukee. In cities like Fall River, Massachusetts, it is little more than 10%. In only 14 of the 50 largest cities of America does the native percentage population equal 50% of the total?

Do you know that 16,000,000 people daily in this country, whose average education is not above that of the 8th grade in public school, are seeing motion pictures whose appeal is deliberately aimed, with notable and welcome exceptions, at the lower instincts of human nature, and which convey immoral, improper, and incorrect ideas of life, manner and conduct?

Do you know that of the workmen in this country who profess to be skilled laborers, only 6% are in truth expert and only 30% have really a working knowledge of their trade? America has been losing that pride in artisanship which is the basis of a sound industrial life.

It is no sufficient answer to say “Europe has been sending us her workers trained from farther to son in the craftsmanship of the Ancient Guilds. Europe is sending us now a demoralized, disheartened horde, fleeing from the folly of their autocratic ruling class and inducted into subtle obliquities of economic thinking, whose outward expression is “working slow on the job.”

Experimental living and governmental maladies are spread among us from abroad by nations passing through the kindergarten of self expression and group control. The robust general health

of our community will wear down these germs in the end. Meanwhile, loose thinking on economic problems has been fostered by inexperienced idealists in control of our industrial life.

We must publicly discuss and teach widely sound, straight thinking. Economic and physical laws are immutable. We cannot lift ourselves over a stile by our bootstraps. Sustenance comes from work and brains, and the use of capital, and is not the gift of nature or the Gods.

Washington's farewell address reminds us - "Against the insidious wiles of foreign influence, I conjure you to believe me, fellow citizens, the jealousy of a free people ought to be constantly awake, since history and experience prove that foreign influence is one of the most baneful foes of Republican government."

Europe was keenly alive, even before the war, to the economic value of her immigrants and has tied them to the homeland, while resident in America, through every form of racial society, racial newspaper, friendly service, banking assistance and home-tie up building, while America has been slow even to teach them the meaning of the institutions under which the immigrants are living.

The number of cases of disloyalty reported to the military intelligence in New York City reflected to an extraordinary degree the ebb and flow of the fortunes of the armies engaged. This is obviously the natural result.

If I understand what was meant by the great and solemn referendum throughout the land last Fall, resulting in a majority of nine million votes, it was an order from the American people to their officials to busy themselves with our domestic housekeeping (Applause); to keep their eyes in the boat, to use a rowing expression rather than, as they have done in recent years, think first with so much concentration of the welfare of the people on the other side of the world.

America needs an Old Home Week, a new birth in the virtues our pioneer ancestors brought with them to the new world. We have changed from an agricultural country to an industrial country, and there has followed the natural congestion in great cities.

The permanent welfare of a Republic depends on those high qualities amounting to genius which flare up for a generation or two, sometimes when two different racial strains meet as in the days of the glories of Greece, but in the final event its only sure foundation is the gradual leveling upward of the mass of the people. The day of Greece was short-lived because the average intelligence did not rise with the passing years.

There must be for us the gradual rising trend in number and intelligence of that sound parent stock which ventured across the sea from the northlands and has shown its fitness to survive in the orderly government of the world. The name "American" since early Gothic times has defined

the man of great or laborious enterprises, the man who ruled because he labored for the benefit of all.

The war and experiences of the draft have opened our eyes to many possibilities of progress, if we exclude, for the present, further infiltration of indigestible elements; study our undeveloped areas; and choose the blood and the trades with which to make them productive.

Every adult who has lost those springs of hope and power which rise in the man or woman who sees a change ahead should see extended out to him in America the helping hand of modern methods which can shift the square peg from the round hole. A hopeless workman of sixty was moved from an industrial efficiency of 30%, with a few weeks training, to an efficiency of 80% and his entire outlook on life and that of his family altered. A class of twenty six young East side garment workers drafted for the war, were taught in seven weeks to become blacksmiths and delivered a uniform and high order of workmanship.

The American Republic is based on the fundamental principle of assimilation. The governments of Europe have practiced for centuries race segregation and are now stressing it more than ever since the war, both at home and among their emigrants here.

America should be a place where every child born of whatever race should have an American chance for success. Every American boy and girl should be taught in the American tongue,

which is the language of the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States.

The welfare of our country must be viewed over a long sequence of years. In racial questions the country is only a unit. We want our American Republic to stand as a rock against the assaults of time.

Let no one think in advocating a temporary stringent restriction of immigration that we forget this land was founded and has been maintained as the home of immigrants. Looking down the vista of years the name of an Italian explore comes to our mind, financed by a Spanish queen; the Norse Vikings with blond hair and blue eyes; the Dutch caravels come into the picture and the ships of the Puritans.

We are founding here a new race, selective of the best the world can give, that we in turn may give back in fuller measure a spirit of liberty ad leadership to the old world.

America acknowledges her debt to her foreign born citizens. In our own time Jacob Riis was called the “best American.” In the spirit of leadership of a great American, himself a mixture of many races, Theodore Roosevelt, we aim to make America a better place for the average man to live in and to weld a citizenship into national solidarity which shall be from one end of our country to the other, 100% American (Applause)

Mr. Wickersham, President: The last speaker represents a race referred to by one of the previous speakers, of the men who have built the large majority of our public works, built our subways, erected our buildings, constructed our bridges -- this man is singularly well qualified to speak on this subject, himself for three years an interpreter at Ellis Island, afterwards a member of Congress, active on both sides of the water during the Great War, and now holding for the our a high office in the city government. I have great pleasure in presenting Mr. LaGuardia.

(Applause)

Fourth Speaker

The Honorable Fiorello H. LaGuardia

President of the Board of Aldermen

Mr. Chairman, gentlemen, ladies: fortunately I didn't hear the entire address of the previous speaker not the gentlemen who preceded him. The few minutes that I did hear really made me feel rather uncomfortable, and I felt perhaps that I needed to be fumigated and then apply to a Board of Special Inquiry whether or not I am an American. This question of immigration comes up every few years, every now and then, and we hear arguments for further restriction and then we hear percentages of the foreign born and children of the foreign born and it is really a pity that in order to sustain these arguments we cannot change the history of the country and instead

of having a new country of less than 300 years, we cannot have a country of a thousand years of existence. (Applause)

The preceding speaker said that forty million of the 110,000,000 were foreign born or the children of foreign born. Why, of course, figure it up, - what else could it be in less than 300 years of national existence?

You know, it is so strange, I heard with a great deal of interest the sharp criticism and the undesirability of certain elements from the preceding speaker. What difference a few months will make. In those twilight periods, just as one administration is about to go out and a convention is about to convene, how different all of this, and how great the Italians and how great the Jews are and how great the Germans are in that handshaking period. (Applause)

The preceding speaker stated with accuracy that 24% of the American Expeditionary Force could not write home in English. True; but he failed to state that the 24% fought like Americans and died like Americans. (Applause)

Then the speaker stated with accuracy that something like 51% of the foreign-born who came from our industrial districts were unfit for military service. Shame on our industrial system which will so ruin the manhood of the country. (Applause)

The preceding speaker stated that the present immigration from southeastern Europe was undesirable and unaccustomed to advanced civilization, assuming for a moment that the people of the preceding speaker came over in the Mayflower in 1620 and my people from southeastern Europe came over in the 1870's, don't forget, Mr. Hooker, that my people went to the country where your people came from five hundred years before Christ and brought civilization there. (Applause)

And then the preceding speaker stated and quoted accurately the views of the Department of Justice as to the Communists and radicals in this country. Great authority, the Department of Justice. (Laughter) The Department of Justice has 57 varieties of explanations for the Wall Street explosion and not one arrest.

Now then, for a moment, let us see what further restrictions we can enact and put on our statute books. If there is any further restriction as to the qualifications, physical, mental, moral and otherwise, that you can possibly think of that can be added to the immigration law as it now exists, I would like to hear it.

In the first place, it was stated that the burden of proof as to the admissibility and qualification of the alien should be on the alien. A good suggestion, but, Mr. Hooker, you are about 22 years too late. That is the law today.

Now then, our law requires that a man be physically sound, that he have no physical defects, that he be not afflicted with any contagious or dangerous disease, that he has never been convicted of crime involving moral turpitude, that he does not come here under contract to labor, that his passage has not been bought by another, that he has never been the subject of charity or the inmate of an almshouse or poorhouse on the other side, that he is not a polygamist or an anarchist, that he is able to earn a living, and that he is not likely to become a public charge. Can you add anything to that? Do you want them all to be six feet six? (Laughter)

Recently the immigration law was further restricted requiring all to be able to read and write and after many years of agitation you finally succeeded in putting into the law the literacy test, and now instead of having workers who may not be able to read some of Professor Jenks' treatise on economics, but who might have been willing to work in Mr. Hooker's factory, are excluded. (Applause)

You wanted that; now you have it. Now you can claim that they know how to read and write, but think too much, they know too much about economics.

That is an example of what further restriction might do. I had experience as an American Consul on the other side at the Port of Fiume, before Fiume was placed on the map by an erratic post. (Laughter) I inspected all of my immigrants. The immigration law did not give me that power as an American Consul, but the quarantine law says that the American Consul should issue a bill of

health, so I being young, youthful and ambitious, I retained a physician and physically examined every immigrant, because I construed the law to mean that if I was to issue a bill of health certifying to the good health of the passengers of that ship, I had a right to physically examine the passengers. The Cunard Line told me that they were in business fifty years before I was born and that that is not the law and not the custom. I continued to physically inspect my immigrants as the Port of Fiume. They reported it to the Department of State, that I was abusing my powers, not only examining the immigrants contrary to law, but I made them pay for the cost of examination, and the result was that out of 66,000 immigrants that left my Port, when I was an underpaid American Consul, (Laughter) but thirteen were rejected for contagious disease and for trachoma, thirteen out of 66,000. (Applause) Incidentally, the Department of State has not yet decided whether I had a right to do that or not. (Laughter)

Now then, after that I had occasion to serve in the immigration service for three years and what was said about the inspection is true, but whose fault is it? Gentlemen, we have a Board of appeals in the custom service, of judges, getting \$10,000 a year for life to decide whether a fish is a sardine or an anchovy (Laughter), but you permit Ellis Island to be undermanned and the workers to be underpaid at Ellis Island, and it is physically impossible to carry out the intention of the law under conditions at Ellis Island today. (Applause)

Now, as the immigrant arrives, - this is not from theory, Mr. Hooker, but from actual experience, - we have our medical men at the stairs, watching the approach of the immigrants to see that his

walk is correct, that there is no defect in the walk; he is met at the middle of the stairs by another doctor who examines his arms, wrists and fingers; as he goes up there is another doctor who examines his eyes for trachoma; as he passes on another doctor inspects his scalp; then he goes on; if he has the slightest symptom or indication of any organic defect, he is taken aside and given a thorough examination. We have doctors there to pick out psychopathic cases, feeble minded cases. After going through this general medical inspection they are taken and very thoroughly inspected for lungs and heart and other physical defects. After he passes that physical test, he goes up to the immigration inspector, who asks his name, his age, his sex, (Laughter) nationality, the amount of money, where he comes from, where he is going to, if he has a ticket, who paid for his passage, whether he has a promise of work or whether someone has told him that if he came here he would get work, his occupation or what he did on the other side, if he was ever in jail, if he is a polygamist, or if he believes in anarchy and then after her answers all those questions, then what happens? If he says he has got work he is held as contract labor; if he says that he hasn't got work and he doesn't know anything about work, then he is held as likely to become a public charge, and then he is sent to a Board of Special Inquiry, and there is a very thorough examination. The Board of Special Inquiry consists of three inspectors, interpreter, the Secretary of the Board, and they put this man through a third degree, and the burden of proof is on the alien according to law, Mr. hooker, and he there must demonstrate to the satisfaction of this Board that he is qualified and beyond a doubt admissible under the law. Recently, and since my time, they have the literacy test, and I believe they are required to read forty words or

something like that. The Jews come along and they are required to read forty words of some doctrine of Christ, or something like that (Laughter)

Now then, really, beyond that, mark you, we do not lose jurisdiction of all these aliens by any means. If we find that within three years they are in the United States in violation of law, that they belong to any of the excluded classes, we take them and send them back at the expense of the steamship company that brought them over. If we find, under a recent enactment, that is, since my time, he has committed a crime since he has arrived here, we can deport him at the expense of the steamship company. If we find that he believes in anarchy or professes anarchy -- that does not mean, gentlemen, because a man is dissatisfied with underpaid wages and he strikes for more wages together with the rest of the men, - that does not make him an anarchist, although some men want to think of him as that, but if we find that he is here in violation of law, we still have jurisdiction, so that all this cry, all this alarm about the danger of immigration to this country I believe is rather unjustified at this time.

Now, as to the Johnson bill: I don't think that it is any secret any longer. I left Congress in January of last year and the Johnson Bill was then under contemplation. We had a great deal of discussion about it, on the floor, in the coatroom and in the committee room. The Johnson Bill is to restrict and stop immigration for a certain period to give the government a chance to think what it will do to satisfy the demands of the western coast to cut out Japanese immigration. That is the purpose of the Johnson Bill, if you want to know it.

Now, if you stop immigration, stop it entirely, if you wish, you will find out that if you want the children of immigrants to become Americanized, and that is right, we want them to become Americanized, if you want them to go to our schools and high schools, and that is correct, we want them to go to our schools and high schools, who is going to dig your mines and dig your subways, and who is going to build your railroads? So that we need this flow of green labor at times. While the first generation of immigrants who came to this country performed that work willingly, they expect their children to become Presidents of the Board of Aldermen or something else. (Laughter and Applause)

We want to carry on this work of Americanization. I am helping in it, but if you do that there will be a shortage of labor, Mr. Hooker, even in the electro-chemical industry.

Now, it was stated here, gentlemen, about the amount of money that is sent back every year. I do not know whether it was Mr. Marshall or some other distinguished American who appeared before a Committee on immigration many years ago, when one of the Burnett Bills was under consideration, and this very question was brought up, as to the hundreds of millions of dollars that went back there. The money went back, but the labor which earned that money remained in this country and you cannot take that away. There is no loss to the country; there is no economic loss of this money that goes back. I believe that is a rather narrow and farfetched feeling. Some of these men send money to the remainder of their family who cannot come to this country for

reasons of physical defect and other reasons, owing to our immigration law. They have earned that money by hard labor and it is no economic loss to the country that that part of their earnings are sent back.

I do not believe that the United States feels that loss. I do not believe that we have arrived at that low financial strait that we are to put an embargo on the sending back of money. Would you put an embargo on the investment of American capital on foreign enterprise? If you put an embargo on the going of money from one, you have to put an embargo on the other just as well, and I do not believe that that represents the policy of this country. It certainly does not represent the views of men who handle large finances.

Now, gentlemen, I say those of you who are really interested in this human subject, it is a human subject -- oh, it is easy to decide whether an importation belongs to Class A or Class B of the tariff, but when you are passing upon the admission of an alien to this country, you are dealing with the hope of a human being. I have sat on Boards of Special Inquiry as interpreter. I have conveyed the message, the decision of the Board, that the alien was excluded. I saw the despair on the faces of those unfortunate people. With death there is at least no uncertainty, but with an order of exclusion from the Land of Hope, there is nothing but despair, and I have seen families who have given their all to come to this country so that they might call and give their children an equal chance with other children, receive an order of deportation and their cry haunts me today.

Why, can't we do all of this inspection of the other side and be less cruel in the enforcement of our law? (Applause)

Don't blame the alien for embarking when a greedy agent sells him a ticket and tells him that he can come through. Let us be fair about this question.

That brings me to the question of radicalism and Bolshevism. Gentlemen, immigration laws will not stop the spread of Bolshevism. That is a world disease. We cannot stop Bolshevism in this country by making speeches, by printing pamphlets and sending them out, we cannot stop bolshevism by suppressing speech. We can stop Bolshevism only by gaining the confidences of the people in this country by giving efficient honest government. (Applause) That is the only way we can combat this.

Do you know, gentlemen, that there are more than a dozen new countries in Europe today undecided as to what form of government they agree to establish? They read our Constitution and it seems satisfactory. They read our Declaration of Independence and they are inspired, and they think after all the American form of representative government is the ideal form, and then they hear that there is agitation throughout this country to suppress speech, to keep down meetings, to oust members who are elected and all that sort of restriction, what sort of impression is it going to make on these new countries that are looking to us for guidance and inspiration? (Applause)

The gentleman correctly stated that people who are starving need real leadership, constructive leadership and not destructive leadership. That may be true, but people who are starving and who are out of work, before they need leadership, need food, and you cannot preach patriotism to people on empty bellies.

Now then, if conditions in this country are such that the man who will labor, and of course every man ought to labor, can earn enough to properly provide for himself and his family, to earn enough so that he may live up to the American standard, if he can live under a government that is fair and just, we will have no Bolshevism in this country, and if we have no Bolshevism in this country there will be less in Europe.

The only way to fight Bolshevism is with truth, but not the spoke word, the living act; and I tell you, gentlemen, that every time this country has put the alien to the test, he has responded 100% for it.

The gentleman stated that the large percentage of lawlessness was foreign. I take issue with that statement. If you take the percentage of the foreign born that commits crime with the population of that nationality, of every race, you will find that the foreign born can commit a few more robberies and burglaries and yet have something to spare. You must take this question relatively. You must take the City of New York with 800,000 Italians, with nearly a million and a quarter of

Jews, and all along that population, and then figure your percentage of crimes committed, and then arrive at your conclusion whether or not all of the lawlessness is foreign.

Don't forget that it is easy for a man, unaccustomed to our country to obtain a false and unjust impression of what law and order means. Yes, Professor, we teach them the constitution and he likes it; we teach him what the Constitution means and he absorbs it; we teach him how the Constitution is amended and he studies it, and then he hears of the Eighteenth amendment, and he goes out and he sees everybody buying booze. Can you expect that he have respect for law and order? (Applause) We have got to live up to everything that we preach; we have got to set a good example to these new arrivals.

Above all, we have the question of helping them. If we keep aloof and permit them to go in the slums, - and gentlemen, I will tell you, as a city official, there should be no slums in a city of the size and wealth of New York City, - if we permit them to go into the slums, if we keep away from them, if he lives under undesirable conditions, if he is exploited in his work, and then the agitator comes to him and give him one half of the truth, you cannot blame this unfortunate for becoming a radical. We should meet him half way. We should see that he has proper living quarters; we should see that he is protected in his work, we should give him the opportunity to learn American institutions, and then you will see that the agitator cannot make headway with that man.

Now, gentlemen, this continent held apart from the world for centuries, and this country grew mighty and powerful and now leads the world, because of immigration, whether you came on the Mayflower or whether you came on the Mauretania. I told you of the despair and hopelessness of the alien who receives his order of deportation. There is only another instance that make life bearable at Ellis Island, and that is when the newly arrived comes through on his medical inspection and his mental test and his law requirements, and finally he receives his card of admission and he gets on the ferry boat, goes out to the front and the ferry boat pulls out, and he looks at the sky lines of New York City. All that he has is that O K card, but look in those eyes and you see what America stands for -- Hope! (Applause)

Mr. Wickersham, President: Professor Jenks have five minutes to reply, as the burden is on him who is advocating a change in the law -- five minutes for Professor Jenks.

Professor Jenks: Gentlemen, I will hold strictly to the five minutes. Mr. LaGuardia has just given us a most charming, picturesque view and accurate description of the immigration law and its working that I have ever listened to, and I agree with every word of it.

So far as the immigration law is concerned, and so far as the hopelessness of those who are rejected are concerned, I had already recited one instance of the kind myself, but on the other hand, let us keep this in mind: it is not the labor unions, it is the most thorough, scientific examination of the immigration question that has ever been made by a body, and an utterly

impartial examination, that says that the standard of living of the American working classes of the American people are being lowered by the large numbers of immigrants who are coming in, and Mr. LaGuardia made some impartial statement which did not in any way contradict that, excepting in this, that it was stated that it was the opinion of the Labor Unions, the labor union crowd, but it is not the labor union investigation on which that is based.

I agree with all the statements that were made by Mr. Marshall as to the evils that arise from lack of distribution. I would myself have advocated, had there been time, examination on the other side. I would myself have advocated, as have all of the supporters, so far as I am aware, of the present restriction of immigration, that there should be better methods of distribution, and the committee of both the Senate and the House today, I am informed, are working on just that very question.

But the one really at issue is this: whether we can have a more restricted immigration in order that our standards of living may be maintained and elevated, which now are being depressed and not maintained beyond all question on account of the immigrants that are coming in, and secondly, whether we cannot make such a selection of the immigrants that are coming in that we may within a few years when they are properly trained and properly distributed, absorb still more of them than are coming in now. It is a question of selection, of distribution, and of so coordinating our institutions now that we may do these good things that we wish to do.

I would support any and every measure of education, and I would go still a step farther than Mr. LaGuardia has so well done, and say for those that come in, we should give them not merely the best of opportunities, but we should welcome them as fellows, we should accept them as citizens and we should treat them as equals and friends. (Applause)