

Immigration Bill Passes House

ON December 13 the House of Representatives passed the Johnson bill establishing a temporary bar against all labor immigration. The vote was 293 to 41. Twenty-three Democrats and eighteen Republicans voted in the minority; nearly all the opponents of the bill representing industrial constituencies in such states as New York, Illinois and Massachusetts. The measure is not intended as a basis for permanent immigration policy, but simply as an emergency "injunction" to halt immigration until Congress, with its usual leisureliness, can determine the policy it wishes to adopt.

The bill as originally drafted barred immigration for two years, but in the course of discussion in the House it was amended to a one year's exclusion policy. Further important amendments are expected in the Senate. Senator Dillingham of Vermont has introduced a bill limiting the number of aliens of any nationality who may be annually admitted to the United States to 5 per cent of the number of persons of that nationality already resident in the United States. The aim of this measure is to restrict immigration from southern and eastern Europe and from Asia, without any direct discrimination against any nation, and this is possible because the older immigration, which would count largely in determining the number of persons resident in the United States, came largely from such countries of northwestern Europe as Germany, Scandinavia, Great Britain and Ireland, and the big immigration from such countries as Italy, Poland, Russia and Syria is comparatively recent.

The House of Representatives voted unanimously to repeal legislation "that by its terms is in force only during the existence of a state of war." The Lever Food Control Act, the Trading with the Enemy Act, the War Finance Corporation Act and the acts governing the Liberty and Victory loans were not comprized within the scope of the original resolution, but by a vote of 179 to 137 an amendment was adopted, on the motion of Representative Bland of Indiana, including in the repeal the Lever Act with the exception of a section relating to rents in the District of Columbia. Among the measures repealed were the temporary clauses of the Espionage Act, frequently used during the war to suppress pro-German and pacifist agitation, and the Overman Act, which enabled the President to reorganize at his will the machinery of the executive branch of the Government.