

sidered in accordance with the regular practice prescribed by the Naturalization Act and that the fact that the applicant may be an enemy alien is not in itself to be regarded as a reason why the application should not be entertained, since all applications from enemy aliens will be specially and carefully considered in the Department of the Secretary of State before the issue of a certificate will be sanctioned.

I think that was before the government and perhaps the people of Canada realized the type of war we were facing. At that time Canada was unaware of the menace of the fifth column. Subsequently came the blitzkrieg. On July 15, 1940, the Secretary of State (Mr. Casgrain) explained the situation in these words, to be found at page 1643 of *Hansard* of that year:

When I assumed my present office on May 10, the invasion of the Netherlands and Belgium had just taken place. The reports which reached us as to the conduct of the so-called fifth column in these countries led me immediately to make a study of the situation in Canada in relation to naturalization.

He went on to say:

I felt it my duty to direct that, for the time being at least, no further certificates of naturalization should be issued to applicants of enemy origin.

In other words, on May 10, there was adopted the policy of withholding naturalization certificates, although applications for naturalization were still being heard. The members of the committee which sat last year felt that this action was creating considerable misapprehension across Canada, and apparently the officials of the Department of the Secretary of State agreed with us. The department drew up the recommendation in that regard, which will be found in the report of the committee to this house. This report reads:

It is of the opinion that considerable misapprehension has been occasioned by the fact that, although in recent months certificates of naturalization have not been issued by the Secretary of State to aliens of enemy origin, there is no provision which prevents the hearing before the courts of applications from applicants who are of enemy origin.

The report went on to recommend that there should be no further hearings of applications for naturalization by enemy aliens except in cases specifically authorized by the Secretary of State. I find now, however, that this recommendation has not been followed; apparently it has been ignored entirely although, when we left here last August, we understood that all the recommendations of the special committee which sat last year were to be adopted and carried out. Further, it was agreed by officers of the Department of the Secretary of State and by all the mem-

bers of the committee that our naturalization procedure was inadequate and should be revised. We recommended that there should be greater solemnity in connection with naturalization hearings.

Mr. HANSON (Skeena): With regard to naturalization, was not the recommendation of the committee which sat last year that the Secretary of State should deal with each individual application on its merits and issue certificates to those who were entitled to get them?

Mr. GREEN: The complaint of the committee was that applications by enemy aliens were being heard in the naturalization courts. This really did not mean anything, because naturalization certificates were not actually being issued by the Secretary of State, but we felt that for the peace of mind of the Canadian people, instructions should be sent out to the naturalization courts that no further hearings be held of applications by enemy aliens except where the Secretary of State recommended that a hearing be held. Does my hon. friend understand that?

Mr. HANSON (Skeena): Applications by Italian and Japanese subjects should be dealt with on their merits.

Mr. GREEN: This recommendation applied only to Germans and Italians. I was just about to quote the recommendation which was made in connection with naturalization procedure. It was as follows:

That measures should be taken to invest the important step of naturalization with greater solemnity and to impress upon those who apply for the privilege the importance of the obligations which they assume as British subjects.

In addition to making that recommendation, we felt that on the broader ground of national policy the whole question of naturalization was well worthy of consideration by a special committee. We recommended accordingly and the government has seen fit to accept that recommendation. I think it will be admitted by everyone in this chamber that our method of naturalization is far from being the best that could be devised. I believe everyone will admit also that the parliament of Canada has given the subject of naturalization scant consideration in recent years. I know all members will admit that naturalization is and will always be of the greatest importance to Canada because so many of our people have become Canadian citizens and British subjects by way of the naturalization courts. Some of our best citizens and, indeed, some of the leading members of this house are naturalized Canadians. The 1931 census showed that at that time there were in Canada 614,971 naturalized Canadians.