

*Immigration Act*

even shocked to hear that the laws passed by this parliament, still on the statute books, still authorize racial discrimination as a basis for the acceptance or exclusion of individuals seeking to come into Canada. Indeed I spoke to one hon. member a few moments ago and informed him that there does remain racial discrimination in our statutes in regard to immigration, to which he replied that he had no idea that was the case.

The bill itself is short and simple. It provides that section 61 (g) of the Immigration Act be repealed. Section 61 states, in part:

The governor in council may make regulations for carrying into effect the purposes and provisions of this act and, without restricting the generality of the foregoing, may make regulations respecting

(g) the prohibiting or limiting of admission of persons by reason of

(i) nationality, citizenship, ethnic group—

And so on. I would ask hon. members of this house to pay particular attention to that phrase, "ethnic group".

And it continues:

—occupation, class or geographical area of origin, (ii) peculiar customs, habits, modes of life or methods of holding property,

(iii) unsuitability having regard to the climatic, economic, social, industrial, educational, labour, health or other conditions or requirements existing, temporarily or otherwise, in Canada or in the area or country from or through which such persons come to Canada, or

(iv) probable inability to become readily assimilated or to assume the duties and responsibilities of Canadian citizenship within a reasonable time after their admission.

The principle of this bill is to eliminate those sections by which the governor in council is authorized by this parliament to regulate the admissibility of people to Canada. The only portion of those words that refers directly to origin is the phrase "ethnic group", although others that refer indirectly are "peculiar customs, habits, modes of life", "geographical area of origin" and so on. Those are also words that are apt to be used for the purpose of rejecting would-be immigrants to Canada on grounds of racial background.

Those provisions are entirely out of line with modern policy statements made by this government and its predecessor regarding the basis of our immigration policy. There was a time when racial grounds were considered satisfactory grounds for exclusion. Indeed people were excluded specifically by statute if, as an example, they came from what was then called the Chinese race.

For some time now our spokesmen have made it clear that in fact the policy of Can-

ada in respect of immigration is not based upon racial grounds. In fact we have two streams of immigrants coming into this country: We have those who are admitted on grounds of their skill and ability to make an economic contribution to Canada, and we have others admitted on the basis of what we might call family grounds, or grounds of relationship to Canadian citizens.

The provisions which this bill seeks to eliminate are those which are entirely out of line with the modern concepts of the immigration policy announced from time to time by the government of this country. Those grounds are anachronistic at this time. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, the provisions which my bill seeks to eliminate are inconsistent with Canada's, as well as other countries', professed declarations of policies in the international field.

Just this morning, Mr. Speaker, the members of one of the committees of this house, namely the committee on external affairs, had presented to it by a spokesman for the Department of External Affairs a statement in regard to a declaration adopted unanimously by the United Nations general assembly on November 21, 1963 regarding the elimination of all forms of racial discrimination. We were told by that spokesman for our Department of External Affairs that this declaration provides a standard of conduct for all members of the United Nations. We were told that Canadian government policy supported this declaration, its aims and purposes, and that the Canadian delegate voted in favour of it at the general assembly.

What is in that declaration to which we have subscribed? In the affirmations or recitals appears the following:

Solemnly affirms the necessity of speedily eliminating racial discrimination throughout the world, in all its forms and manifestations, and of securing understanding of and respect for the dignity of the human person.

Article 1 states:

Discrimination between human beings on the grounds of race, colour or ethnic origin—

And, I call your attention, Mr. Speaker, and the attention of all members of this house, to that phrase "ethnic origin", which is exactly the same as the phrase used in the section to which I have referred, and which I wish to have eliminated.

Article 1 states, as I have said, that discrimination on these grounds—

—is an offence to human dignity and shall be condemned as a denial of the principles of the charter of the United Nations, as a violation of