

New Citizenship Act proclaimed

Canada's new Citizenship act, which became law on February 15, treats everyone equally regardless of sex, country of origin, age or marital status.

Secretary of State John Roberts emphasized that the law was "new and unique, not just a revision of the old act...."

One major change is the three-year residency requirement for all applicants. The old act required five years of residence in most cases.

Another change is the removal of the phrase "a Canadian is a British subject." This, however, will in no way affect the status of Canadians traveling abroad, as they will continue to receive protection from the British legation wherever a Canadian mission is not in existence. At the same time, the new legislation does recognize the status of "citizen of the Commonwealth" and thereby acknowledges the ties of friendship between Canadians and other citizens of the British Commonwealth, many of whom are no longer British subjects.

Children born abroad

The new act makes provision for either parent – including adoptive parents – to apply for citizenship on behalf of a minor child. Under the former act, in most cases, only the father could apply.

For the next two years a parent may apply for citizenship for children born abroad to a Canadian mother prior to February 15, 1977. Such children are not now Canadian citizens unless their father was Canadian at the time of their birth.

The rights of children born abroad, in or out of wedlock, are also now protected. The right to citizenship will be automatic in the first generation. Persons of the second generation are allowed to retain their citizenship provided that, by 28 years of age, they have either resided in Canada for one year or have established "a substantial connection with Canada."

Marriage to foreign nationals

Women who did not become citizens under the old act because of marriage to foreign nationals are now able to acquire citizenship under the new law

by notifying the Minister. However, Canadian citizenship will not be returned automatically to women who do not request it because of possible inconveniences to persons living abroad.

Other changes

The age of application for citizenship will be reduced from 21 to 18 years.

Under the new law, citizenship cannot be arbitrarily withheld by the Minister. It may be withheld only at the discretion of the Governor in Council (the federal Cabinet), and only if it would be "prejudicial to the security of Canada or contrary to public order...."

The old act required that a person be of "good character", as interpreted by a citizenship court judge. In the new legislation, specific criteria based on a person's criminal record will determine whether the applicant is a fit candidate for citizenship.

Finally, there will no longer be a two-year wait for unsuccessful applicants. These persons may re-apply as soon as they feel ready to do so. Detailed information may be obtained from the Court of Canadian Citizenship, 150 Kent Street, Ottawa, Ont., K1A 0M5, Canada.

Locomotive surfs on magnetic wave at 300 miles an hour

A proposal by three Canadian universities for a new mode of high-speed transportation is raising hopes that getting from Toronto to Montreal within the lunch hour may become a reality.

The Canadian Maglev Project, a development program shared by Montreal's McGill University, Queen's University, Kingston, and the University of Toronto, is rapidly gaining international recognition as one of the most promising proposals yet for a ground transportation vehicle using magnetic fields to both support and propel it.

The downtown-to-downtown trip should take no longer than one-hour-and-a-half, compared to three-and-a-half hours by air and four-and-a-half hours by Turbo train.

The implementation of such a system, which would involve not only construction of a vehicle, but also of miles of special guideway, is still many years away, and would have to be preceded by an extensive engineering design and testing program. But, according to Gordon Slemon, professor

of electrical engineering, who heads the U of T group of the Maglev team, nothing stands in the way of proceeding but the decision to commit the necessary resources and get the necessary work done.

"What we are saying," Slemon declares, "is that as far as we can see, all the fundamental problems have been solved, and that we can demonstrate the technical feasibility of it

beyond any reasonable degree of doubt. Moreover, our preliminary studies show the system would be economically justifiable."

Looks like a plane

The kind of vehicle envisaged would resemble a Boeing 707, about 35 metres long, 3.2 metres wide, seating 100 passengers four abreast. It would speed along an elevated, flat-topped concrete guideway at 300 miles an

