

*Supply—Citizenship and Immigration*

do not refer to the language qualification, which was discussed briefly in connection with a bill we had before us a little while ago. Is there any requirement that they must have attended so many classes or anything of that sort? I appreciate that it is most difficult. Here we are on the one hand suggesting that they should be urged to take out their certificates of citizenship as soon as they qualify from the point of view of residence, and I appreciate that it would perhaps appear inconsistent if in the face of that we put other obstacles in their way and compelled them to comply with this or that regulation before they could obtain them.

I wonder if some happy medium could not be arrived at whereby if free classes on citizenship were available in a locality, perhaps some classes using films or visual education and some the lecture method, which might take only four or five nights during a year, consideration might then be given to making attendance compulsory at such classes before these people would be regarded as qualified for citizenship. Has any consideration been given to that, or as to whether anything along these lines could be worked out? I know that efforts are being made by voluntary organizations in certain provinces to give classes, and that is what made me wonder whether there was a possibility of making attendance compulsory to a certain extent?

**Mr. Harris:** We are in the process of drafting a number of regulations having to do with these classes. In the meantime, however, where they have been held and where a certificate has been granted the county judge will accept that as evidence of certain accomplishments. But it will happen, of course, that some applicant for citizenship who has attended no classes at all but who is fully qualified according to the standards we set down will come before a judge. Therefore it is difficult to say that such a rule should apply, although we undoubtedly encourage them to do so. On the other hand, there are also many places where we have no classes, yet by private tuition and self-help the immigrant is able to appear before the judge. Where there are no classes we are seeking to have them if we can, and where there are classes we are doing our best to see that as many people as possible attend them and that some recognition is given for having done so which will permit them to have easier access to the courts and their citizenship.

**Mr. Fulton:** I think that is a very excellent idea. I hope the minister can report to us that other provinces besides Ontario and British Columbia are awarding certificates of

[Mr. Fulton.]

proficiency. Have any other provinces adopted that scheme?

**Mr. Harris:** I think that is all at the moment.

**Mr. Fulton:** Can the minister tell us for the record who is the new director of the citizenship branch in succession to the late Mr. Frank Foulds, to whose work I think we are all glad to pay tribute.

**Mr. Harris:** We have not appointed a new director. There is an acting director, Mr. Eugene Bussière, but the permanent appointment has not been made.

Item agreed to.

Immigration branch—

60. Administration of the Immigration Act, §24,-403.

**Mr. Fulton:** The minister said he would take advantage of this item to reply to the general discussion and suggestions that have been made with respect to immigration.

**Mr. Harris:** Mr. Chairman, I wish immediately to thank hon. members for their kind remarks about myself and the officials of the branch for the work we have been doing. I believe hon. members realize that in dealing with immigration we are dealing with human beings; and while there are certain definite prohibitions in the Immigration Act which must be observed, nevertheless the regulations are flexible and should be used with discretion. They should not always be applied rigidly. The department tries to follow that practice within the policy laid down from time to time by the government. Where we are able to assist hon. members, not only are we glad to do so but we should in fact do so.

In the general discussion it seemed to me that every shade of opinion was expressed as to immigration; and it occurred to me that everything that was said this afternoon has been said at one time or another by myself and by my officials, when we have been discussing the policy of immigration. There are times when one takes the view taken by the hon. member for Cape Breton South, which I think is probably the most restrictive approach that has been stated so far in this debate. On other occasions perhaps we would take a view more in line with that of the hon. member for Queens who, if I understood him correctly, while he did not recommend it in exact terms, nevertheless thought in terms of a general migration of people at some time in the future of the world.

In between those two extremes the Canadian immigration policy tries to function. As