

Therefore I suggest to the minister that he will be neglecting his duty if all he is depending upon to prevent people who have been deported from returning to Canada is the penalty clause in this bill. Both of my colleagues in attendance this evening are lawyers and believe that anyone who breaks the law must pay the penalty, whether morally that penalty is justified. However, it seems to me the immigration officials could exercise good judgment on behalf of the Canadian public in preventing deported persons from returning, in which case there would be little or no need for this law.

I am afraid that once this law is passed, as is common with other similar laws, all we will accomplish is a conviction of persons under the law which will result in many of these people becoming guests of the Canadian public in our institutions for a period of up to a year, and I am not sure that is the wish of the Canadian public in asking the government to limit immigration to this country.

Mr. Paul Yewchuk (Athabasca): Mr. Speaker, I have a few reservations about this bill. Although on the surface it looks like a housekeeping bill designed simply to plug a loophole, I think it is to some extent a bill that is based on a false assumption.

● (2150)

I think the false assumption is that everybody who has been deported is a criminal and therefore should never be allowed to return to this country. Everybody who has been deported from this country is not a criminal. There are many cases of individuals who have been deported for reasons which cannot be classified as criminal activity. Let me give you an example.

I was associated with a case of an individual who was deported only yesterday. He happened to be a student travelling in this country, and required some money. He took a job for a month or so without a ministerial permit, and was deported for doing so. Under this legislation, unless I am wrong, this man will be prohibited from ever coming to this country again for the rest of his life, whether he wants to come as a tourist, a visitor, or what have you. He is on the minister's black list and will not be allowed to come back in without running the risk of facing a fine or a prison sentence.

Unfortunately I did not hear the minister's explanation when he led off the debate. Perhaps he would explain how he will get around this particular problem. It seems to me that because of the fact that a lot of people are deported for reasons that may be considered to be criminal, this will tend to tar everybody with the same brush. The minister did indicate that a certain amount of humanitarianism and good judgment will be required in the administration of this measure, but I do not know that ministers of immigration in the future will be as humane as this particular minister claims to be.

The provision that leaves everything up to the minister's discretion, or requiring that everyone must get a permit from him puts a rather difficult obstacle in the way of people who want to come here simply for the purpose of visiting. A better method must be available, and we should attempt to differentiate in respect of reasons for deportation in terms of this bill when it becomes law.

Immigration

I can think of cases where people, who have been deported for a reason such as the one I gave in respect of the student, may be required to come to Canada to visit friends or relatives here, and may not have the time to go through the dragged out procedure of obtaining a ministerial permit. This bill may create very serious difficulties for people in that category.

I am not sure that without some clear delineation as to the kind of guidelines the minister will follow in issuing permits I am prepared to give him the absolute power for which he is asking in this bill. It would also be useful to consider some other aspects of the Immigration Act about which I am concerned, and one is the point system.

Many people may make application for immigrant status who, for one reason or another, do not obtain enough points and are rejected. While this point system is useful as a guideline, I think it does not consider the needs of certain regions in Canada. This is an area where possibly greater discretion in terms of regional need is required.

It is fair to say that in the prairie provinces, certainly in northern Alberta with which I am very familiar, there is a tremendous shortage of workmen, skilled and unskilled. One of the greatest shortages at the moment is in respect of unskilled workmen. One can go to almost any service station or farm and find that the operators or farmers are unable to find men to help them carry on with their work. Many Canadians do not want these jobs, and this is an area where we should re-assess our immigration laws to make sure that these areas are treated differently than others, such as the metropolitan centres of the country where unemployment is more of a problem.

The situation varies not only from city to city and province to province, but from region to region within provinces. If we are really concerned about meeting all the needs of this country in terms of the availability of workmen we should be looking for some changes.

I would agree that we should be increasing the number of vocational schools in order to upgrade the skills of individuals who are chronically unemployed or presently considered unemployable. The fact is that programs of this kind have not been very useful to date, and I do not see anything on the horizon that promises anything different. Even though we may think that some day we will have sufficient vocational training facilities, we must find some method of motivating people to go to these institutions, particularly those chronically unemployed or unemployable but who are in good health, and who lack skills. It is possible that some day we might find a formula under which we can prepare these people for the labour market, but at the moment there are many areas in the country that require workmen but are absolutely unable to get them.

When we look back over the history of immigration in Canada we find that our laws have been much more lax than they are today. In the 1930's, the 1920's and earlier, when we wanted settlers to open up agricultural lands in the west, there were virtually no restrictions in respect of educational ability or skill. The only restrictions were those in respect of health. It has been proven to my satisfaction that it is not the amount of education an individual may have, or his particular trade or professional qualifications that guarantees a good or productive