

Immigration Appeal Board Act

matter that has now been brought to light is revealed in, I believe, clause 1, which the minister mentioned refers to the United Nations convention relating to the status of refugees. This particular provision in the bill is an improvement on the old because the definition of "refugee" is now spelled out. Just for the record, I was able to acquire a copy of the Convention relating to the status of refugees signed at Geneva on July 28, 1951. I have not had an opportunity to read all of it, but I thought for the purpose of this debate I would quote the convention definition of a refugee. There are a couple of lines crossed out and I do not know what that means, but it comes to me with the compliments of the Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs. Therefore, I shall read the amended clause in the hope it is right. This is the definition of "refugee":

Owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it.

I was under the impression that the legislation always had such a definition, but on talking to the hon. member for Greenwood (Mr. Brewin), he told me that for many years he had been trying to get this definition adopted, that it had never been in the legislation. This is why I am glad this particular definition will now be incorporated into the act.

There are some problems with respect to the act itself, and I know we will discuss them in committee, but I am a little concerned about the distinction that is made between permanent members and temporary members of the board. I understand what is meant by a permanent member, but I wonder just what is happening in the area of temporary members. The Governor in Council in the first instance is given power to appoint seven temporary members for a term not exceeding two years. On the other hand, no qualifications are set out for these temporary members.

In view of the fact that this is a court of record, which means it is an extremely important court, I am wondering why the minister has not seen to it that temporary members hold office for a certain period of time, though I realize we have to have a restricted time. I am not referring particularly to a good behaviour provision, but I think they should be removed by the Governor in Council for just cause, and I am wondering why this provision is not made in respect to the temporary members. I do not want to be partisan in this regard, but it is possible that a temporary member might bring down a decision which is unfavourable to the government and he might be removed. I think these members should only be removed for cause. However, I hope the minister will elaborate on this point to our satisfaction.

Another matter that concerns me about temporary members is this. Will there be a sufficient number of duly qualified people available to serve as members? I think the appointment should be for a term a little more definite than "up to two years". That kind of appointment gives a person no incentive to become a member. We should at least inform a temporary member that he will be appoint-

[Mr. Alexander.]

ed for a period of at least two years. I am also wondering whether we will be able to acquire the calibre of men and women that we need, people who can determine the lives and futures of countless thousands who will be seeking landed immigrant status in this country. I hope the minister will explain this area to me. I see no distinction between the permanent member and the temporary member. To my way of thinking both are equally important, and I think we should minimize any distinction there is between the two.

There is one glaring defect in the bill and this relates to the administration of the board. As a result of the meetings of administrative efficiency councils that have been held throughout the country it is apparent that for every five or ten judges there should be at least one competent administrator who is able to line up cases, file transcripts, set cases down for hearing and so forth. I see no provision in the bill in this regard. As a matter of fact, I was very surprised when a member at one of our committee meetings indicated that the board had not suggested any rule changes whatever, notwithstanding all the difficulties that face the board. Therefore, I hope there will be some insistence on the need for administrative efficiency. It is one thing to have judges; it is quite another thing to have judges with the necessary staff, particularly with a clerk or administrator who can process and expedite cases.

The minister has mentioned the need for a new Immigration Act, and there is no question about this since we have not had one since 1952. We have heard the minister talk about review, and it is time, in terms of contemporary thinking in 1973, for such a review. In fact, such a review is long overdue. I heard the mayor of Vancouver express his concern the other day about their immigration problems in terms of the number of people flooding into that city. Perhaps this same problem exists in other cities. I hope that in this consultative atmosphere in which the minister has placed himself there will be ongoing and serious consultations with the provinces and the cities in order to at least develop this policy paper about which he speaks. Perhaps we will have to wait until he brings it out to get into that area of the matter.

● (1700)

I should like to put a few comments on *Hansard* about immigration. Immigration is really a two-way street, and we have to continually remind ourselves of this very basic philosophy regarding immigration policy. People from all over the world from various backgrounds and races come here to improve their economic lot. We want them because of their skills, for which we do not have to pay any money whatever.

I was very impressed when the minister said on June 11: But to bring this history more up-to-date, the immigration division of my department has case histories of more than 27,000 new businesses established by newcomers during the past 20 years. These enterprises directly created more than 83,000 jobs. Last year alone immigrants brought \$334 million in capital into this country.

As was pointed out in the December 1972 issue of the *J.I.S. News*, published by the Jewish Immigrant Aid Service of Canada, we should never forget and never be oblivious to the thousands upon thousands of immigrants who with their toil, intelligence, assiduity, sagacity, skills and perseverance, have elevated, built and continued to devel-