

Immigration

why parliament should take a greater interest in this subject. Under the present system, a lot of what has been done by regulation has, in effect, been done in secret.

● (1600)

As we have heard, the minister has proposed an amendment. The hon. member for Provencher said it was half an answer. I would put the fraction lower; I would say it is one-tenth of an answer. What does it amount to? It says the regulations will be found in the *Canada Gazette*. I do not know how many hon. members have ever looked at the *Canada Gazette*. It lists all the innumerable regulations which are made under the various statutes of Canada—huge volumes of them. No one who does not have the patience of Job can possibly expect to find a particular regulation in that mass of words.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): It is not exactly a best-seller.

Mr. Brewin: I doubt that it is. And I imagine fewer copies of it are read than are printed. Yet here we are, saying to prospective immigrants, "Read the *Canada Gazette*. Get the information from these fearful tomes". I gather it does not even have a proper index, so people would have an awful time finding a particular regulation.

The other aspect, and a more important one, is the undertaking that the text of such regulations will be laid before parliament as soon as possible. But even this is not a process which gives notice to very many people. As I understand it, the minister can simply table the relevant document, and that ends the matter because there is no way of questioning here what is contained in the regulations. For this reason, I find the minister's proposal altogether inadequate. The issue here is whether we in parliament are to exercise some measure of control in accordance with the principle of parliamentary supremacy, or whether we shall continue to countenance the issue of a series of semi-secret documents—no doubt got together and put into shape by very distinguished bureaucrats in the department. In my view, that is not good enough. After all, we are here for the purpose of dealing with matters like this.

If I have not been very successful in persuading the minister to accept the amendment I have proposed, may I say I would not feel at all badly if motion 50 were passed, rather than motion 52. I think there is very little difference between them, though naturally, from pride of ownership, I prefer my own version.

Hon. Bud Cullen (Minister of Manpower and Immigration): Here, again, we have two approaches before us, the one taken by those who have responsibility for administering a particular bill in a particular situation, and the other by those who have no responsibility and who see no practical difficulty in circumstances which the party or the government of the day must face when dealing with 600,000 people who apply to come into this country every year.

At the committee stage we discussed this proposal at some length. A motion was made by the hon. member for Provencher

[Mr. Brewin.]

er (Mr. Epp) requiring an affirmative resolution of parliament. That motion was defeated in the committee. However, in the interest of meeting some of the suggestions which were made, we did bring forth 115(3). The hon. member for Greenwood (Mr. Brewin) denigrates that particular effort, the point of which was to get necessary information to the public who are concerned about immigration. After all, laying regulations before parliament is making them available in a public forum. They are available to everyone, and it is up to the research staff of the party concerned to check on a daily basis to see what papers have been filed so that if desired they might be given the widest publicity.

The motion put forward by the hon. member for Provencher goes further, requiring that every order in council and every form should also be subject to parliamentary approval. In other words, he apparently wishes to prevent the exercise of virtually all the powers assigned in the act to the governor in council or the minister until parliament has given its approval, no matter how trivial a regulation, order in council, form or amendment might be. This motion would have the effect of bringing the operations of the department to a virtual standstill.

Many of the regulations are relatively unimportant or technical, though they are still essential for the efficient and effective operation of the immigration program. The delays which could result from the requirement to attain parliamentary approval followed by publicity for 30 days would permit persons to circumvent new regulations by coming to Canada before a regulation came into effect, thus defeating the very purpose of the regulation. The provision for 30-days delay already built into 115(3) poses sufficient danger of such circumventions. Most regulations are made to overcome or to prevent serious problems. Delay in their implementation can easily augment those problems.

I recognize what hon. members are endeavouring to do. I suggest that if we are able to change our rules in such a way that it is not necessary to spend an interminable amount of time before we are able to get anything done, that may be the time to give effect to these motions. But given the rules under which we presently operate I suggest, with respect, that the hon. members proposal would be to the detriment of the immigration program and to the detriment of the people we are trying to help, namely, those who apply to come to our great country.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Turner): Is the House ready for the question?

Some hon. Members: Question.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Turner): All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. Members: Yea.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Turner): All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. Members: Nay.