

*Canadian Citizenship*

Mr. STEWART (Winnipeg North): What about the Japanese?

Mr. MITCHELL: I can answer that too. If my hon. friend had been sitting where I sat in 1942, what would he have done?

Mr. STEWART (Winnipeg North): I would have done a better job than you.

Mr. MITCHELL: If he had been sitting where I was sitting in 1942, when freedom as we understand it was almost disappearing from the face of the earth, he probably would have taken the same position that we had to take, and the Americans had to take, at that time.

Mr. STEWART (Winnipeg North): The Americans did not.

Mr. MITCHELL: The Americans did it, of course. But I was speaking of an entirely different matter. I was speaking of the immigrants who have come to this country, and I think they should all be treated the same, irrespective of where they come from. If five years is the trial period before citizenship is granted, I think it is like the law; you cannot have two principles, one for the rich and a different one for the poor, for if you do you are headed for revolution. So that I hope the amendment will be defeated.

Mr. FULTON: I think a few things remain to be added, and for a few minutes I should like to deal with what the Minister of Mines and Resources said. Before doing so, however, I should like to go back to perhaps the main tenor of the remarks of the hon. member for Eglinton, which was that by section 10 (1) (c) as it now stands the value of the common citizenship which members of the British commonwealth share is being reduced. At that time one hon. member on the other side interjected a remark to the effect that he saw no reason why a non-Canadian British subject should not be treated as an alien. Well, it has been said earlier in this debate, and I think with a certain amount of truth, that in this world as we know it the only approach we have had, as yet to a common world citizenship is that concept of a British subject which is common to all the empire countries. A great deal has been said to the effect that somehow we must arrive at a concept of world citizenship. We have an approach to it in the concept of a British subject. It is not a question, let us make this clear again, of being a subject of Great Britain. It is a brotherhood which is shared by all the members of the empire; and to my way of thinking a British subject of Great Britain is as much

[Mr. Mitchell.]

privileged to share my citizenship of my country as I am to share his. We should not always look at it the other way. I do not always look to the United Kingdom when I think about British subjects. You can look to Australia or New Zealand or the other members of the empire. I say we should not always look to Great Britain, which is only the origin of the empire. We should look to all the other countries and develop a real feeling of empire unity.

I see no reason why that feeling should not be expanded. First we have to make it a real feeling within the commonwealth; and then I see no reason why it should not be expanded, as was said so magnificently the other day by Mr. Churchill, so that eventually we might be able to realize the ideal of a union of all English-speaking peoples. There are certain tendencies in the world to-day which are definitely working toward unity, toward a common idealism; and I think it would be a great shame if we in Canada, because of some misplaced or unreal concept of a derogation from our autonomy, were to strike a blow at the little progress we have made so far toward that common idealism.

That, I think, is what is at the root of the objections which come from this side of the House to this particular section of the Bill. We do not accuse hon. members opposite of being poor Canadians or of trying to derogate from empire unity as a matter of policy, but we do feel that inadvertently—let us put it in that way—by this section they are striking a blow at the status of British subjects which we now hold. The Secretary of State has asked how this could be so, how this accusation could be correct when by this section no right which he now possesses in Canada is taken away from the British subject. I think the answer to that contention was given by the hon. member for Eglinton, that it is the very right of Canadian citizenship which is denied to him for the five-year period.

What does this denial mean? Some people may say it does not mean a great deal, but I say that if my position as a British subject means anything it means that I can have the knowledge that were I to go to Australia or New Zealand, then, because I share the same citizenship they have, I would be entitled to become a citizen of that country without going through the same formalities, the same procedure, the same routine and perhaps even the same delay as an immigrant from some other part of the world which is not a member of the British empire. I feel that quite strongly, and I value that right which is accorded to me by the other domin-