

*Canadian Citizenship*

as a communist, that is any reason for requiring all British subjects from other parts of the commonwealth to submit to the same conditions as those from alien lands.

There are several matters which, in conclusion, I shall discuss briefly. It is abundantly clear that change is made by this section in the present position of the British subject from other parts of the commonwealth who comes to this country. Right now he has all the rights of citizenship spelled with a small "c". This bill proposes to attach conditions which have not hitherto been exacted of him if he wishes to possess Canadian citizenship, with the citizenship now to be spelled with a capital "C".

He has been entitled to call himself a citizen. What is he to be in the five years of residence here? He is still a British subject. No one can take that from him. Thus, there are three classes of people provided for in this bill. There is the Canadian citizen, the man who is here and who has established his rights to become a citizen. There is the man who is an alien, and who continues to be an alien at least for those five years. In the third place, under the present bill there is an in-between class which is composed of British subjects who have not yet been here for five years. The British subject in this class is not an alien and he is not a Canadian citizen. What is he to call himself? He is still to be a British subject who is waiting to qualify at the end of five years for Canadian citizenship.

Who is there in this chamber who will say that it is a contribution to Canadian citizenship or Canadian unity to say to that man with all his traditions—the same traditions as we have, and the same democratic approach to life as we have—that for that period he is neither flesh nor fowl? I cannot square that with even common sense.

I have pointed out that the principle of section 10 (1) is to place British subjects from another part of the commonwealth and aliens from alien lands, no matter how good they may become as citizens, in precisely the same position under this bill, when coming to Canada and seeking to become Canadian citizens. That is the principle of section 10 of the bill, and it is a principle which I submit this chamber cannot endorse.

It means that we tell the British subject coming from another part of this commonwealth, "When you enter Canada, so far as your rights as a Canadian citizen are concerned, and your status, the fact that you owe allegiance to the same king as we do makes no difference." That is the significance of

[Mr. Fleming.]

section 10. It means that our common allegiance means nothing under this bill. It is, as if we were putting up at the ports of debarkation of ships bearing immigrants to this country a notice to all British subjects from other parts of the commonwealth stating, "Your allegiance to the same sovereign as we have means nothing, when it comes to applying for rights for citizenship in this country." Can this chamber endorse that principle? How can it do so?

What would we lose by accepting this amendment? I submit we would lose nothing. There is no question of principle at stake in permitting a British subject to enjoy rights similar to those he now enjoys. In securing his rights to that Canadian citizenship, with domicile, plus one year's residence, and other qualifications, there is no principle at stake. There is likewise no inconvenience at stake—notwithstanding this red herring about the Immigration Act which has been drawn across the discussion of this question.

Moreover I say there is no question of Canadian autonomy at stake. From some of the expressions from some quarters of this chamber one would think that Canada, by recognizing any preferred position for British subjects coming from other parts of the commonwealth over aliens was derogating in some way from its autonomy. How could anything be farther from the fact? Those who are bringing that theme forward are troubling themselves with something in the nature of unwarranted fears and suspicions. There is somewhere an inferiority complex in that attitude. What we need in our approach to these matters is a complex of equality, not an inferiority complex. Let us not go on fighting old battles. In that connection I cannot help remembering a cartoon by the famous cartoonist Low of London which appeared a year or two before the outbreak of war. That was in the days when guarantees were being asked for—guarantees, guarantees, guarantees! Guarantees had been given by the government of the United Kingdom. But some of the continental powers kept on coming back asking for more guarantees. The cartoon showed two British statesmen talking to each other. One said to the other, "Our friends on the continent want us to guarantee the guarantee that we have given to guarantee the guarantee which we have given." And the other gentleman said, "Gad, that's going a little bit too far."

Mr. Chairman, surely this matter of autonomy is played out. There is no question as to our full equality in the commonwealth. How are we going to use the rights we have? Are we going to use those rights to place British