

Supply—Citizenship and Immigration

The situation is the same today.

• (7:30 p.m.)

Now, after 37 years and the holder of a certificate of Canadian citizenship for many years I find that I do not enjoy all the privileges of a Canadian who happened to be born here and had little choice, while I chose Canada as my country at its direct invitation.

As my representative at parliament I would respectfully ask that this situation be remedied as soon as possible through promised legislation. You are aware that it is not likely to seriously affect my position as a citizen, but there is a very distinct reluctance in any citizen to find himself referred to as "second class."

Without unseemly boasting I might state that I feel that I have been a useful citizen, sharing in any community effort in any place in which I have lived since coming to Canada. No citizen could be more proud of this great land than I, nor love it more.

For this and many other reasons I feel that complete and unrestricted citizenship is my right, not only for myself but for my sons, and for my dignity as a very happy member of so great a nation.

Because such legislation was promised some time ago, I believe in 1964, because nothing has been done to date, because the situation has been drawn to the attention of the public, I, on behalf of many citizens who find themselves in exactly the same circumstances, ask the new minister to take this matter under consideration and rectify the wrong which these people feel has been done them.

Mr. Herridge: Mr. Chairman, I first want to congratulate the minister on his appointment and say it is very interesting to see on the front benches sitting on his right a gentleman whose life has been spent with management and on his left a gentleman who has been with organized labour most of his life. I think it indicates we have a democratic country.

I too can say that during my nearly 21 years experience in the House of Commons I have dealt with hundreds of people who wanted to bring immigrants to this country and it has never cost anybody, in the 21 years I have represented Kootenay West, a cent to consult their member of parliament for advice because I know what the law is, I know the regulations, and I know the people to whom representations should be made, whether it be the minister, the board or officials of the department.

During the hearings in connection with the Columbia River Treaty in the External Affairs Committee we were promised that it would be the policy of the B.C. Hydro Power Authority not to allow anyone to be employed on any project on the Columbia River who had not been a resident of Canada for at least

[Mr. Winkler.]

60 days. That promise is not being kept and I bring it to the attention of the minister, because organized labour and local residents are quite concerned about it.

What is happening is that citizens of the United States come into Canada as landed immigrants. They fill out the necessary forms and the next thing we know they are employed on the High Arrow, Duncan or Mica dams. The United States foremen in charge of these jobs send to the United States for their pals when they want them and their pals come in and go to work at once. Even though there is good employment in the district there are occasions when local and other residents do not get an opportunity to obtain employment, and this causes concern to them.

We had the same situation during the building of the gas pipe line. Hundreds of people came in from the United States as landed immigrants. They worked on the pipe line and as soon as the work was completed they returned to the United States. Prior to coming to Ottawa for the opening of this session three or four men who are working on these jobs spoke to me and told me, "These Americans are laughing at our regulations which permit them to come in under these circumstances. They tell us frankly they intend to return to the United States, that they are not real landed immigrants."

I bring this to the attention of the minister in order that he may check the situation. During the building of the pipe line project I asked the R.C.M.P. to check these people's car licences. On that occasion they came into Canada for the three, four or six months and practically all their licences were visitors' licences. They did not think enough of Canada to purchase a regular licence.

I think something should be done to make certain that these people who come into Canada as landed immigrants are really landed immigrants and that they intend to settle in Canada. The minister should have another look at whatever form is signed to make certain these people pledge themselves, so far as humanly possible, to come to Canada with the intention of becoming Canadian citizens.

Mr. Brewin: Mr. Chairman, I have been interested in the subject of immigration for quite a long time, indeed for a long time before becoming a member of parliament. We have had a whole series of ministers of immigration and I have been testing my memory to see if I can remember whom they have been during the time I have been interested in this matter. There was Hon.