

*Citizenship*

formal and voluntary act other than marriage, becomes a citizen or national of another country while outside Canada, thereupon ceases to be a Canadian.

Hon. members will note that that particular situation has not been altered, in my present reading of this legislation.

I am satisfied that no citizenship officer so designated under the authority of the Canadian Citizenship Act would have assured Mrs. Beach otherwise.

The Secretary of State did not tell me in this letter or in any other way how we will be satisfied of that fact, and inasmuch as Mrs. Beach has made these comments publicly I am just curious as to how the Secretary of State has been able to verify that. In the next paragraph he goes on to say the following:

Although this young woman was mistakenly advised by a Canadian officer of another Department that she should not jeopardize her Canadian status by registering as a citizen of the United Kingdom while in England, the unfortunate fact remains that Mrs. Beach actually ceased to be a Canadian when she became a United Kingdom citizen on July 12th, 1974.

Besides submitting representations from overseas, Mrs. Beach recently called at the Citizenship Registration Branch in Ottawa when the circumstances of her case were discussed at length with her. She was again informed that after she has resided . . .

This, to me, is an indication of the kind of continuing insensitivity there is at the present time.

. . . in Canada for twelve of the eighteen preceding months, she may apply for the grant of Canadian citizenship under a special provision of the Act for persons who ceased to be Canadians by naturalization outside of Canada. Another requirement of this special provision is that such applicants must satisfy the Minister that they intend to have their place of domicile permanently in Canada. If there were other means under present law by which Mrs. Beach could more readily become a Canadian again they would have been explained to her during her recent interview.

The minister concludes, and here I find the weakness and the lack of flexibility present in these legislative proposals:

As regards future law I would hesitate to speculate whether sub-clause 5(4) of the Citizenship Bill (Bill C-20), if passed in its present form, could be applied to Mrs. Beach's case. The sub-clause would empower the Governor in Council to allow grant or resumption of citizenship without condition in cases deserving of compassionate consideration for exceptional reasons.

What seems to be suggested there is that in the case of Mrs. Beach, in spite of the fact that she was misinformed on more than one occasion and is being faced with a considerable amount of unnecessary hardship, in my estimation, she would not be considered under the legislative framework the Secretary of State has placed before us in Bill C-20. If that is the case, the so-called updating and modernization of Bill C-20 as against the model of 1947 is not exactly the modern instrument the Secretary of State would have us believe. He may have provided some window dressing, and he may have provided some new terminology by changing nomenclatures such as "British subject" to "citizen of the Commonwealth", but I will have more to say about that when we resume at eight o'clock.

However, apart from some of the window dressing it is difficult to discover where the minister is really following through on his commitment to make this a modern, effective, and fair piece of legislation, in particular with respect to the rights of those people—and we will have an increasing number—who will be travelling abroad for purposes of

[Mr. MacDonald (Egmont).]

business, study, or for their own relaxation. If they are unfortunate enough to be even in the least misinformed with respect to the present procedures with regard to citizenship, they can find themselves in the victimized state of Mrs. Beach who, in her situation, for a period of time has been absolutely stateless and now finds that she will have to go through the whole process of immigration to this country again.

Again, relating this kind of proposal, this kind of situation, to the very tightened up and increasingly complex administrative procedures which have been proposed by the Immigration Committee report and which will likely be introduced by the Minister of Manpower and Immigration (Mr. Andras), one realizes what a great amount of sorrow and difficulty we are going to create for a number of people who have the misfortune to travel from this country and be misinformed as to their rights and responsibilities as citizens.

May I call it six o'clock and continue when the House resumes at 8 p.m., Mr. Speaker?

[Translation]

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** It being six o'clock, I do now leave the chair until eight p.m.

At six o'clock the House took recess.

[English]

**AFTER RECESS**

The House resumed at 8 p.m.

**Mr. MacDonald (Egmont):** Mr. Speaker, there are two other matters I should like to raise in what might be called the second half of this speech on Bill C-20.

**Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre):** What is the score?

**Mr. MacDonald (Egmont):** The second half, hopefully, will be more interesting than the first, but no less pertinent.

Before moving on I want to refer to one particular aspect of the bill that I mentioned at the outset. Perhaps I did not put it totally in the context that will be considered by committee.

As the minister is well aware, reference is made in clause 33 to the ownership of property, particularly land. Of course this is of some little consequence to those of us who come from Prince Edward Island—I stress the word little in terms of size but not of importance.

As I mentioned this afternoon, ownership is one of the basic concerns in Prince Edward Island at the present time so I am somewhat surprised to note that in clause 33 there is no substantial alteration or recognition of the recent decision of the Supreme Court of Canada which upheld the decision and the legislation of the government of Prince Edward Island concerning the sale of areas of land over ten acres. While there is one major difference between the reference in clause 33 and the Prince Edward Island legislation, the essence is really the same. The difference is that in Prince Edward Island absentee ownership refers to