

Supply—Citizenship and Immigration

gested, I should like to know what kind of shrift such a suggestion has received from the minister and what action he has taken.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Tremblay: Mr. Chairman, I would not want, on consideration of estimates relating to immigration, to give a detailed account of the lengthy statement I have already made on the urgent necessity of a progressive and dynamic Canadian immigration policy. I would not want to give a lengthy explanation of the administrative reforms already under way in the department to improve the efficiency of our various immigration offices around the world and also to set up new offices in order to bring into the country the immigrants we need so much.

Therefore, I will not go into the statement I made in the house on August 14 last when the first part of my estimates was considered. This afternoon I will only cover some of the points concerning especially certain hon. members who have suggested the setting up of a committee. First, I would like to say to the hon. member for Winnipeg North (Mr. Orlikow) that, like him, we recognize the need to make major amendments to the Immigration Act. It was said that one after the other all ministers of immigration assured the house of the need to amend drastically, even to revise entirely, the Immigration Act. And all the people of Canada, as well as the members of parliament, are still waiting.

If I add my voice to that of all the ministers of citizenship and immigration who preceded me, it is because I hope that, this time, major and essential amendments will be made to the Immigration Act, so that it will better meet the needs of the 20th century and enable Canadians to bring to our country even more immigrants than in the last few years and get them to benefit from the numerous advantages which will result from major amendments to the Immigration Act.

Some members, and in particular the hon. member for Peace River (Mr. Baldwin), have suggested that committees of the house should be set up, or at least a committee on which the various parties of the house would be represented, to study possible amendments to the Immigration Act. I am not going to make an immediate statement on behalf of the government regarding the propriety of establishing such a committee, but I would just like to tell the hon. member for Peace River and the other members who made the suggestion that I would personally like to receive, in one form or another, the suggestions or comments of all members, what-

ever their party, regarding the future policy to be followed for immigration.

It is my opinion that, in a field such as immigration, even if the government is responsible and should take the initiative of working out such a policy, the comments and suggestions of the other parties who may represent an important percentage of the population should not be overlooked. The hon. member for Winnipeg North mentioned, among other things, the problem of discrimination or alleged discrimination against the West Indies. In this connection, I can say that, contrary to what he thinks, there is no discrimination against the British West Indies. Those people have exactly the same privilege and right to apply for entry in Canada under the existing legislation, but since the same criteria of selection as for any other country in the world are applied, it often happens that people in those areas are unable to complete their studies and they find it difficult to meet the requirements imposed by economic conditions in Canada at the present time. Everybody agrees that in order to adjust yourself to the Canadian economy, which is highly industrialized, you need a minimum of capacity and knowledge. Thanks to that non-discrimination, we have considerably increased the number of immigrants we have been able to bring in from that part of the commonwealth. The number of immigrants from that part of the world in 1961 was 1,126; in 1962, 1,480 and in 1963, 2,200 immigrants.

There seems to be a tendency to increase immigration from that part of the commonwealth. I know that reference is sometimes made to the special program established in 1962 concerning domestic servants who qualify under that program to come to Canada. This should not be misunderstood. Immigration privileges granted to certain groups are over and above those we are offering all residents of other foreign countries. Our selective standards are lowered for special groups in order to help alleviate the shortage of domestics in Canada.

The hon. member for Winnipeg North mentioned the special problem of integration of new Canadians. Everybody will admit that, while contributing to preserve the heritage and identity of the various ethnic groups, we in Canada, whatever our nationality may be, will have to make a common effort to develop a Canadian feeling; and it is up to the citizenship branch to develop this feeling.

On the other hand, we may very well admit that each particular group wants to keep its