

Immigration Act

factors be considered in this important area. We all realize that immigration has a vital role to play in our national development. The contributions made by new Canadians are clearly evident in every phase of our social and economic life, and without them Canada would be infinitely poorer. We in this country have been singularly blessed by providence. We have great areas of land containing vast resources and the capacity to provide an increasing supply of the necessities of life. There is the general recognition and guarantee of human rights and fundamental freedoms, as well as many other advantages which together make this country a very desirable area of the world in which to live.

It would appear that under the terms of the Immigration Act policies can be followed which lead to a refusal to admit persons founded on their nationality, citizenship, area of origin and so on. This has been brought to our attention by the hon. member for Greenwood, and I believe the time has come when we should give consideration to some of these sections of the legislation. However, the question which arises in my mind is this: Why should we delete the entire section as outlined in the explanatory note? I believe some of these provisions are still essential. No matter how much new Canadians may have contributed to this country, and no matter how much we may depend on immigration for the expansion of our population and our domestic market, we have to recognize that some of these factors must be taken into consideration. However, I will agree that when it comes down to the specific areas of nationalities and ethnic groups, I do not believe that this provision should be left on our statute books.

It has been pointed out that consideration must be given to occupation and economic circumstances and to the possibility or otherwise of people making the necessary adjustments when they come to Canada. These are very important considerations and I do not take exception to them because, as I have mentioned before, to admit into this country people who have not the ability to take their place and make their own way and sustain themselves is not in the best interests of Canada or the Canadian people. As I have pointed out, I believe the time has come when we should remove some of these limiting factors such as nationality, ethnic group, and so on.

In order to substantiate his argument and bolster his presentation the hon. member for Greenwood (Mr. Brewin) referred, quite prop-

erly, to the United Nations convention on racial discrimination, which question was brought to our attention today in one of our committees. Canada of course is a signatory, and one of the responsibilities we assumed when appending our signature to this document was that everything possible would be done to remove any element of discrimination in our national life. What we have been observing throughout these past few weeks has shown the extent to which discrimination may lead some people, and we abhor this type of thing.

As far as the principle of removing a limiting factor on the basis of nationality or ethnic groups is concerned, I would be in full support of this principle, but I think very careful consideration ought to be given to other aspects of the situation. As I have pointed out, we must recognize the fact that national interests, as well as the welfare of those whom we would welcome to our country, require and demand that we give adequate consideration to these other factors as well.

Mr. Skoreyko: I wonder whether I might ask the parliamentary secretary to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration (Mr. Badanai) a question. I was very interested in his speech, in which he indicated that the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration (Mr. Nicholson) is working on a white paper on citizenship and immigration matters. Could he inform the house as to when this white paper will be ready?

Mr. Nicholson: If I might answer that, Mr. Speaker, encouraging progress is being made on the white paper. We are hopeful that it will be tabled some time in the late spring or early summer, certainly before we adjourn for the summer vacation, so hon. members will have an opportunity to study it during vacation. It will be referred to a committee of the house when we resume our session in the fall.

Mr. Skoreyko: Can the minister assure the house that all the recommendations which are outlined in Bill C-69 which is sponsored by the hon. member for Greenwood (Mr. Brewin) will be taken into account in the white paper?

Mr. Nicholson: I am delighted to assure the house that all the representations made here today, including those made by the hon. member for Greenwood (Mr. Brewin), will be given very careful consideration by my department, by me and then by my colleagues when it reaches the cabinet stage.