

Immigration

That Bill C-24, respecting immigration to Canada, be amended in clause 125 by striking out line 17 at page 73 and substituting the following therefor:

"with this act or the former act at the option of the person concerned with this proceeding."

He said: Mr. Speaker, I really want to test the minister on this one exactly as I did on an earlier motion, and I would be glad if the minister would reassure the House. Then I would ask, in the same way as the hon. member for Laprairie (Mr. Watson), for the permission of the House to have the motion withdrawn. It seems to me that my motion is essentially one of fairness. There are certain tests under the existing act. There are certain requirements, and I suggest that it would be fairer to the immigrant if he could use either the existing ground rules or the new ground rules, depending on his wishes. Somebody in the middle of the process suddenly confronted by this formidable statute might have imposed on him different criteria. I would like to think that this is not true, and if my apprehension is not well founded and the minister can reassure me that there will not be new tests or criteria, I would be glad to ask that my motion be dropped.

Hon. Bud Cullen (Minister of Manpower and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, it is my feeling that the motion is, in fact, redundant because by judicial interpretation the clause as it now stands always would be read to ensure that the legislation which is to the person's advantage would be the legislation applied in his case. In most cases the new act will be to the person's advantage, but where it is not—primarily unsuccessful claimants to convention refugee status—the board would, quite legally, act under the former legislation.

To give the person a choice would do the opposite to what the hon. member wishes, since it would permit the person to choose, in ignorance, the option which may very well not be to his advantage.

Mr. Fairweather: I would like permission to withdraw my motion.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ethier): Does the hon. member have unanimous consent to withdraw his motion?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Motion No. 54 (Mr. Fairweather) withdrawn.

Hon. Bud Cullen (Minister of Manpower and Immigration) moved:

Motion No. 55.

That Bill C-24, respecting immigration to Canada, be amended in the Schedule by striking out subparagraph (b)(ii) in item 6 at page 77 and substituting the following therefor:

"(ii) in prescribed circumstances, is a visitor in Canada or the holder of a permit in Canada within the meaning of the *Immigration Act, 1976*."

He said: Mr. Speaker, this is simply a consequential amendment. It comes about as a result of too zealous an attempt to change the language. It was inhibiting and limiting, and I think this amendment corrects the flaw.

Motion No. 55 (Mr. Cullen) agreed to.

[Mr. Fairweather.]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ethier): The House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred divisions on Bill C-24. Call in the members.

Mr. Goodale: Mr. Speaker, there have been discussions among representatives of the parties. As the House will recall, we have one other item of business with which we would like to deal before the conclusion of the discussion with respect to the immigration bill, and that is the one hour which was mentioned earlier respecting the special order of the House relating to the metric conversion legislation.

I believe there is a disposition in the House at the moment—since we have now concluded all the motions at the report stage of Bill C-24—to defer the votes on those motions until the first order of business tonight at eight o'clock, and to devote the hour which remains before six o'clock to a discussion of the metric conversion legislation. I wonder if Your Honour could confirm that there is that disposition. Then we could use this hour to discuss the metric conversion legislation, proceed with the votes on Bill C-24 this evening, and then move immediately after those votes to the third reading of Bill C-24.

As I make that suggestion, I sincerely apologize to Your Honour and to the officers at the table. The discussions which led to this development took place just now and we did not have an opportunity to alert you before this moment.

Mr. Baker (Grenville-Carleton): Mr. Speaker, I want to concur in what the parliamentary secretary has said. The special order which was made on Friday envisaged that we might complete the report stage of Bill C-24 and then proceed directly to third reading. However, for the purposes of this hour it is agreeable to us to move to consideration of Bill C-23 and complete it. In the order of Friday, the House indicated that this hour would be set aside for the completion of Bill C-23, so we concur in the suggestion made by the parliamentary secretary.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, the suggestion being made is in conformity with the order passed the other day under Standing Order 75A, and it also represents what we have been discussing in the last little while. Just so that we can be clear, I will make one suggestion. If it does not take the full hour to deal with Bill C-23, I suggest we call it six o'clock when we finish Bill C-23, so it is understood that tonight at eight o'clock the bells will be rung to call in the members for the votes on Bill C-24.

Mr. Goodale: Mr. Speaker, just to be technically correct, I think the motion under Standing Order 75A required that this hour be designated by a minister of the Crown, and I invite the President of the Privy Council to make that designation.

• (1700)

Mr. MacEachen: Mr. Speaker, I designate whatever is required of this hour to deal with Bill C-23. It is understood that the Minister of State will make a number of amendments to the bill, when consent is given, to go into committee of the