

divorce bills in this house should rise in their places and recommend a better one. Let us have the details of any such plan, because in these critical times I do not think the people of Canada like to see their members of parliament repeat year after year almost the same objections, while at the same time failing to offer any cure.

I believe we may very well rely upon the senate committee to use good discretion in deciding whether or not divorces should be granted. Some hon. members say that a reading of divorce bills leads one to the belief that there is collusion in all of them. That, of course, is a reflection upon anyone who recommends that they come before this chamber. It is an aspersion cast upon the other house, which has approved the bills that are now before us. It casts a reflection not only upon the members involved, but also upon the solicitors.

If hon. members will reflect upon the very narrow grounds for divorce permitted in this country, they will realize that, of necessity, the evidence in each case is of a most limited nature. I do not think we as members of the House of Commons would be well advised to cast reflections upon applicants in divorce cases by offering the opinion that they are guilty of collusion, when we do not know the facts, and have no just reason for being suspicious. If there is collusion, that is sufficient to nullify any application for divorce, and there is punishment provided for those who are guilty. But let us not leave this chamber with the idea that in the majority of divorce cases there is collusion.

CANADIAN CITIZENSHIP

NATIONALITY, NATURALIZATION AND STATUS OF ALIENS

The house resumed consideration in committee of bill No. 7, respecting citizenship, nationality and naturalization and status of aliens—Mr. Martin—Mr. Golding in the chair.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN (Mr. Golding): When the committee rose at six o'clock we were discussing section 37.

Mr. REID: We were discussing the kind of ceremonies which would be held, and the questionnaires and examinations which would prevail when those applying for citizenship would appear before the courts. I had asked the minister if he had studied the United States scheme, and I had reminded him that people from about thirty-six countries were now citizens over there, a condition similar to that obtaining in Canada. My opinion

[Mr. Boucher.]

was that in no country comparable with either the United States or Canada was it more important that we should educate peoples coming from other countries.

I wish to go on record in this matter because, once this bill goes through—it is not parliament that will have anything to do with the matter but the regulations, and everything pertaining to the measure will come under officials and under the hand of the minister. I would remind the minister that, despite all the good assurances and promises he might give to the committee, a minister's term of office expires at some time or another and a new minister takes his place, and then all that is said, all the promises made here are gone. It is what is in the statute that governs.

I wish to draw the attention of the committee to the practice which has been followed for many years in the United States and which over the years has worked to good advantage. They have what are known as educational schools; they set a uniform examination all over the country, so that no matter what the state in which the applicant resides the examinations and answers are along the same lines from the Atlantic to the Pacific. I quote from section 356 (3) of the nationality act of 1940 of the United States:

The purpose of the educational examination shall be to determine whether the petitioner has a fair knowledge of the fundamental principles of the constitution and is qualified to assume the duties and responsibilities of a citizen of the United States. To this end the petitioner may be questioned as to (1) the principal historical facts concerning the development of the United States as a republic; (2) the organization and principal functions of the government of the United States, and of the states and local units of government, and (3) the relation of the individual in the United States to government—national, state, and local, the rights and privileges growing from that relationship, and the duties and responsibilities which result from it.

To guard against the examination being too difficult there is this proviso:

Every care shall be exercised to avoid abstruse, technical, irrelevant, and extreme questions. The language level of the questions shall be suited to the particular petitioner having regard to his educational background and the extent of his knowledge of the English language.

I bring that to the attention of the minister and the committee because I believe there is a great deal of merit in it. I think every hon. member must have had representations made to him by our own people who have criticized the method of handing out naturalization papers in the past. I have attended many courts on behalf of applicants for naturalization and have heard them being asked three or four questions: Who is your sponsor? How long have you been in this country? Are you married or single? Do you owe any