

*Canada Elections Act*

Another thing I should like to point out is that very often the government of Canada has serious disagreements with the government of the United Kingdom and also the governments of other Commonwealth countries. For example, I might refer to the Suez crisis or the situation last year in which Britain, at the NATO conference, opposed our move to withdraw troops from Europe. There are other instances to which I could refer in which the government of this country has had a disagreement with the government of the United Kingdom or the governments of other countries in the Commonwealth. Therefore, I believe it is important that those people who have the right to vote are the people who have made a commitment to Canada by taking out Canadian citizenship.

I was also surprised by the remarks made by the hon. member for Skeena and the hon. member for Regina-Lake Centre. As I recall it, these two members have always strongly opposed situations in which non-Canadians have a majority participation in Canadian companies. Time and time again, I have heard them speak against situations in which Canadian corporations were controlled by persons who are not Canadian citizens. They continuously put forward the proposal that at least 51 per cent ownership should be by Canadian citizens. Yet, in this debate they are proposing that we continue a situation for a while whereby we give the vote, which in my opinion is more important, to some people who have not given the commitment to become Canadian citizens. I am wondering how they resolve that inconsistency in their thinking. Where is the logic in that particular course of action? The hon. member for Brandon-Souris has said we should accentuate the positive. I agree with him. In my view, the positive approach is to support Canadian citizenship. Canadian citizenship should be the governing rule for voting in this country. When a person takes out that citizenship, he makes a commitment to this country before any other country. This is his primary interest.

● (5:20 p.m.)

**Mr. Dinsdale:** Would the hon. member permit a question? How does he reconcile his narrow definition of nationalism and citizenship with his espousal of world federalism?

**Mr. Allmand:** I would much sooner have a world government, but until we have it I do not want people who are not citizens voting in my country and determining what the policy of my country should be.

[Mr. Allmand.]

**Mr. Benjamin:** This is hardly a good example.

**Mr. Allmand:** I wonder if the hon. member would take the same position with respect to foreign ownership. It has been said, perhaps by him and the hon. member for Skeena, that because these people have acquired rights we should recognize them. Would he take the same position with respect to non-Canadians owning Canadian companies and running Canadian unions? I doubt that he would. I wonder where he finds the arguments to support the position which he is now taking in the House? As I said, I will support in the first instance the amendment of the hon. member for Matane, because I think it is the most logical one. It brings consistency to our Elections Act. But if it is defeated, I would support the amendment of the hon. member for Vancouver Quadra which is I think a great improvement over the text we have at present.

**Mr. Benjamin:** As you will recall, Mr. Chairman, last night I also threw an amendment into this hopper on the assumption that if the bill were to continue to contain the principle which it has now this would be retroactive legislation which would not be proper in our electoral law or any other kind of law for that matter. I will not repeat my remarks of last night and I hope hon. members will read them for whatever they might be worth.

May I say that the remarks of the hon. member for Notre-Dame-de-Grâce are hardly relevant to an election law since corporations do not vote. They might try to buy elections with large contributions to one or more political parties, but they do not cast ballots. So, it is hardly relevant what one's position might be on foreign ownership as compared to one's position on immigrants or Canadian citizens being eligible to vote in a federal election.

**Mr. Allmand:** Would the hon. member permit a question? Do I understand the hon. member correctly? Did he state that it is all right for non-citizens to vote in Canadian elections but it is not all right for them to own parts of Canadian industry or Canadian corporations?

**Mr. Benjamin:** I do not know what that has to do with it. What I am trying to say is that the principle I prefer is the one stated earlier by the hon. member for Skeena. Why do we worry about whether or not these people are