

Immigration

Mr. Epp: Mr. Speaker, I rise on the same point of order. Although the grouping possibly was arrived at because of the general heading "regulations", I believe the topics are sufficiently distinct for the grouping as suggested by the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) to be made more workable. Motion No. 49, standing in the name of the minister, has been discussed at some length in committee, and I think it is quite distinct from my motion No. 50 wherein I ask that the House agree to the tabling and the coming into force of regulations. So, with all due respect, I support the view of the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre.

Mr. Cullen: Mr. Speaker, I do not see any problem with that. There are some differences, and if it will make the House happier, let us proceed on that basis.

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

Motion No. 49.

That Bill C-24, respecting immigration to Canada, be amended in clause 115 by striking out lines 39 to 49 at page 65 and lines 1 to 3 at page 66 and substituting the following therefor:

"(k) requiring any person to deposit security with the Minister to guarantee the performance by that person of any obligation assumed by him with respect to the admission of any other person;

(k.1) where a person or organization seeks to facilitate the admission or arrival in Canada of a convention refugee or a person who is a member of a class designated pursuant to paragraph (d) or where a person seeks to facilitate the admission of an immigrant who is related to him, establishing the requirements to be met by any person or organization including the provision of an undertaking to assist any such convention refugee, person or immigrant in becoming successfully established in Canada;"

He said: Mr. Speaker, in the motion I am proposing to amend clause 115(1)(k) which is intended to fulfill my undertaking to respond, to the extent possible, to concerns expressed by members of the committee about the regulation-making power respecting people who may be authorized to assist the admission of certain immigrants and visitors. The amendment would restore the original paragraph (k) and create a new paragraph (k.1). The effects, compared to the amendment reluctantly passed in committee, would be as follows: first, the question of security deposits would be divorced from the matter of applications by people in Canada who want to assist the admission of refugees and other immigrants; second, organizations might be authorized to sponsor refugees and quasi-refugees, but not ordinary immigrants. Individuals might be authorized to assist the admission of relatives, but not non-relatives other than refugees or quasi-refugees.

I believe this amendment meets the main points made by members of all parties in committee and fulfills my commitment to the committee.

Mr. Jake Epp (Provencher): Mr. Speaker, committee members will recall the differences we had when the minister brought forward his amendment as he introduced it at the report stage. Now it is acceptable to us, but I think there are one or two points that should be stressed. First of all, I commend the minister for separating the security deposits for sponsorship applications. I think this was a very worth-while step. The question we have to answer concerns the so-called

quasi-refugees. I think the very words give us some difficulty. What do they really mean? Is it just more verbiage which means nothing to anyone who has not been present at the committee discussions?

The way I understand this clause, a person who has left his country in eastern Europe, for example, and who would not be eligible as a convention refugee under the convention which Canada has signed as a member of the United Nations, could be sponsored by a group in Canada interested in his or her well-being. For example, multicultural groups in Canada which have attempted through the years to maintain their culture would be able to sponsor those individuals to help them in their admission to Canada. I believe that is a valid exercise under the Immigration Act, and I welcome that provision. However, I believe the minister is well aware of the difficulty we have with the definition of "organization". The minister's amendment provides, "to be met by any such person or organization". What is a bona fide organization which would sponsor a refugee under these limited conditions? I believe the words "limited conditions" should be stressed. The condition is satisfactory, but we have questions about the organizations.

As we said to the minister in committee, it is very important we ensure that the organization willing to sponsor such individuals be a bona fide organization, that it have the support of a fairly wide constituency of Canadian citizens, and that it not be, to put it colloquially, a fly-by-night organization created simply for the purpose of sponsoring people. We want to ensure that these people are sincere in their efforts and that they have the interests of the person, and of Canada, in mind. Under those conditions, we accept the amendment of the minister.

• (1540)

Mr. Andrew Brewin (Greenwood): Mr. Speaker, the minister is quite right, in my judgment, in saying that the amendments passed in the committee appear to improve considerably the first draft. Therefore, I am disposed to support this resolution. There are one or two things, however, about which I am a little unhappy. I wonder about the necessity of this kind of resolution. There have been persons or organizations assisting people to come to Canada. Many of them have been churches, ethnic organizations or people interested in immigration, and without the aid of legislation such as this they have been assisting people. This amendment just requires them to be ready to give an undertaking. I am not happy about that, because the word "undertaking" is vague. If we are going to legislate obligations to be assumed by people, we should either make available a copy of what they might be expected to fill in, or we should give some particulars. We should not just have a vague reference to an "undertaking". I think that is rather loose drafting.

When we discussed this matter in committee we were informed by officials that it was contemplated that if a person gave an obligation as required by this amendment, that might count toward the admissibility of the person that person was undertaking to assist. If that is the intention, I think it should