

*Inquiries of the Ministry*

An Act to amend the British North America Act 1867.

Whereas the Senate and House of Commons of Canada in parliament assembled have submitted an address to Her Majesty praying that Her Majesty may graciously be pleased to cause a measure to be laid before the parliament of the United Kingdom for the enactment of the provisions hereinafter set forth:

Be it therefore enacted by the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the lords spiritual and temporal, and commons, in this present parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

Amendment as to legislation respecting old age pensions. 30 & 31 Vict., c. 3; 9 Eliz. II, c. 2.

1. Section ninety four A of the British North America Act, 1867 is hereby repealed and the following substituted therefor:

Legislation respecting old age pensions and supplementary benefits.

"94A. The parliament of Canada may make laws in relation to old age pensions and supplementary benefits, including survivors, and disability benefits irrespective of age, but no such law shall affect the operation of any law present or future of a provincial legislature in relation to any such matter."

Short title and citation.

2. This act may be cited as the British North America Act, 1964, and the British North America Acts, 1867 to 1960, and this act may be cited together as the British North America Acts, 1867 to 1964.

**Mr. Speaker:** Pursuant to section 2 of standing order 21 this government notice of motion stands transferred to and ordered for consideration under government orders later this day.

**IMMIGRATION****JOSIF VERGAKIS—REQUEST FOR INQUIRY INTO DETENTION**

On the orders of the day:

**Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Leader of the Opposition):** I should like to thank the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration for the answer he gave on June 16 with regard to one Josif Vergakis. At the same time I should like to ask him whether it is a fact that Vergakis was kept in custody following an order given for bail, which he was prepared to put up. Was he kept in custody from May 6 to June 14 for the alleged offence of refusing to answer questions? Is that correct or is it not?

**Hon. René Tremblay (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration):** It is not correct, and I think the explanation is given in the answer I gave this week.

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** If I read the answer correctly that is the position. I ask the minister.  
[Mr. Pearson.]

ter whether in view of this case, another very sordid example of administrative lawlessness, he will now consider having this matter looked into by an independent commission to the end that situations of this kind will not be permitted to continue.

[Translation]

**Mr. Tremblay:** Mr. Speaker, as you know, when a supply motion was presented last week an hon. member dealt with a matter respecting immigration. When that motion comes again before the house in the next few days, I shall be very glad to supply at that time all required information to the house, as well as to the right hon. Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Diefenbaker).

[Text]

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** One of the provisions in Magna Carta is that justice shall not be denied, neither shall it be delayed. Will the minister give consideration to the appointment of even a one man commission to look into this case so that arbitrary actions of this kind in this country may end?

[Translation]

**Mr. Tremblay:** Mr. Speaker, I will be very glad to assign an official to make the necessary investigation in the department with respect to charges levelled against the administration of the department of immigration.

[Text]

**Mr. Andrew Brewin (Greenwood):** I have a supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Would the hon. minister not consider that a special committee of this parliament, which after all is responsible for the liberties of people, would be an appropriate body to look into this whole matter of the immigration law and the difficulties that have arisen?

[Translation]

**Mr. Tremblay:** Mr. Speaker, upon receiving this report, I will be very glad to submit it to any committee of the house for full consideration.

[Text]

**Mr. Reid Scott (Danforth):** Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question. The minister has told the house that he is prepared to follow up any accusation brought to his attention. The question I want answered is, what protection is there for the liberties and rights of those people receiving this treatment of whom we may not hear?