

*Proceedings on Adjournment Motion***PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT MOTION**

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 40 deemed to have been moved.

IMMIGRATION—EFFECTS OF LAW ON WORK OPPORTUNITIES FOR CANADIAN PERFORMERS

Mr. Mark Rose (Fraser Valley West): Mr. Speaker, I note with interest how many hon. members think it is important to leave the House immediately I am called upon to speak on any subject.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

• (10:20 p.m.)

Mr. Rose: The employment protection accorded by United States immigration laws to citizens of that country is immeasurably greater than that offered to Canadians by our legislation. This fact is not a new discovery; it has been long recognized by Canadians who make their living out of the visual performing arts.

As a result of an ACTRA brief, the Association of Canadian Television and Radio Artists, submitted on January 9, 1970, on February 2 I posed a question to the then Minister of Manpower and Immigration. A different minister now holds that portfolio. I would like to quote that exchange because my interest in the matter goes back well over a year. I asked this question:

In view of the recent brief to the minister from ACTRA concerning the lack of employment protection accorded Canadian artists and writers by our immigration laws, is the minister considering proposing amendments to our laws to provide greater security to Canadian creative people?

The minister replied:

Mr. Speaker, the brief to which my hon. friend refers was prepared by ACTRA at my request following a meeting we had to outline the nature of the problem, and there is a problem. At present there are discussions going on between Canada and the United States in an effort to solve the matter in that way. If these discussions fail I believe we will have to consider some alternative.

That was the picture on February 2, 1970. Late in May of this year, almost a year and a half later, I raised the question again and received what I consider to be a rather evasive or equivocal reply indicating that little or nothing had been accomplished in the interval on the matter of lack of reciprocity in the immigration laws, or at least of equal treatment to the performers of both nations by the immigration laws. It seemed that the matter had not moved toward any real kind of solution. I raised the matter again, prompted by two recent press stories that I read. The first appeared in the *Montreal Gazette* of May 20, headlined "Ottawa Singer's Big Break Hits Washington Roadblock." It reads:

Singer David Whiffen nailed down his break into the big time only to find himself in a fight against the biggest city hall in the world—the U.S. government.

A recent Whiffen record—"More Often Than Not"—helped move the young performer on to the disc jockeys' popularity charts.

[Mr. Benson.]

But American immigration and labour department rulings have prevented the young guitar-playing Ottawan from keeping a juicy singing engagement in Washington, D.C.

The second story appeared two days ago, on June 15, in the *Ottawa Journal* and was headed, "Denied U.S. visa, Band Loses Dates." I quote:

An Ottawa group, the Five-Man Electrical Band, are the latest victims of a U.S. legal barrier to Canada's pop musicians.

The quintet, riding high on U.S. and Canadian pop charts, is being denied access to the U.S. to perform despite a series of contracted dates worth some \$30,000.

U.S. immigration officials cleared the group to cross the border for live appearances in Georgia, Alabama, Virginia, Pennsylvania...but the U.S. labour board, which has the final say, nullified the band's entry.

On June 16 then, having raised this matter early in May, I became more than a little angry about the way the problem had been ignored and was working a tremendous hardship on Canadian individuals and groups, while on the other hand we as a government were attempting to assist them through radio and television Canadian content regulations; and at the same time our immigration laws were denying reciprocal protection. While they are denied opportunities to work in the United States, U.S. performers come here constantly on one, two and three-day engagements, play their shows and away they go. There is nothing to stop them.

What is happening to our performers represents a typically timid Canadian government attitude to the United States. We have all seen a reluctance to assert Canadian rights, whether the subject was the proposed Amchitka atomic tests, the TAPS oil tanker route or the flooding of the Skagit Valley. It is all a sort of package, this attitude of the Canadian government—a subservience, a deference, afraid to offer an affront to our great neighbour to the south. As one Canadian I think we have had enough of this kind of thing and I think many other people feel the same way.

I do not know how much time I have left, Mr. Speaker, but there is an excellent brief which outlines this problem in detail and from which I should like to quote. It is well described in the letter from ACTRA to the President of the Privy Council (Mr. MacEachen) to which I referred earlier. I shall read from it until you tell me that my time has expired. On page 6 is the following statement:

A performer therefore has a better opportunity to appear on Canadian television if he or she goes to the United States than he or she does if they stay at home. But to do this, because of the U.S. immigration law, one is almost forced to become an immigrant to that country and therefore cease to be a Canadian. The law reads in part:

"An alien having a residence in a foreign country which he has no intention of abandoning (I) who is of distinguished merit and ability (and) who is coming temporarily to the United States to perform temporary—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laniel): Order, please.

Mr. Rose: That is what I was afraid you would say, Mr. Speaker. Thank you very much.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laniel): The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Manpower and Immigration.