

tion. In a matter so important to people's rights as this I do not think that order in council legislation, as it is commonly termed, is quite desirable. It was perhaps very necessary during the trying period of our country's history, but now in time of peace it is unnecessary to take emergent powers, and there ought to be some plain line marked out in the statute itself to which any intending applicant can refer, and he ought to feel some certainty that that mode will only be changed by the actual deliberation of parliament. I do not say that, certainly not, with the slightest intention of reflecting on my hon. friend. I do not mean that at all, but I do not think it is a proper power to have in the hands of any Secretary of State or of any government, because governments are all liable to temptation, and my hon. friend who appreciates the strenuousness with which political lists are often fought in the Maritime provinces will realize how in a certain province not unknown to us it has been sometimes impossible to get a justice of the peace appointed of a certain political faith while the other political faith held the keys to power. Both have sinned in precisely the same way, and yet we know that to get a man on the electoral list you have to have an affidavit before a justice of the peace. Now if by regulation made by the Governor in Council you could have some particular functionary, and very few of them, you may have just as much difficulty in getting a man to the proper functionary to swear to a simple fact as in the case described by the hon. member for Comox-Alberni where a man had to travel a couple of hundred miles. I do not say the Secretary of State is going to do anything of the kind. We have too much personal confidence in him to think he would do it, but we have not the same confidence that he will be everlastingly in his position. I do not know whether so good a reward as has been suggested is coming to my hon. friend or not. I should be very glad to see him get it, but we do not know who may come after him; we do not know what government may come after him. It may be that some day this party would be rather unwilling to do anything for those on his side of the House, so he had better be prepared.

Mr. COPP: My hon. friend's idea is that the officials to whom we should refer these naturalization questions should be set out in the statute instead of the matter being left to regulation.

Mr. BAXTER: I would prefer that.

Mr. COPP: I may say that we have always referred these questions to the Mounted Police in the different sections.

Mr. BAXTER: It would be better to put that right into the bill, whoever it be.

Mr. CARMICHAEL: I would like a little information from the minister before we leave this question as to whether there could not be co-operation between the Dominion department and the provincial local subdivisions. I understand that the intention is to do away with the present procedure of applying to the district judge for naturalization papers, and that the application is to go direct to the department. I was wondering if it were possible to make use of our provincial clerks or secretary-treasurers. I find that in our western country the applicant for naturalization is usually a foreigner with very little English; he understands very little about writing, or whom to send a letter to, and the initial steps he should take towards getting his naturalization papers. Even though he may have been in the country five years or more he usually goes to the secretary of the municipality, that is the smallest local subdivision, and makes all kinds of inquiries of him as to what he should do and how he should do it. Sometimes he gets this official to do the work for him. Would it not be possible for the Dominion department to co-operate with these provincial units and use the rural secretaries as a medium between the applicant and the department to take the applications and transmit them to the department for consideration?

Mr. COPP: Any official could be referred to. At the present time the work is being done by the clerks of the courts. I do not know that it would be any great advantage to specify that the rural secretaries should take the application. If the applicant wants to get into communication with the department in regard to naturalization and cannot write himself, he must go to somebody. That would be left entirely to himself. The suggestion made in the bill now before the committee is that the application come before the department, and it would not matter whether the application came through a municipal clerk, a lawyer, doctor, clergyman or anyone else whose services were used to make out the application papers. If the suggestion that is now in the bill be carried out, then so far as the department knows the application comes direct from the man himself. He can get anyone he likes to assist in filling out and filing his application.

Progress reported.