

Supply—Citizenship and Immigration

few remarks I made at the beginning of the consideration of my estimates. I may say that I am also disappointed, but they were short on purpose. He will admit, however, that I took only a few minutes of his time whereas he took about twenty minutes of mine.

Mr. Winkler: That is not unusual.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Marchand: There are a few points, Mr. Chairman, on which I would like to dwell in reply to questions. First of all, there is one that struck me and I should like hon. members to understand that their words touched me. It is the issue of discrimination in immigration. Undoubtedly, discriminatory provisions remain in the act, and I believe there will shortly be means to eliminate such discrimination in a democratic country like ours.

There are historical reasons for that. Doubtless, many historical reasons explain the situation, but I feel the past should be obliterated and we in Canada should be in a position to accept immigrants whatever the colour of their skin, their religion their race and their language. That is basic.

Now, I believe it was the hon. member for Carleton who referred to a general immigration policy, that is that policy which is to be adjusted on a short term basis, as opposed to a long term one that would take into account the normal, gradual and continuous development of Canada.

On this point, I am in complete agreement with the hon. member for Carleton. Our policy cannot be a short term one, because then it easily becomes absurd. Since we do not know about the short term movements and can hardly forecast them, as the hon. member said, we spend our time opening and shutting the tap; but since our forecasts were wrong, the tap is always opened or shut at the wrong time.

Therefore, I think that we will have to disregard those short term movements and try to elaborate a policy—I am not saying that we will not make mistakes—which will at least be a little more in agreement with our ideas and our views about the future of Canada.

The hon. member for Nicolet-Yamaska (Mr. Vincent) talked about immigration. He touched upon a sensitive subject, in view of the ethnic composition of Canada, namely immigration from France or French speaking countries compared to immigration which might come from other countries, such as England.

That is a problem which exists in Canada and it might be better to talk about it since it exists.

There is no doubt that our facilities are much better in England than in France as far as personnel and offices are concerned.

But, in spite of that, it remains that France is still a country which does not favour immigration, and the French people themselves do not emigrate easily, especially at this time because there is full employment in France.

But there is no doubt that there is something to be corrected, and we will try to correct it. However, as I was saying at the beginning of my remarks—I did not say much but at least I said that—we cannot decide alone where we will take our immigrants, because it is necessary that immigrants should want to come and that the countries where they live should also be ready to let them come.

Therefore, we will have to submit and accept the situation as it is.

We have improved our offices in Portugal. I think that last year immigration from Portugal increased considerably; it might increase again during the current year.

I will try to be as brief as possible for reasons that you understand as well as I do.

There was something said also about a policy—I think it was the hon. member for Greenwood (Mr. Brewin) who spoke about the situation of visitors in Canada.

I think that very soon, and I hope that it will be within a few weeks—that depends of course on the house because it might also be in a few months if incidents such as those we witnessed today and last week should happen—we will be able to deal with this situation under which visiting Canada has now become a normal means of coming as an immigrant.

It is a hypocritical situation but what is the reason behind it? Undoubtedly, it is due to a number of difficulties in the countries where those immigrants come from. But, at the present time, there is no doubt that many people who come to Canada to stay come as visitors, because it is easier or because we do not have in their mother countries facilities where they can pass the required examinations before coming to Canada.

It is a hypocritical situation which explains why in Canada there are probably several thousands, possibly tens of thousands of visitors who came to Canada with the intention of staying.