

*Immigration Appeal Board Act*

● (1730)

I have a couple of questions for the minister, and want to give him notice that these are the kinds of questions that will be posed to him in committee. He said that the vast majority of the 17,000 or so people awaiting appeal on deportation orders is made up of those who were caught on November 3 as illegal entrants. Are we not subjecting those who came here in good faith on November 3, and who subsequently had a deportation order against them on the ground that they had not applied for landed immigrant status by that date, to additional expense, inconvenience and perhaps unfairness by having to pursue their appeal before the Immigration Appeal Board?

There is also the question of work permits. I have brought many cases to the attention of the department and the minister, and I am sure the situation is compounded across the country. Individuals who had deportation orders issued against them, appealed them and were allowed to stay in the country on this interim basis, are now denied work permits and are thus dependent on relatives and friends for support. I think it is wrong not to allow these people to have work permits, especially when there is evidence in many parts of the country, despite the unemployment figures, of a demand for labour. I can speak of many cases of people who came to this country as visitors and who now want to demonstrate that they can become good citizens. To do this they need work permits in order to take the jobs that are offered to them and they should be enabled to do so.

The next point concerns some sort of education program for the people who are in this country illegally and who have not come forward. The minister has said that he wants to bring them forward, but how are they going to be notified and be convinced that there will be no punishment or no prejudice against them in view of their illegal entry? Many of them will be frightened, and I think the minister and his associates need to help them believe that when this bill is passed there will be 60 days left in which they may come forward to apply for landed immigrant status without penalty. An education program should have been outlined to us this afternoon through which they could be helped.

There has been a haphazard approach to the problem of applying for landed immigrant status within the country. Speaking for myself, on June 12 in this House I said that I supported the removal of the right to apply for landed immigrant status within this country. It was a bad move in 1967, and what happened was predictable. This afternoon the minister left the impression that there were strong elements of dishonesty in the applications. There may have been on the part of certain charter operators who brought in planeloads of people, but I myself have spoken to many individuals who were caught on November 3, and who had come here with open minds. To impute dishonesty to their entry when this means of entry was legal at the time is not fair, and I think the minister should think twice before being too hard on these people.

This afternoon the minister said that the government will bring forward a position paper which will examine the long-term implications of immigration, in view of the fact that we have not had such a revision since 1952 when the present act was passed.

[Mr. Roche.]

The hon. member for Hamilton West (Mr. Alexander) jumped the gun on me this afternoon by quoting from Dr. Freda Hawkins' book "Canada and Immigration, Public Policy and Public Concern". The fact that I want to quote a passage also, indicates that Dr. Hawkins is very popular with the Conservative Party. I hope she is just as popular with the government, because I have never read a book on immigration to Canada that was as comprehensive and far-seeing when setting out the policies that we ought to be following. I recommend the book highly to all members of the House, and especially those involved in the committee, as it sets out the precise steps we need to take on immigration. The passage I wish to quote reads:

The fact of Canadian geography, her immense undeveloped natural resources, and increasing industrial strength suggest that immigration will continue to play a vital role in national development. And in a world of exploding populations, Canada's vast empty spaces, inhospitable though many of them are, must surely be used at least partly as living space. It seems clear, however, that from now on immigration and particularly the pattern of immigrant settlement across Canada will need to be much more closely related to environmental and social, as well as to economic, considerations and to the needs of all provinces and regions. To relate immigration to environment in a positive way will require a far more wide-ranging and socially oriented kind of immigration planning than we have today. An essential feature of it will be the kind of provincial and community participation in immigration policy-making and management which has been envisaged in this study.

We have to recognize that the world is much different today from 1952, and that the flow of immigrants from Europe will slow down, especially in light of the strength of the European countries as a result of the European Economic Community. Dr. Hawkins points out, and I agree, that the Canadian people have not exhibited an understanding of the new kind of situation that immigration to this country is going to develop. We are likely to have far more immigrants from the western hemisphere. The United States will be a continuing source of immigration to this country and even newer is the prospect of immigration from Asia, Central and South America. We must help the Canadian people to understand that there is room in this country for an increased number of immigrants and we should not look at immigration merely in terms of our manpower requirements.

● (1740)

Certainly, it would be irresponsible for any member of this House not to consider manpower requirements when speaking of immigration. There must be a relationship between the two. In my view, our concepts of immigration are tied too closely with what has happened in the past. There has been increasing urbanization, and far too many people, as we know and have mentioned in other debates, have been moving to and living in our major cities. Indeed, the mayor of Vancouver has complained because too many immigrants are coming to his city and compounding social problems. If we maintain our old fashion view of immigration we shall run into such problems. I say that there is lots of room in this country, especially in western Canada, to accommodate more people. We need more people in this country if we are to achieve the greatness we are capable of, given our resources and the continuation of development.