

Canadian Citizenship Act

take them myself. I am not blaming the minister and I am not actually blaming the department because if they have got to follow the regulation, then they have got to follow the regulation. But my suggestion is that the regulation should never be in there. It is a stupid regulation if it is there. As a matter of fact, it is not there at all. The positive thing is there, but there is no provision made for the wife of an immigrant such as I have described.

Mr. Michael Starr (Ontario): I had no intention of saying anything about the amendments to this bill, but since the hon. member for Kamloops (Mr. Fulton) and the hon. member for Saskatoon (Mr. Knight) have made a reference to the necessity for proper procedure in the issuance of naturalization certificates, I felt motivated to say a few words on this subject. A few weeks ago I had the privilege of being present in the county court of the county of Ontario when some 74 citizens of this country received their citizenship certificates. They appeared before His Honour Judge Pritchard of the county of Ontario in an atmosphere that I felt was a model to indicate to those people the value and dignity of Canadian citizenship.

His Honour Judge Pritchard gave a very well thought out address in which he pointed out to them the advantages that would be theirs on becoming citizens of this country. This was followed by the participation of one of the chapters of the I.O.D.E. in Whitby who presented certificates of their own to each of the applicants and also presented, on behalf of the Canadian Bible Society, a bible to each one of these people. Then the applicants were entertained at tea by two chapters of the I.O.D.E. from the city of Oshawa. All in all, I felt satisfied that this was the sort of procedure that should be followed in the courts of Canada and was a model for others to follow. In my own estimation it would certainly leave an impression upon these people of the value of their citizenship in this country.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: If the minister speaks now, he will close the debate.

Hon. J. W. Pickersgill (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration): I did not intend to say anything until I heard the remarks of the hon. member for Ontario (Mr. Starr). I know I would be completely out of order if I attempted to say what I want to say in committee. I agree with what the hon. member has said, and I want to say how much I appreciate and how deeply the members of the government appreciate what is being done to make these ceremonies more

appropriate. It is not really within our jurisdiction, but we certainly do our best to give them every encouragement.

I should like to say a word about what the hon. member for Saskatoon (Mr. Knight) has said. I do not say this in a carping way at all. He talked about the regulations, but it is not the regulation, it is the law. It is not a law I had any share in making. It was made before I became minister. It is a law that I am proposing, in this very bill, to have changed, as I attempted to point out to the hon. gentleman when I raised my objection a moment ago. I think the case will be met by the amendment. Until it is met, the minister has no discretion, and judging from the suggestions that are so often made by members opposite about ministers taking unto themselves powers they do not have, I am sure the opposition will be pleased to hear that this is one case where there are no powers to be taken. The minister is completely bound by the law.

Motion agreed to, bill read the second time and the house went into committee thereon, Mr. Robinson (Simcoe East) in the chair.

Clause 1 agreed to.

On clause 2.

Mr. Pickersgill: I wonder if I could ask the Minister of Finance to move that this clause be stricken out and that the following clauses be renumbered accordingly.

Mr. Harris: I move:

That clause 2 be deleted and the succeeding clauses be renumbered accordingly.

Mr. Fulton: Would the minister say a word about the reason for this. Unfortunately, the other place does not keep a record of the proceedings of all committees. I have read the record of the discussion in the house, and while there was some question as to the advisability of including the clause it seemed to me that the question was resolved rather in favour of its retention. So far as we are concerned, no great importance attaches one way or the other but we would like to be satisfied that it should be taken out and the reason for doing so, before agreeing.

Mr. Pickersgill: I think when I have given my explanation the hon. gentleman will agree with me it is one of those cases where you could toss a coin and decide one way or the other. As the section as it now reads, if you just look at the capital (A), (B) and (C) parts of it, you will find that (A) and (B) are the present law. All that is being suggested in part (C) is that if a Canadian citizen who is abroad has an illegitimate