

tutor of the child who will be responsible for him and who may ask for him to become a citizen. The same would apply for a Canadian who would have lost his Canadian citizenship outside of Canada and who would come back to Canada.

I have had such cases in the past and came to realize that it is very difficult for a Canadian to regain his Canadian citizenship.

With these amendments and those which I have noted as the Minister spoke as well as those contained in the legislation, this bill is quite acceptable, at least as far as our party is concerned, as well as for all other parties in the House, since that bill was long overdue.

With regard to British subjects, I am happy that the minister should now tell us that the privileges they formerly enjoyed upon arriving in Canada will no longer exist. In the future, they will be treated like all other citizens coming from France, Portugal or elsewhere.

One thing worries me, however. A few years ago, when I sat on the immigration committee, I became aware of the fact that throughout those years, a British subject could live and do business in Canada.

I even knew some who had been in Canada for 20 or 25 years without ever having obtained the right to Canadian citizenship. I have not read the bill clause by clause, but I wonder whether that type of case will still exist, because I fail to understand why a British immigrant who came to Canada to settle down, to live permanently should, under the terms of the old legislation, be free to become a Canadian citizen or remain a British subject. I hope that clause in the new bill will do away with that old privilege.

Finally, I thank the minister once more for having introduced Bill C-20. I trust that when it comes up for study in committee if indicated, it will be amended to make it Canada's very own so that we can say: At long last, we have an act that corresponds to the Canadian spirit. I am confident that all Canadian citizens, present and future, will be happy to be governed by this new Canadian Citizenship Act.

● (1740)

[English]

**Mr. Jake Epp (Provencher):** Mr. Speaker, Bill C-20 has been on the order paper for a number of months, and in rising to speak on it now I should like to point out very clearly that it does contain some good points which I will mention briefly. However, as in any legislation which contains negative points, we should also put those forward. I think it is incumbent on members of the opposition to bring those points forward in order that the debate can range over all parts of the bill and everything the bill encompasses can be brought to the public awareness, particularly the implications of the legislation.

There are several positive points in the bill to which reference has been made by most speakers. This is another case of the government presenting an omnibus bill, this one on citizenship, in order to get around other less palatable positions, therefore advancing the argument the government has used before, that if we are against certain parts or clauses, we must be against the whole thing and

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we are either reactionary, antediluvian or anti-something else—all of which I, personally, cannot accept.

The bill does contain certain positive points; for instance, equal treatment to men and women. For example, if an alien wife or a husband of a Canadian citizen wants to gain citizenship, he or she will be subject to the same waiting time. A father or a mother can apply to have a child registered as a Canadian citizen; the derivation of citizenship can come from either parent. Also, the reduction in the eligibility age for citizenship from 21 to 18 is a positive step, to my mind. I believe this change should have been brought in long before we saw Bill 20.

**Mr. Baker (Grenville-Carleton):** It should have been brought in under the elections act.

**Mr. Epp:** That is right, it should have been changed in the elections act. That is the proper place; not the Citizenship Act. This is really doing it after the fact. Having stressed the positive points, I should like to point out a number of things in this bill which do not have my support. Perhaps this big "if" should be put in the middle of my speech because these negative aspects in this omnibus type bill clearly weaken the bill itself. First of all, we should consider the minister who has brought this bill before the House. In my opinion, this minister has a tremendous record of failure. We must also consider the attitude he brings to legislation and his work in the House, which I cannot accept.

Let us look at some of his responsibilities. He brought in the OFY program, which has turned out to be an absolute disaster. This program was taken from his responsibility and placed under the direction of the Department of Manpower and Immigration. What has happened with the CBC and the type of stuff that has been appearing on that network as a result of a so-called humanistic philosophy? In my opinion, the minister's attitude in this regard is simply eroding the principles on which our society is based, yet when you ask questions of the minister or his appointees in the CBC you do not get answers. We are faced with silence or this minister and his appointees say that with our freedom of speech in this democracy we should not discuss such things. I am all for freedom of expression, but when the government uses the taxpayers' money I think it should be responsible for the views it projects.

The minister has been criticized almost as much by members on his own side of the House as those on this side in respect of the *Time* and *Readers' Digest* issue. The minister likes to use the word liberal with a small "l", but let me suggest that we can use the word with a capital "L" in reference to those who are sticking the knife in his back.

What happened to the immigration resettlement program? Earlier it was under the direction of the Secretary of State. That program has also been taken away from this minister. I suggest that was because he was not doing a good job. Yesterday, at the Committee on Labour, Manpower and Immigration, we asked the minister why this program had been put into his department and he replied very clearly that it was in a mess and something had to be done, so he had to take it over. That is the record of this