

Immigration

very low in the prairies and employment opportunities existed, people were receiving four out of five points by saying that they were going to the prairies.

● (1640)

If the immigrant wanted to settle in a place like Toronto or another place in the province of Ontario which was getting more than 50 per cent of the immigrant flow and where employment was higher, he would get three out of five points. So the regulation was meaningless in the sense of encouraging people to go to other areas. But I believe the compromise that has been made is much more practical than the area designation suggested by the hon. member. However, I want the record to show clearly that what was reported after the amendment of the hon. member for Davenport was carried in committee, that there would be no area designation, is not in fact the case and that points will still be awarded for area designation.

What should be pointed out, again, after the speech of the hon. member for Laprairie, is that the government still does not have a demographic policy and that immigration is but one problem of the larger problems of the urbanization of Canada. A much greater condition is that of Canadians moving—inward migration to our urban centres where job opportunities exist. I must say to this government that they will have to get on with a demographic policy and regional expansion policies which will encourage, through incentives, people to move into other areas rather than force them through regulation to settle in special areas.

Mr. Lloyd Francis (Ottawa West): Mr. Speaker, my intervention will not be a lengthy one at this point. I merely wish to say that I support the arguments that have been advanced by the hon. member for Laprairie (Mr. Watson) and most of what the hon. member for Provencher (Mr. Epp) had to say. Part of the clause which this amendment will delete says the following:

For the purpose of this act and the regulations, whenever a person is granted landing and terms and conditions are imposed, no such term or condition may specify the area in which that person shall reside.

I listened with interest to the hon. member for Provencher who said that points would still be granted and in effect there would be some area designation by the back door, in spite of what appears to be the clear wording of the bill before us. I share the fears of those who point out that our immigration has been heavily concentrated in the cities. This has added to our housing problems and to the social services that are required. An attempt to direct immigration to the slower growth areas in Canada seems to me to be a reasonable thing to do. I am aware of the problems concerning possible exploitation.

I have listened to the arguments of those who say that this might be a violation of human rights. However, I am not persuaded that it is a violation of human rights to say to those who choose to come to Canada that they are requested to spend a certain period of time in one of the slower growth areas in the country. This appears to me to be a reasonable

[Mr. Epp.]

request. I know the mover of this amendment, the hon. member for Laprairie, has indicated he might withdraw it, but I simply wish to say that I, for one, believe we must face the problems of urbanization to a much greater degree than we have so far.

The hon. member for Laprairie referred to our housing policy and to the urban transportation commitment of the party to which I belong. We have a substantial obligation in that area. I would like to see the development of an urban policy along with measures which would allow the free movement of people in Canada wherever they choose to reside. But in principle I go along with those who say that it would not be a violation of human rights to request those who come to Canada to spend a certain period of time in one of the underdeveloped areas so that they would not all go, in overwhelming numbers, to the urban centres where the problems of urban life are magnified as a result.

Mr. Gilbert: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the hon. member would permit a question. I want to ask him which areas he would designate as the slower growth areas in Canada where immigrants could be sent, because all the slower growth areas are areas of very high unemployment, and if we were to send these people to the slow growth areas there would be a tremendous problem with regard to their employment. I would like the hon. member to address his remarks to that question.

Mr. Francis: I am not in a position to give a detailed description, but I listened to the Minister of State for Fitness and Amateur Sport (Mrs. Campagnolo) who tells me that there are job opportunities in her area in British Columbia and they would welcome a number of immigrants to that area. I am aware that there are employment opportunities in the frontier areas of Canada.

Mrs. Campagnolo: For skilled workers.

Mr. Francis: For skilled workers and others.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Francis: My point is that the concentration of immigration in the large cities compounds and magnifies the problem. It is still a very basic point and the hon. member, I am sure, would have to concede it.

Mr. Andrew Brewin (Greenwood): I understood the hon. member for Laprairie (Mr. Watson) to say that at a certain stage he might withdraw his motion, so obviously it is not necessary for me to make a long speech. I am sure many of us might be in agreement with a great deal of what he said about urban planning, but I cannot support his theory that we should direct certain people resident in Canada as to where they are to go, this despite what the hon. member for Laprairie and the hon. member for Ottawa West (Mr. Francis) said that there is no right involved. That is not quite correct.

I am sorry, I do not have the actual citation here, but the United Nations convention on this subject clearly refers to freedom of movement. If we invite people to this country, we