

Supply—Citizenship and Immigration

to bring French speaking immigrants. Is it because the officers of the Department of Citizenship and Immigration care very little in having French speaking immigrants? I would ask the minister to give me reasons for such difficulties.

Mr. Marchand: Mr. Chairman, may I answer something in this regard? It may be at the time the hon. member was at lunch but when I spoke about my estimates, I gave the reasons why this is so.

Mr. Asselin (Charlevoix): Mr. Chairman, I am aware of those reasons, but I feel there may be others for the Minister to discover upon inquiry with his officials. I should be pleased to know of other reasons as I am convinced there are some.

The minister also replied to the question put by the member for Nicolet-Yamaska (Mr. Vincent) concerning the possibility of concurrent jurisdiction between the provinces and the federal government in the field of immigration. The minister somehow did not think too clearly in this respect; at the outset he said immigration comes under federal jurisdiction, but later on he changed that, saying that there could be concurrent jurisdiction in the case of Quebec where, at the present time, the Minister of Cultural Affairs seems greatly interested in this matter. An act has been adopted in Quebec, as the minister knows. In that case, must the provinces get in touch and co-operate with the federal Department of Citizenship and Immigration with regard to this important question of immigration?

Mr. Marchand: Mr. Chairman, the province like the federal government has jurisdiction in the field of immigration. But section 94, if my memory serves me correctly, says that in the case where the provincial legislation conflicts with or contradicts the federal legislation, the federal government takes precedence.

I said the same thing twice, but I meant to clear it up.

Mr. Asselin (Charlevoix): Mr. Chairman, can the minister tell me whether the Quebec government got in touch with him about the establishment of an immigration service in Quebec?

Mr. Marchand: Mr. Chairman, Quebec did not get in touch with us.

[Mr. Asselin (Charlevoix).]

[English]

Mr. More: Mr. Chairman, I have just one or two matters for the minister. First of all, I should like to express my agreement with those who have raised various problems in respect of the Citizenship Courts. There should be some unification of approach to the granting of citizenship to immigrants so there will not be discrimination and hardship in respect of the questions asked of these people and their knowledge concerning Canadian citizenship. The former minister of citizenship and immigration knows that last winter I raised this matter with him. I am dissatisfied with the way these courts have been extended. I know the new minister will be interested in this. I know we are catching up gradually but I hope the government will see that these courts are extended as quickly as possible.

A matter has come to my attention concerning a particular case. I will not mention the name but I should like to tell the minister about the facts of this case because I do not believe his departmental officials can cope with the matter. I want to say that there is no recrimination against the officials. Personally I have had very good co-operation from the ministers and any officials with whom I have had to deal either here in Ottawa or in my constituency of Regina. The case concerns two children who were born out of wedlock and a subsequent marriage. The law says that only the mother may apply for citizenship for the children. In this case, regardless of what kind of citizenship court we have, personally I do not think the mother ever will qualify to become a Canadian citizen and yet she is a good mother and it is a good family. In Saskatchewan either the mother or father has authority for these children but I am told that under federal law the mother only can be granted the right to ask for citizenship. The father is a citizen. He wants his children to be Canadian citizens. They are good children and will make good citizens.

Unless some change is made, in my opinion there is no hope of these children ever becoming Canadian citizens. I bring this matter to the attention of the minister because I think that if I have a case like this there must be other cases throughout the country. I see no reason in a particular case like this and under these circumstances why an application by the father on behalf of these