

There was no answer in respect of question 4(b), as to whether there was an attempt to consult with me in respect of the appointment of lawyers to act on behalf of CMHC in my constituency; and if not, why not. Obviously, I could have answered that question. No attempt was made. I think it is fair that we should expect, when questions are placed on the order paper, to get frank and honest answers to them. It is very obvious in this case that the government might have been embarrassed by the answers if they were given, but I do not think embarrassment constitutes an excuse for not giving the House answers or for giving answers which can only be seen as misleading. I think the public of Canada and the members of this House are entitled to more frank behaviour on the part of ministers of the Crown.

## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

### CITIZENSHIP ACT

#### MEASURE TO ESTABLISH CONDITIONS AND PROVISIONS GOVERNING CITIZENSHIP

**Hon. James Hugh Faulkner (Secretary of State)** moved that Bill C-20, respecting citizenship, be read the second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Broadcasting, Films and Assistance to the Arts.

He said: Mr. Speaker, last October 10, Bill C-20, an act respecting citizenship, was given first reading. Today, as I propose the second reading of this bill, I believe it would be helpful if my remarks were to place the question of citizenship in as fully developed a context as possible. Accordingly, I should like first to situate the proposed legislation within the Canadian context by looking at the history of naturalization and citizenship laws in this country, and then to examine some of the specific provisions of the proposed legislation.

In proposing the second reading of the Canadian Citizenship Act in 1946, my predecessor, the Hon. Paul Martin, stated the case for establishing a distinct Canadian citizenship. He declared in part, and I should like to quote from his remarks of that day:

The bill arises from the fact of pride, common pride, in the achievements of our country, based upon the great exploits of our people... For the national unity of Canada and for the future and greatness of this country, it is felt to be of the utmost importance that all of us, new Canadians or old, have a consciousness of a common purpose and common interests as Canadians; that all of us be able to say with pride and say with meaning: "I am a Canadian citizen".

In framing the Citizenship Act of 1947, the government was rightly concerned with the principle of citizenship that would be so defined and with the implications of that definition for Canadian society. With the principle of Canadian citizenship firmly established, we now focus attention on the process of acquiring citizenship. For our part, Mr. Speaker, one of the prime factors in determining the nature of this new citizenship legislation has been the government's concern for those individuals who will be most directly affected by it, namely, the potential citizens of this country.

### Citizenship

The landed immigrant who makes the momentous decision to apply for Canadian citizenship testifies to his commitment to this country. He states he desires to join Canadian society formally so that he can participate fully in the Canadian community. In expressing the wish to adopt a new nationality, the potential citizen must place his case before the citizenship authorities. It seems only fair to that individual that he have a precise idea of the basis on which his case will be judged. For this reason, in drafting Bill C-20 we have made every attempt to make the whole process of becoming a citizen clear and straightforward.

The fundamental change in the proposed legislation is that the grant, retention, resumption or renunciation of citizenship is no longer a discretionary act on the part of the minister. Rather, it is made a right upon compliance with certain specific statutory requirements. This does not mean that anyone who knocks on our doors automatically has the right to become a citizen. It does mean that to obtain Canadian citizenship, an individual will go through a clear and straightforward process and, upon the fulfilment of certain conditions applicable to all persons, citizenship shall follow.

In its definition of citizenship as a qualified right, Bill C-20 represents the latest progressive step in the history of naturalization and citizenship laws in Canada. I believe it would be useful to review these steps very briefly so that the proposed legislation can be seen in the proper perspective.

Even before 1867, the various colonies which later formed the Dominion of Canada enacted legislation regarding the naturalization of aliens. A year after confederation, parliament passed legislation providing for one uniform law of naturalization. In 1881, the Canadian parliament passed its own Naturalization Act based upon the Imperial Naturalization Act of 1870 enacted by the United Kingdom parliament. However, the lack of uniformity in laws relating to citizenship and naturalization in the British Empire continued to cause difficulties. The Imperial Conference of 1911 agreed upon a number of basic principles for new imperial naturalization legislation. Among these, two in particular should be noted: one, imperial nationality should be worldwide and uniform; and two, there should be a five-year qualifying period.

● (1630)

In 1914, the legislation embodying the principles agreed upon was enacted by the United Kingdom parliament and by the Canadian parliament and subsequently by the legislatures of the other dominions. In Canada, the citizenship or nationality laws were determined by three statutes: the Canadian Immigration Act of 1910, designed to meet the needs of immigration and deportation; the Naturalization Act of 1914, adopted in order to meet the needs of imperial nationality; and the Canadian Nationals Act of 1921, enacted to meet the needs of participation in the international community, the League of Nations particularly.

It is interesting to note that not everyone who was a Canadian national under the Canadian Nationals Act was a Canadian under the Canadian Immigration Act and nowhere was provision made for Canadian citizenship. In