

*Canadian Citizen Identification Cards*

Therefore I cannot foresee any problem as far as that card is concerned, even if it were related in some way to a computer for the storage of the data.

I think however that we will face some problems; indeed the usefulness and the efficiency of every national system of identification cards rests to a great extent on its security aspect and, naturally, on its acceptance by the public. I suppose that security would apply to information provided on the card and to the formalities required for obtaining it. It would be absolutely necessary first to check the applicant's identity. There should be no opportunity for serious errors in the descriptive information, and the card itself should be designed in such a way that it would be practically impossible to forge it or alter it. Therefore, the first step in this process calls for the co-operation of the people and might create major problems, because in many cases, checking the identity of the applicant will bring on him many problems. If statements under oath supporting evidence for an application, the testimony of relatives or sponsors, or other forms of confirmation are required, the public might possibly react unfavourably. The value of the system will however depend greatly on the effectiveness of the measures taken at this stage. The descriptive information required on the card is rather obvious: the name and place of birth, the sex, the height, the blood group, the colour of the eyes, physical features least likely to be changed, as well as a photograph and the signature of the holder. Were it required to list distinctive marks like scars, birthmarks, or else fingerprints, the public would no doubt be against it, for, in the first case, it would be an invasion of privacy, and in the second, it would mean an unpleasant and useless requirement. The increased security of the system brought about by those additional identification methods is not essential to its proper operation, and it seems wise to forgo the meagre benefits they provide. I also believe it is possible, with our technical means and devices, to manufacture cheaply an identification card which would be difficult to use for fraudulent purposes; if this process does not provide an absolute guarantee against duplication or alteration, it is second only to the most sophisticated and expensive forgery techniques and allows the immediate tracking of rough alterations. By the same token, if it were possible to make a color identification card to which there would be a symbolic value, it would be quickly accepted by the public.

In concluding, Mr. Speaker, I find certain advantages in the use of an identification card issued by a governmental agency. I do not think it should be mandatory and I would object to a measure making it mandatory for Canadian citizens to carry one or to produce it on request. I recognize that such a system raises problems and can lead to abuses, but I think problems can be solved and abuses eliminated.

[*English*]

**Mr. E. B. Osler (Winnipeg South Centre):** Mr. Speaker, I will not take long because I know other hon. members wish to speak in this debate. I should like to say a few words and give my reasons for seconding this notice of motion.

I am grateful to the hon. member for Laurier (Mr. Leblanc) for bringing forward this matter. I noted with

interest his words and those of my colleague, the hon. member for Bonaventure-Iles de la Madeleine (Mr. Béchard).

I am glad to second this motion. I think it is a motion that should be brought forward, discussed, examined from every angle with very long tongs, and then dropped into a furnace and burned. One word in the motion bothers me. I do not like the word "requiring". I wish that word had not been included. One could say identification cards are very useful. Yet if you were to say to a Canadian citizen, without embellishment, "You are required to carry an identification card," I think he would say, "I'll be damned if I will."

Under normal conditions an I.D. card is not acceptable. There may be some conditions, such as in wartime, when conditions are confused or when there is an emergency, when identification cards might be useful. They were useful during the last war when we wanted to register people for selective service and take an inventory of the qualifications of people who lived in this land. However, under normal circumstances I cannot understand why the servants of a free people, the government, should ask that citizens carry identity cards.

I have a charming little poodle at home. It is the third dog I have had. The other two lived for 13 years, and this one is in its third year. She is just as intelligent as I am, and twice as attractive. The law requires a dog to wear a tag; she must wear it all the time. The only difference between us is that our ancestors climbed out of the slime, yet my ancestor in his wisdom took the road that led to my making, whereas the dog's ancestor took another road. I do not think any human being should ever allow himself to be tagged, even though society demands that dogs be tagged. Never must we allow that.

Since other members wish to speak, I merely say that this issue should be discussed. It ought to be examined in good will by people on both sides of the fence. Surely there are more acceptable ways of combating problems than the issuance of identification cards. What would give anybody the idea that such cards are good anyway? If the carrying of an I.D. card were made mandatory, I would cheerfully go to jail rather than accept such a law, because in a society which would allow this I would probably be safer, more comfortable and among more congenial people if I were in jail than in society generally.

**Mr. G. H. Aiken (Parry Sound-Muskoka):** Mr. Speaker, I want to add a few words to the debate and also leave a few minutes for my hon. friend from Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles), who also wishes to speak. I oppose this notice of motion as drafted for three reasons. First, I oppose it because "immigrants" is included in the wording of the motion. I think that provision is most offensive to immigrants, prospective citizens and, perhaps, to visitors coming to this country. If people are here as visitors or as landed immigrants, they have in their possession passports from their own country. They retain such passports until they become Canadian citizens, at which time they give up their foreign passports and receive Canadian citizenship cards. For that reason I do not see why immigrants should be included in the wording of the motion.

My second reason is what I would class the traditional reason. We should approach the question of identity cards