

Immigration

[Translation]

Mr. C.-A. Gauthier (Roberval): Mr. Speaker, I will say only a few words, and touch on only three points, because it was agreed at the beginning of the sitting to refer this bill to committee as quickly as possible.

First of all, Bill S-12, as passed by the Senate on November 12, was certainly well examined by hon. senators. As it happens, there is not much talk about the work of the Senate because we have so much to do here in this House. For once, the Senate introduced a bill drawing the attention of the House. I think we must congratulate them tonight for their work on this immigration bill.

Furthermore, the minister did a very good job in enlightening the House. I followed his speech carefully, and he explained very well the shortcomings of the present legislation as well as the effects Bill S-12 will have.

Mr. Speaker, after listening to the minister I think that the introduction of Bill S-12 is timely. I was surprised, although I am not an expert on immigration matters, to hear the minister tonight that some immigrants re-entered Canada 9, 10, 12 or 15 times after being deported. The other members also stated those facts, and that is why I do not want to repeat what they already said. I simply want to express my satisfaction and say at the same time the impression we had when we saw that mass of people who were re-entering Canada after being sentenced.

We always wondered how our legislation could allow those people to go about so freely but I never imagined that an individual could re-enter Canada 15 times after being deported as many times. It must be noted that most of those people are troublemakers.

In past years, there was trouble in the province of Quebec and elsewhere. When we consider the names of the leaders who aroused the people, we see that most of the time the names of the deported resurface because we do not have any legislation to keep them out of Canada.

I am happy Bill S-12 makes guilty of an offence and I quote:

Every person against whom a deportation order is made who

(b) returns to Canada without the consent of the Minister . . .

I feel that amendment will give authority to the minister through the sanctions imposed. The law will not be respected without corresponding punishment. The minister said earlier that the judge will always have discretionary power in imposing the penalty according to each case. All I ask, Mr. Speaker, is that the judges use their common sense as most usually do. I ask that they show compassion while remaining firm, that our Canadian laws be respected and all sorts of revolutionaries kept from rallying our young and the not quite so young and stirring up trouble in Canada.

I want this bill to be deferred to the permanent committee as soon as possible, that it might be passed before the Christmas recess.

● (2100)

[English]

Mr. Ron Huntington (Capilano): Mr. Speaker, Bill S-12 as presented to the House corrects an obvious difficulty

[Mr. Gilbert.]

for the department in that a deported person could come right back to the country merely to await a new deportation hearing. As has been said and read, the bill adds a penalty to section 35.1 of the Immigration Act that should discourage the commuter or the "bumper jumper". I hope the penalties outlined there are wise and do in fact discredit this abuse of the Canadian law.

I cannot forget the fact that just a few years ago the Immigration Appeal Board had a total of over 28,000 appeals between January 1, 1973, and August 31, 1974. Close to 23,000 of these had been dealt with by October 16, 1974, and 5,000 odd remained on the books. Of the total, 2,500 had formal hearings, 2,500 were awaiting documents, and 18,400 of the appellants had been given landed immigrant status.

It would appear that since the right of appeal against deportation was restricted on August 15, 1973, the board had been able to progress with a rather heavy work load. In October, 1966, the then minister of immigration, presently the Minister of Transport (Mr. Marchand), decided that things were in a bit of mess in the department and ordered a white paper. This white paper was intended to stimulate public assistance for the department with an input to the drafting of an updated Immigration Act. A statement of principles and policies pertaining to immigration was made, but where has been the result?

The one thing that has happened is that we had the Immigration Appeal Board Act in 1967, and tonight we are discussing Bill S-12. In the meantime, since 1966 and the white paper, we have been a haven for numerous American pimps, procurers and prostitutes, and we have enabled them to continue to be domiciled here even after conviction under our Criminal Code. Our present inadequate laws, combined with certain flaws and weaknesses in some provincial laws, particularly private companies acts, constitute an open invitation to U.S. con men, swindlers, fraud artists, and both penny anti and big time crooks to enter Canada easily for the purpose of looting the Canadian till.

Bumper jumpers have been the order of the day, and we are trying to prevent them with the introduction of Bill S-12. I certainly hope that this abuse at our crossing points will be ended with this bill. Crime, and the infiltration of Canadian business for the laundering of illegal money have been made possible by a loose application of the Immigration Act, and if we were sincere back in 1966 about the updating of that act, why have we not been with it?

One other situation that applies to immigration that is unfair to the private property owner in our municipalities, and that I believe deserves some consideration on the part of federal and provincial authorities, is the cost of education of those immigrants who land in our cities and attend schools within our cities and who become a burden on the local property owners.

One other thing to which I should like to draw the minister's attention is the screening and interviewing procedure for non Canadians entering Canada at our international airports. It is really a farce. Preliminary interviews are now conducted by untrained customs officers and undergraduate students taking summer employment. Immigration officers only conduct an interview in