

**CRIMINAL CODE, IMMIGRATION ACT, 1976 AND
CITIZENSHIP ACT**

MEASURE TO AMEND

Hon. Ray Hnatyshyn (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada) moved that Bill C-71, an Act to amend the Criminal Code, the Immigration Act, 1976 and the Citizenship Act, be read the second time and referred to a legislative committee.

He said: Madam Speaker, this is a very important Bill. Indeed, it is an historical Bill which I have the honour to present for second reading.

Unfortunately, without commenting on what has transpired here, due to the circumstances of the business of the House, we find ourselves with five minutes within which we are expected to deal with a Bill that I believe is very important and which has been developed by all Members of the House in a spirit of non-partisanship and co-operation that I believe is important for legislation of this sort.

I had rather hoped that we would make progress before the summer recess and, indeed, today I was in receipt of a package of amendments that were presented to me and which have been cleared by members of the Opposition in discussions with members of all Parties.

These amendments constitute a package which involve very important concepts and fundamental questions with respect to the operative sections of the legislation.

Indeed, my friend, the Hon. Member for York Centre (Mr. Kaplan), spoke to me this morning with respect to a particular provision. I have had an opportunity to discuss this matter with my staff to try to determine whether or not there was a possibility of having these matters dealt with today. Regrettably, I have come to the conclusion that the amendments, some of which affect the proposed amendments to the Immigration Act and the Citizenship Act, and which I would be required to discuss with my colleagues, the Secretary of State (Mr. Crombie) and the Minister of Employment and Immigration (Mr. Bouchard). It is important for us to deal with this matter carefully. I could have rejected the amendments, one of which would have made this legislation retroactive rather than retrospective.

Mr. Robinson: Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. In view of the importance of this legislation, and in view of the fact that there appears to be a consensus among the Parties with respect to the matter, I would seek unanimous consent at this point, given the hour, that we proceed with this legislation notwithstanding the clock, until it has received and completed second reading.

In view of the fundamental importance of dealing with this matter expeditiously, I would seek unanimous consent for us not to see the clock in order that we might complete second reading of this important legislation.

Message from the Senate

Mr. Guilbault (Saint-Jacques): Madam Speaker, we on this side of the House might be amenable to the suggestion made by the Hon. Member. However, in the spirit of co-operation, there are other Bills that other Members would like to pass. I wonder if the Hon. Member would be agreeable to passing Bill C-83 as well.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Champagne): There seems to be negotiations taking place on the floor of the House of Commons.

Mr. Prud'homme: To say the least.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Champagne): There are some messages I would like to read to the House.

Mr. Hnatyshyn: Madam Speaker, I am here in all seriousness to try to do the right thing with respect to this legislation. I can assure Members of the House that this is a matter of very great importance to the Government. I am not going to have the matter dealt with in a slapdash, haphazard manner.

I can assure the House that I will call on my House Leader to make arrangements to have this matter brought up at the earliest date when this House reconvenes. It will be a priority matter for us. I want to deal with this legislation and we will deal with it in a manner which does it justice and, I hope, in a spirit of non-partisanship that has prevailed on this. I realize there is an order of the House, Madam Speaker. I can only say that I will continue my remarks when we next have the opportunity. I hope I receive the co-operation of the House.

• (2000)

Mr. Murphy: Madam Speaker, just so there is no confusion in the House, we are certainly not tying the progress of this piece of legislation to any other legislation in the House.

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MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Champagne): I have the honour to inform the House that a message has been received from the Senate informing this House that the Senate has passed the following Bills, without amendment:

Bill C-56, An Act to amend certain Acts relating to financial institutions.

Bill C-62, An Act relating to the forgiveness of debts incurred or assumed in respect of certain official development assistance loans made by the Government of Canada to the Governments of Togo and of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania and also to the former East African Community.

[Translation]

Bill C-63, An Act to amend the Small Businesses Loans Act.