

As far as I can see, the only reason put forth by the government for not making that distinction is that it will complicate the administration of the Immigration Act. The defence put forward is based on the Immigration Act and that is not a proper answer to our submission. Surely the position is the same with the Immigration Act. In the partner nations of the commonwealth we have Canadian facilities for examining immigrants to make sure that a person is not allowed to come to Canada who will not be able to establish a permanent citizenship here. The Immigration Department has far better facilities for making the necessary investigations and doing the necessary checking in Great Britain, Australia and New Zealand than it has in Holland or Russia. I do not think anyone would contend to the contrary. Therefore I submit that one way out of this difficulty would be to have the Immigration Act amended so that a British subject from one of the partner nations of the commonwealth should not be deported after a shorter period than five years, should not be deported, say after three years. It should be possible to check up on a person from another British nation within three years if it takes five years to check up on a person coming from outside the commonwealth. I put that suggestion before the ministers concerned because I think it is one way out of the difficulty.

But if they do not feel free to accept that suggestion, why not provide in this citizenship bill itself that there be power to deport up to five years, although citizenship be granted to such a British subject in a shorter time? In other words, retain the power to deport up to five years. These people will not be stateless; they are still British subjects and that status is carefully preserved for them under the bill as drawn. I think you can get around the difficulty, leaving the Immigration Act as it is, if the government will not cut down the time under that act to three years for a British subject, and yet providing in this bill that a person entering Canada from a partner British nation can get citizenship within a shorter time than persons coming from, say Russia or China. I would ask the two ministers concerned to give these suggestions serious consideration because, if something like that were done, I do not think there would be reason for much controversy over the other provisions of this bill and we might be able to get it through practically unanimously.

Mr. KNIGHT: I asked the minister a question which is recorded on page 1003 of *Hansard*, and the same subject was mentioned

this afternoon in connection with section 28, which has a distinct bearing on the section before us. Section 28 states:

A person, who has acquired the status of British subject by birth . . .

As the hon. member for Kamloops has pointed out, most of the citizens of the Irish Free State were born British subjects but they have renounced the status of a British subject. Is the minister now prepared to answer the question I asked at that time?

Mr. MARTIN: The hon. member for Rosetown-Biggart asked the same question and it was agreed that we would discuss it under the pertinent section, section 28.

Mr. FLEMING: I should like to say a brief word to clear up several problems that seem to have arisen during the course of the discussion.

The hon. member for Swift Current raised the question of the position of British subjects coming from lands outside the self-governing nations of the commonwealth. It will have been observed that my amendment confines the privilege which I suggest ought to be given to those within the scope of section 28. Section 28 refers to:

A person, who has acquired the status of British subject by birth or naturalization under the laws of any country of the British commonwealth other than Canada.

Section 2(g) defines "country of the British commonwealth" as "a country listed in the first schedule to this act," and the first schedule to the act embraces only the self-governing nations of the commonwealth. So that we are not concerned in this amendment, with persons coming to this country from other than self-governing nations of the commonwealth.

The Secretary of State indicated that he would present an amendment to section 10. The house will welcome that amendment. But it does not touch the point I raised in my amendment. There is no escape from the issue raised there.

Someone has spoken of the desirability of unanimity on this bill, and I endorse that sentiment completely. No one would have been happier than I to see complete unanimity, and the minister will bear me out when I say I had hoped that we might approach this bill with unanimity, but apparently that has not been possible.

The immigration regulations really have no part in the debate on this amendment. I made it clear in everything I said in support of the amendment that I am assuming the provisions of the Immigration Act will remain inviolate. If there is the slightest doubt in the mind of the Minister of Mines and Resources it would