

hon. member for Charlevoix-Saguenay would make it mandatory for Canadians to register as Canadians.

The CHAIRMAN: There is already one amendment before the committee.

Mr. DIEFENBAKER: I have not offered an amendment; I have just suggested the acceptance of this proposal.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member for Charlevoix-Saguenay moves that the word "may" in the fourth line of section 3 be struck out and the word "shall" substituted therefor.

Mr. MARTIN: This argument is, of course, the argument which went on in the drafting of the bill. I have always held the view which the hon. member has, but some draftsmen take the view of the hon. member for Labelle. In the light of the discussion the government will be pleased to accept the suggestion made by the hon. member.

Amendment agreed to.

Mr. DIEFENBAKER: May I now move, seconded by the hon. member for Kamloops:

That section 3 be amended by adding after the word "status" in line 35, the following words, "or racial origin."

Mr. LESAGE: I went to the United States last week. The immigration officer asked me what was my nationality. I said "Canadian citizen". He inscribed "Canadian citizen", but he said, "What is your racial origin?" I said, "White". He put down "White", and he was satisfied. But I had to give both. I do not think that when the racial origin is asked for it is sufficient to answer "Canadian citizen". I may be a negro and be a Canadian citizen, and my racial origin is "black"; I may be a Chinaman and be a Canadian citizen, and my racial origin is "yellow". There are not many racial origins. It is untrue to say that I am of the French race. I am of French descent; some others are of English or of Scottish descent. There are not a great number of races; there are white, black, yellow, red, brown.

Mr. COLDWELL: Is the hon. member sure it is "white?" The Chinese believe it is "pink".

Mr. LESAGE: It may be.

The CHAIRMAN: Shall the amendment carry?

Mr. MARTIN: No. There is a good deal of merit in what has been said by the hon. members for Eglinton and Lake Centre. The hon. member for Lake Centre, as he has

[Mr. Diefenbaker.]

demonstrated on many occasions in this house, is a good lawyer, and he knows perfectly well that it is not possible to envisage every kind of situation. What we are seeking to do is, as he stated, to avoid the *carte blanche* imposition of such questionnaires as he has referred to and others which I know about, as well, in the administration of my department. By "national status" we simply mean the sort of thing that has to do with the country to which the person owes his allegiance. I do not think the section should be amended to take care of the particular suggestions he has in mind; not that I am not fully appreciative of the points which he makes. But, having in mind the provisions of the other acts we have looked at and the experience of other countries, I think it would be better to leave the situation just as it is. I should have no objection to adding this—and I make it as a suggestion without undertaking to add it or to suggest that it should be added, but merely to argue the point. In order to have it conform to one of the latter sections, we might say "is required to state or declare his citizenship, nationality, or national status". That would help a little, but would not meet the point of the member for Lake Centre, but that is the extent to which I think we should go.

Mr. REID: In municipal and provincial elections many persons have been challenged at the poll on the ground of citizenship. I refer to those who come from European countries and have been granted naturalization. Under this bill, when a man appears to cast his vote, in a provincial election, and is asked by the presiding officer to produce his naturalization papers, exactly what will be his status?

Mr. MARTIN: No act of this parliament can affect the operation of a provincial act dealing with elections. That is one of the prerogatives given to the provinces. If, however, anyone is asked what his national status is, he will say in reply, pursuant to the passage of this section, that he is a Canadian citizen.

Mr. REID: Has the minister discussed this bill with the United States authorities? How will the United States treat citizens under the act if this bill becomes law?

Mr. MARTIN: The hon. gentleman has asked a question to which I am glad to reply. When the bill was prepared we thought it desirable to have the advantage of as many minds as possible. Officials of my department invited persons who have to do with the administration of the naturalization act and