

That is the time for them to declare the purpose for which they want to come back to the country, and there will be a delegation of authority to issue the minister's consent at border points where the purpose of the visitor is identified as being innocent. But we do not want to be left in the position in which we are now, where people who have been deported come back illegally because they only face another deportation.

Mr. Yewchuk: Mr. Chairman, this is my final question. I want to know two more things. The minister has not told me what length of time he anticipates it would take to issue a ministerial permit. Let us say it is for an occasion which has a specific date but, because of the mail service in our country, this individual who is in some other country did not receive notification until two or three days before the event. How long would it take him to get the ministerial permit? Second, could the minister clarify what he anticipates would be the number of these permits issued to people who have been deported for non criminal reasons? Does he anticipate that most would be able to get a permit to come back to visit, or very few?

Mr. Andras: I thought I answered the first question by saying we would delegate authority to the border point upon a phone call from the region. So in terms of a situation such as the sudden illness of a relative in Canada, where there was no advance warning to the person who was coming back who had been deported, that person could come to the border, explain the circumstances, and within an hour might receive the authority. I am quite prepared to delegate it. In fact, ministers permits are delegated now on certain prescribed occasions.

As to the second part of the question, I honestly could not give the hon. member the number.

Mr. Yewchuk: I am asking for the ratio, not the number.

Mr. Andras: I cannot give the hon. member an indication of the number of people to whom the minister's consent to come back is given or would be given under the circumstances of the proposed amendment. Such consent is going to be for the purposes I have already described. For coming back to Canada to take up Canadian citizenship or landed immigrant status, that is a different matter altogether.

● (2210)

Mr. Hnatyshyn: As far as the operation of this particular clause is concerned, may I ask the minister whether prosecution will be instituted through his department or through the offices of the attorneys general of the provinces?

Mr. Andras: We would notify our own officers at the border or our inland officers. I have authority to make arrest under this but the practice is to refer it to local police forces. In fact, many of the applications for arrest would be enforced by police officers. As my hon. friend from Broadview indicated, and this was also brought to my attention by the police forces in some of the major cities, too often they have no way of deterring hardened criminals from coming back to Canada. Those people just

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laugh at the idea of being shipped across the border once more.

The application for charges would be laid by our officers, or officers of the metropolitan forces, and the decision to prosecute by summary conviction or indictment would be made by the Crown attorney.

Mr. Peters: In view of the number of people coming in—I think the minister mentioned 170 out of 70,000 as the number that came to his attention as being subject to this type of legislation—may I ask how many were from the United States and how many arrived by air from other countries?

Mr. Andras: Mr. Chairman, those that came to my attention by and large are from the United States, people who cross the border to Vancouver, for instance. I believe the hon. member for Capilano could support that. Or they come across to Toronto, to Windsor and so on, but the vast number of people or criminals who have crossed the border came by way of Detroit and Windsor. I subscribe to the proposition that we should improve the prevention system but it is a problem when you have 40 million people a year coming here. Of course the number is not the real problem either, it is the type of people. The Americans have something like nine million or ten million illegal immigrants now, so their problems are far worse than ours even though their computers may be a little better.

Mr. Peters: It seems to me, with my small experience of border points, that those who were not allowed into the United States—including a couple of former members of parliament—found out that they were unable ever to cross the border. It seemed that the officials could recognize them every time. I am not really concerned with the criminals, unless the minister agrees with some of our legal colleagues that anybody who has committed an offence is a criminal.

I know there have cases of deportation where the people did not want to do something within our law at times, but they were not bank robbers or out to cheat anybody—except the country, I suppose. Unless the word criminal is used to mean such cases, the people I am concerned with are those who have relatives here and who were deported because they did not meet our requirements. It seems to me that to put them in jail rather than develop a system to make screening simpler is not the answer.

We need something that will allow our officers to be less cautious rather than more so. I am sure these people are well known after they have been deported three or four times, and would be easily recognized if they attempted to cross the border again.

Most of the immigrants in my riding, and I suppose the same is true of the minister's riding, have come by air from Europe and the Caribbean, and are not what I consider to be criminals. Where there are passports and other facilities, we should not have this difficulty. I know some cases that should not have happened. I hope this bill will not be the only thing which will try and prevent people from re-entering this country who came in under those circumstances. I say this because some may have parents here, and some may be parents of those who live here.