

Summer Recess

House leader a question with respect to this bill. Now that we are passing it in the House of Commons in the hope that it may soon become law, will the government House leader suggest, or do something else, that the senators come back so that they can pass the bill and it can become law? Surely he will agree with me that for the senators to have gone home until October 15 when this important piece of legislation is before us, is hardly doing their duty.

Hon. Yvon Pinard (President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, I am convinced that if the Senate had known we would adopt this bill today they would have stayed. On the other hand, I am sure that they will suffer less, politically, for having left last week than any party on the other side of this House.

Hon. Walter Baker (Nepean-Carleton): Mr. Speaker, I assume from his answer that the government House leader will bring this matter to the attention of the senators. When he does, I would ask him to inform them that he has our complete support and also the support of the man who wished he could be a senator, the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles)!

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Knowles: Mr. Speaker, I thought my friend and neighbour on Commanche Drive was really a friend. To suggest that I would like to go to that other place is as unfriendly a thing as he could say!

Motion agreed to, bill read the third time and passed.

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

MOTION RESPECTING SUMMER RECESS

The House resumed from Monday, July 21, 1980, consideration of the amended motion of the President of the Privy Council (Mr. Pinard):

That, when the House adjourns on the day that this order is adopted, it shall stand adjourned until October 15, 1980, provided that at any time prior to that date, if it appears to the satisfaction of Madam Speaker after consultation with the government, that the public interest requires that the House should meet at an earlier time, Madam Speaker may give notice that she is so satisfied, and thereupon the House shall meet at the time stated in such notice, and shall transact its business as if it had been duly adjourned to that time; and

That, in the event of Madam Speaker's being unable to act owing to illness or other cause, the Deputy Speaker, the Deputy Chairman of Committees or the Assistant Deputy Chairman of Committees shall act in her stead for all the purposes of this order.

Mr. Chris Speyer (Cambridge): Mr. Speaker, during the last few weeks and days many matters of tremendous importance have come before the House. One of the matters which has concerned me is the administration of the law by the ministers upon whom it is imposed. Specifically, I should like to deal with the whole area of discretion exercised by a minister, properly or improperly.

Every minister of the Crown has reposed in him by statute, certain discretions and to varying extents. For example, the Minister of National Revenue (Mr. Rompkey) has the ability to choose the method of prosecution in income tax cases. The Minister of Justice (Mr. Chrétien) has the discretion to determine whether to bring a matter before the Supreme Court of Canada even after all judicial remedies have been exhausted. But nowhere is the discretion wider than that reposed in the minister of immigration.

● (1520)

The Immigration Act sets forth standards to guide in the admission of people into this country. Those standards are rigid, and they need to be, but they are general. There are a certain number of cases in which it is important, however, that we relax those standards. That is the purpose of the discretion. That is the purpose whereby a minister is able to give a ministerial permit. Accordingly, a wide power of discretion is vested with the minister of immigration so that he can relieve or give relief to worthy people who want to come into this country and who are not technically eligible under the act or the regulations.

There is no member in this House who has not pleaded on behalf of a constituent or some other person for the right of that person to be admitted to Canada even though in the circumstances he is technically disqualified. I say to this House that every minister, especially the minister of immigration, has to have a sense of compassion and a sense of humanity to deal with cases which, on their facts, cry out for admission. However, there are certain cases in which a minister abuses that right and abuses that discretion.

There has never been any necessary correlation between, on the one hand, a high degree of intelligence, and on the other, good judgment. How many people in this House have we seen with a high degree of intelligence but no judgment, or a lack of judgment?

The Minister of Employment and Immigration (Mr. Axworthy) in this session has consistently set a pattern which has demonstrated, certainly to me, a lack of capacity to exercise good judgment. When a prime minister looks for a minister, what does he look for? He looks for integrity. He looks for intelligence, and above all he looks for good judgment. As I say, we have some compelling examples which I shall bring before this House which I say to hon. members have rendered ineffective the minister of immigration's functions because of a serious lack of judgment in a number of instances.

It is far too easy to generalize because we all resort to our own sense of prejudices. We have to be specific and draw conclusions from specific instances. No instance is more compelling than the matter which I have drawn to the attention of the House on a couple of occasions, namely, the Calamusa matter. I wish to speak to the facts of this case. I know only certain facts but there are many others which are the duty of the minister of immigration to bring before this House in order