

**RT. REV. MSGR. JOHN O'GRADY**



**SECRETARY**

**NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC  
CHARITIES**

**1346 CONNECTICUT AVE. N. W.  
WASHINGTON 6, D. C.**

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Statement of Rt. Rev. Msgr. John O'Grady, Secretary

For immediate release  
June 6, 1952

During the past few weeks we have had the first real national educational program on the Christian doctrine of immigration in twenty-seven years. This, as we all know, is very dear to the heart of our Holy Father. The present National Origins quota system was born of prejudice and racism. Anyone who reads the McCarran Omnibus Immigration Bill carefully and in light of the Reports that were made on it by the Committees, must recognize that this Bill would make immigration more restrictive. For instance when one considers its failure to give parents of aliens any preference, and its continuation of the mortgages on quotas under the Displaced Persons Act, one begins to see readily that it would make it impossible for many families to be reunited for the next twenty years. The Greek quota is mortgaged until the year 2013; the quota for Hungary is mortgaged until the year 1985; and the Lithuanian quota is mortgaged until the year 2087.

In his press release of June 2, Mr. Bruce Mohler, Director, Bureau of Immigration, National Catholic Welfare Conference, states that the McCarran Bill "removes existing racial barriers to admissibility and citizenship." It very generously gives a quota of 100 to the people of the Philippine Islands, to a people who heretofore could come in without any limitations. Then it goes on to provide that a person of Philippine origin who is living in Brazil, even the son of a Filipino mother and a Brazilian father, would be counted against the Philippine quota. I wonder who could convince people in the Philippine Islands that this is a liberal immigration Bill. Japan also has a quota of 100.

Mr. Mohler goes on to say that "the bill originates a series of preference classes, thus establishing, for the first time under U. S. immigration law, a policy of selective immigration." I would say this sets up an arbitrary system. What

qualifications do the officials of the Immigration Service have for selecting skilled people? How many skilled people are selected for jobs in our own country by any governmental agency?

Again Mr. Mohler says that "all visas not taken up by the preference classes are to be given to regular quota immigrants." I wonder how Mr. Mohler would explain this to countries whose quotas have been mortgaged for fifty years? I wonder how he would explain to people whose quotas have been used entirely by preference classes?

One of the worst provisions of the McCarran Bill as originally reported to the Senate was that a person who contracted mental illness at any time after entry, even forty years after coming to the United States, was liable to deportation. Even if the person had been ill for only a short time and the cost of medical care had been paid for by the family or by the person himself, nevertheless he could be deported. In the amendment, which was forced by the opposition, only mental illness contracted within five years after entry makes a person subject to deportation. A temporary illness contracted during this period would make a person liable to deportation even if the cost of medical care were provided by his family. In order to resist deportation the person would have to prove not to the satisfaction of a court, but to an agent of the Immigration Service, that the illness resulted from causes developing after entry.

Another serious objection to the McCarran Bill is that it really makes naturalized citizens second class citizens. It makes naturalization a sort of temporary license which is granted to a person, one might say, at the pleasure of the police officer. It is pointed out clearly in the Report of the House Committee that one of the purposes of this provision was to make denaturalization easier. Before World War I the naturalized citizen had the same status as any other citizen. Then in order to take care of a few Nazis, fraud was made a basis for denaturalization. Now the McCarran Bill would make it relatively easy for a citizen to be denaturalized.

When we talk about improvements in the McCarran Bill we have to recognize



that they are not of too great importance. They are certainly not in accord with the thinking expressed by the Bishops Committee at its last meeting. They are not in accord with the thinking of representatives of the various Catholic organizations that were assembled in Washington on March 3, 1952. How can we as Catholics support a Bill that virtually regards millions of our own people, including Italians, Poles, Croats, Slovenes, Lithuanians, as second-class citizens, a bill that is based on the doctrine of Nordic superiority, a bill that is based on a one-culture pattern in our country. It is interesting to note that the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A., the National Lutheran Council, the American Friends Service Committee - one might say practically all the large Protestant Churches and Jewish organizations - have spoken with one voice against the basic principles involved in the McCarran Bill.

