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STATEMENT BY SENATOR DANIEL K. INOUYE
ON S. 747 AND S. 1932, TO AMEND THE
IMMIGRATION AND NATIONALITY ACT

The problem of the protection and extension of civil rights is often looked upon as one which is strictly confined to certain groups and certain areas within the United States. In many ways, I can understand such views in the light of the record of injustice and intransigence which has been endured for so long by so many with so little to say.

However, I wish to point out that the matter of amending certain provisions of the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952 is in many ways at least as important to the people affected as the question of civil rights is to the colored people and their concerned brethren. And like the civil rights issue in the south, as well as in other parts of the United States, the question of proper amendment of the Immigration and Nationality Act will undoubtedly have considerable effects on the American image held by the world at large.

I submit that these two issues are inextricably intertwined, that we cannot afford to emphasize either at the expense of the other. We most certainly cannot emphasize the need for revisions of the Immigration Act alone without paying heed to the extremely urgent question of civil rights at home. But, emphasize the domestic civil rights issue alone and we will have to countenance the inevitable charge that America only pays lip-service to the inscription of welcome carved below the Statue of Liberty.

For these reasons, I previously supported S. 747, introduced by Senator Hart of Michigan. I believed then that S. 747 had certain meritorious features which would go a long way towards rectifying many of the inequities long perpetrated under the Immigration Act. I have listed these features in S. 747 point by point. I think that this is a good bill and deserves serious study by this committee. Together with Senator Hart, I believe that S. 1932, also introduced by him on July 24, 1963, as an Administration measure is, likewise, an excellent bill. I

co-sponsored S. 1932 as I had S. 747. Many provisions of these bills are identical. The basic difference lies in the two alternate means of modifying the national origins quota system, the bane of an enlightened immigration policy.

As indicated by Senator Hart, it is perfectly consistent to actively support the fullest congressional consideration of both these proposals. I do not believe that they are mutually exclusive. Towards this end, I should like to point to features in S. 747 which commend themselves to your consideration, as well as to features in S. 1932, the Administration bill which would immeasurably contribute to an enlightened immigration policy.

Among the various features of S. 747, I would especially like to point out the following:

a. Section 201 (a) of the present law is amended so as to provide an increase in the number of quota visas from 154,000 per year to 250,000 per year. The allocation of 50,000 visas to refugees and/ or escapees without regard to quota area, quotas, etc.

I feel that liberalization of this section would have the effect of implementing our frequent protestations about the need to take care of those who have been persecuted or displaced by Communist take-overs in their country of domicile.

b. Section 201 (e) of S. 747 stipulates that all quota numbers at the end of the year which have not been used are placed in a pool and divided among the quota areas which have a back-log of applicants waiting for immigrant visas. The formula recommended then, by S. 747 to divide these quota numbers from the pool is far more realistic than what we have at the present. As the new formula is used, Japan's quota rises from 185 to 5,378, Korea from 100 to 2,616, Philippines from 100 to 2,913, and China from 205 to 5,335. These are countries which have over-subscribed existent quotas by 22,000, 8,882, 1,192, and

8,124 respectively. It is my view that the use of the new formula will have the effect of realistically adjusting quota figures to actual immigration averages and demands from these countries of Asia. The same thing can be said of countries from the European area, as well as other parts of the world. Overall, I think that S. 747 basically strives at two objectives:

1. It seeks to update the 1952 Immigration Act by recognizing the fact that the record of immigration to this country since 1952 has been achieved not as a result of, but in spite of, the said act. Approximately 2,500,000 immigrants, including 750,000 displaced persons have been admitted since 1952 through a series of special, temporary, ad hoc immigration enactments. S. 747 would recognize this and seek to incorporate these into the basic act, along with liberalized quota setting procedures.

2. It seeks to quell those skeptics who point to certain discriminatory procedures in our present Immigration Act with a view to detracting from the image of America as a land which welcomes those of all other lands in order to help build itself. No amount of Voice of America proselytizing will do us more good overseas than enactment of S. 747.

The basic objectives of the Administration measure, S. 1932, do not materially differ from the foregoing. However, I would like to re-emphasize the late President Kennedy's message to Congress accompanying S. 1932, in which he said: "The (present) system is based upon the national origins of the population of the United States in 1920. The use of the year 1920, is arbitrary. It rests upon the fact that this system was introduced in 1924 and the last prior census was in 1920. The use of a national origins system is without basis in either logic or reason. It neither satisfies a national need nor accomplishes an international purpose. In an age of interdependence among nations, such a system is an anachronism. For it discriminates among applicants for

admission into the United States on the basis of accident of birth."

The words of President Kennedy have been underscored by President Johnson in his State of the Union message: "We must also lift by legislation the bars of discrimination against those who seek entry into our country, particularly those with much-needed skills and those joining their families. In establishing preferences, a nation built by the immigrants of all lands can ask those who now seek admission: 'What can you do for our country?' But we should not be asking: 'In what country were you born?'"

The specific features of S. 1932 which commend themselves for adoption are as follows:

a. Section 201 (a) of the Immigration and Nationality Act will be amended so that existing quotas by national origins would be reduced gradually at the rate of 20 percent a year over a five-year period. The quota numbers so released would then be placed in a reserve pool. Eventually, all quota numbers will be in the pool. Quota numbers in this reserve pool will be augmented by quota numbers not fully subscribed by any country.

During the five fiscal years following passage of the Act, such a reserve pool can be used with certain limitations, to admit immigrants who are unable to obtain prompt issuance of visas due to oversubscription of quotas in their particular country. I feel that the overall effect of this amendment would be to more realistically adjust quotas to the number of people from any one country desiring to come to America. The prescribed limitations, such as that the combined quota numbers issued to any quota area in any year shall not exceed ten percent of the total quota numbers authorized for the year, is a built-in guarantee that no single country will dominate in the percentage of immigrants coming to this country. In effect, the national origins quota system will be gradually abolished, in line with

Kennedy's message. Countries perenially oversubscribing their quotas, from the Southern Mediterranean as well as from the so-called Asia-Pacific triangle will be more fairly treated under the new formula.

b. In addition, Section 4 of the bill seeks to amend Section 202 of the Immigration and Nationality Act to eliminate the so called Asia-Pacific triangle provisions. These provisions now require persons of Asian ancestry, even if only one parent were Asian, to be attributed to quota areas not by their place of birth but according to their racial stock. This phase of the present Act is especially discriminatory in that only those from the triangle are so set apart; whereas peoples from other areas are assigned quotas primarily by their places of birth. I feel that Section 4 of S. 1932 is, indeed, a step forward for a country anxious to secure the goodwill of those countries fimming the Pacific Basin from Pakistan to Japan, from the north of the Australian continent to the Kuriles. No amount of prattling about the need for good East-West relations will be effective unless such discriminatory provisions are summarily done away with.

In many other respects, S. 1932 closely resembles S. 747; in the liberal approach to admitting refugees suddenly dislocated and to admitting relatives of those already resident in the United States, as well as to those with certain special skills. I need not go into these details as they have been covered thoroughly in Senator Hart's presentation as they were in the late President's message to Congress.

I personally feel that most, if not all, of the kind of legislation which seeks to lift the educational, welfare, civil rights, and working standards of this country ultimately redounds to the benefit of all. A higher educational standard means eventually more productivity. A better welfare program means maintenance of less costly punitive and correctional institutions.

Expanded civil rights means less internal friction and division. Higher working standards means less costly insurance premiums and more production.

In very much the same way, I feel that a liberalized immigration policy, besides having its own intrinsic merit in terms of altruism, nevertheless contributes to an improved image of the United States in countries abroad. In this sense, I think it can rightfully be said that we cannot afford not to pass either S. 747 or S. 1932.