



British Nationality and Status of Aliens Act 1914

1914 CHAPTER 17

PART II

NATURALIZATION OF ALIENS

2 Certificate of naturalization

- (1) The Secretary of State may grant a certificate of naturalization to an alien who makes an application for the purpose, and satisfies the Secretary of State—
 - (a) that he has either resided in His Majesty's dominions for a period of not less than five years in the manner required by this section, or been in the service of the Crown for not less than five years within the last eight years before the application; and
 - (b) that he is of good character and has an adequate knowledge of the English language; and
 - (c) that he intends if his application is granted either to reside in His Majesty's dominions or to enter or continue in the service of the Crown.
- (2) The residence required by this section is residence in the United Kingdom for not less than one year immediately preceding the application, and previous residence, either in the United Kingdom or in some other part of His Majesty's dominions, for a period of four years within the last eight years before the application.
- (3) The grant of a certificate of naturalization to any such alien shall be in the absolute discretion of the Secretary of State, and he may, with or without assigning any reason, give or withhold the certificate as he thinks most conducive to the public good, and no appeal shall lie from his decision.
- (4) A certificate of naturalization shall not take effect until the applicant has taken the oath of allegiance.

- (5) In the case of a woman who was a British subject previously to her marriage to an alien, and whose husband has died or whose marriage has been dissolved, the requirements of this section as to residence shall not apply and the Secretary of State may in any other special case, if he thinks fit, grant a certificate of naturalization, although the four years' residence or five years' service has not been within the last eight years before the application.
- (6) For the purposes of this section a period spent in the service of the Crown may, if the Secretary of State thinks fit, be treated as equivalent to a period of residence in the United Kingdom.

3 Effect of certificate of naturalization

- (1) A person to whom a certificate of naturalization is granted by a Secretary of State shall, subject to the provisions of this Act, be entitled to all political and other rights, powers, and privileges, and be subject to all obligations, duties, and liabilities, to which a natural-born British subject is entitled or subject, and, as from the date of his naturalization, have to all intents and purposes the status of a natural-born British subject.
- (2) Section 3 of the Act of Settlement (which disqualifies naturalized aliens from holding certain offices) shall have effect as if the words “naturalized or ” were omitted therefrom.

4 Special certificate in case of doubt

The Secretary of State may, in his absolute discretion, in such cases as he thinks fit, grant a special certificate of naturalization to any person with respect to whose nationality as a British subject a doubt exists, and he may specify in the certificate that the grant thereof is made for the purpose of quieting doubts as to the right of the person to be a British subject, and the grant of such a special certificate shall not be deemed to be any admission that the person to whom it was granted was not previously a British subject.

5 Persons under disability

- (1) Where an alien obtains a certificate of naturalization, the Secretary of State may, if he thinks fit, on the application of that alien, include in the certificate the name of any child of the alien born before the date of the certificate and being a minor, and that child shall thereupon, if not already a British subject, become a British subject; but any such child may, within one year after attaining his majority, make a declaration of alienage, and shall thereupon cease to be a British subject.
- (2) The Secretary of State may, in his absolute discretion in any special case in which he thinks fit, grant a certificate of naturalization to any minor, whether or not the conditions required by this Act have been complied with.
- (3) Except as provided by this Act, a certificate of naturalization shall not be granted to any person under disability.

6 Persons previously naturalized

An alien who has been naturalized before the passing of this Act may apply to the Secretary of State for a certificate of naturalization under this Act, and the Secretary of State may grant to him a certificate on such terms and conditions as he may think fit.

7 Revocation of certificate of naturalization

- (1) Where the Secretary of State is satisfied that a certificate of naturalization granted by him has been obtained by false representation or fraud, or by concealment of material circumstances, or that the person to whom the certificate is granted has shown himself by act or speech to be disaffected or disloyal to His Majesty, the Secretary of State shall by order revoke the certificate. .
- (2) Without prejudice to the foregoing provisions, the Secretary of State shall by order revoke a certificate of naturalization granted by him in any case in which he is satisfied that the person to whom the certificate was granted either—
 - (a) has during any war in which His Majesty is engaged unlawfully traded or communicated with the enemy or with the subject of an enemy state, or been engaged in or associated with any business which is to his knowledge carried on in such manner as to assist the enemy in such war; or
 - (b) has within five years of the date of the grant of the certificate been sentenced by any court in His Majesty's dominions to imprisonment for a term of not less than twelve months, or to a term of penal servitude, or to a fine of not less than one hundred pounds; or
 - (c) was not of good character at the date of the grant of the certificate; or
 - (d) has since the date of the grant of the certificate been for a period of not less than seven years ordinarily resident out of His Majesty's dominions otherwise than as a representative of a British subject, firm, or company carrying on business, or an institution established, in His Majesty's dominions, or in the service of the Crown, and has not maintained substantial connection with His Majesty's dominions; or
 - (e) remains according to the law of a state at war with His Majesty a subject of that state;

and that (in any case) the continuance of the certificate is not conducive to the public good.

- (3) The Secretary of State may, if he thinks fit, before making an order under this section refer the case for such inquiry as is hereinafter specified, and in any case to which subsection (1) or paragraph (a), (c), or (e) of subsection (2) of this section applies, the Secretary of State shall, by notice given to or sent to the last-known address of the holder of the certificate, give him an opportunity of claiming that the case be referred for such inquiry, and if the holder so claims in accordance with the notice the Secretary of State shall refer the case for inquiry accordingly.
- (4) An inquiry under this section shall be held by a committee constituted for the purpose by the Secretary of State, presided over by a person (appointed by the Secretary of State with the approval of the Lord Chancellor) who holds or has held high judicial office, and shall be conducted in such manner as the Secretary of State may direct:

Provided that any such inquiry may, if the Secretary of State thinks fit, instead of being held as aforesaid be held by the High Court, and the practice and procedure on any inquiry so held shall be regulated by rules of court.

Status: This is the original version (as it was originally enacted).

A committee appointed under this section shall have all such powers, rights, and privileges as are vested in the High Court or in any judge thereof on the occasion of any action, in respect of the following matters :—

- (a) the enforcing the attendance of witnesses and examining them on oath, affirmation, or otherwise, and the issue of a commission or a request to examine witnesses abroad; and
- (b) the compelling the production of documents; and
- (c) the punishing persons guilty of contempt;

and a summons signed by one or more members of the committee may be substituted for and shall be equivalent to any formal process capable of being issued in any action for enforcing the attendance of witnesses and compelling the production of documents.

- (5) Where a person to whom a certificate of naturalization has been granted in some other part of His Majesty's dominions is resident in the United Kingdom, the certificate may be revoked in accordance with this section by the Secretary of State, with the concurrence of the Government of that part of His Majesty's dominions in which the certificate was granted.
- (6) Where the Secretary of State revokes a certificate of naturalization, the revocation shall have effect from such date as the Secretary of State may direct, and thereupon the certificate shall be given up and cancelled and any person refusing or neglecting to give up his certificate shall be liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding one hundred pounds.

7A Effect of revocation of certificate of naturalization

- (1) Where a certificate of naturalization is revoked the Secretary of State may by order direct that the wife and minor children (or any of them) of the person whose certificate is revoked shall cease to be British subjects, and any such person shall thereupon become an alien; but except where the Secretary of State directs as aforesaid, the nationality of the wife and minor children of the person whose certificate is revoked shall not be affected by the revocation, and they shall remain British subjects :

Provided that—

- (a) it shall be lawful for the wife of any such person within six months after the date of the order of revocation to make a declaration of alienage, and thereupon she and any minor children of her husband and herself shall cease to be British subjects and shall become aliens; and
 - (b) the Secretary of State shall not make any such order as aforesaid in the case of a wife who was at birth a British subject, unless he is satisfied that if she had held a certificate of naturalization in her own right the certificate could properly have been revoked under this Act, and the provisions of this Act as to referring cases for inquiry shall apply to the making of any such order as they apply to the revocation of a certificate.
- (2) The provisions of this section shall, as respects persons affected thereby, have effect in substitution for any other provisions of this Act as to the effect upon the wife and children of any person where the person ceases to be a British subject, and such other provisions shall accordingly not apply in any such case.
 - (3) Where a certificate of naturalization is revoked the former" holder thereof shall be regarded as an alien and as a subject of the state to which he belonged at the time the certificate was granted.

8 Power of Governments of British possessions to grant certificates of Imperial naturalization

- (1) The Government of any British Possession shall have the same power to grant a certificate of naturalization as the Secretary of State has under this Act, and the provisions of this Act as to the grant and revocation of such a certificate shall apply accordingly, with the substitution of the Government of the Possession for the Secretary of State, and the Possession for the United Kingdom and of a High Court or superior court of the Possession for the High Court, and with the omission of any reference to the approval of the Lord Chancellor, and also, in a Possession where any language is recognised as on an equality with the English language, with the substitution of the English language or that language for the English language :

Provided that, in any British Possession other than British India and a Dominion specified in the First Schedule to this Act, the powers of the Government of the Possession under this section shall be exercised by the Governor or a person acting under his authority, but shall be subject in each case to the approval of the Secretary of State, and any certificate proposed to be granted and any proposal to revoke any certificate shall be submitted to him for his approval.

- (2) Any certificate of naturalization granted under this section shall have the same effect as a certificate of naturalization granted by the Secretary of State under this Act.

9 Application of Part II to Self-Governing Dominions

- (1) This Part of this Act shall not, nor shall any certificate of naturalization granted thereunder, have effect within any of the Dominions specified in the First Schedule to this Act, unless the Legislature of that Dominion adopts this Part of this Act.
- (2) Where the Legislature of any such Dominion has adopted this Part of this Act, the Government of the Dominion shall have the like powers to make regulations with respect to certificates of naturalization and to oaths of allegiance as are conferred by this Act on the Secretary of State.
- (3) The Legislature of any such Dominion which adopts this Part of this Act may provide how and by what Department of the Government the powers conferred by this Part of this Act on the Government of a British Possession are to be exercised.
- (4) The Legislature of any such Dominion may at any time rescind the adoption of this Part of this Act, provided that no such rescission shall prejudicially affect any legal rights existing at the time of such rescission.