

*Immigration Act, 1976*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski):** Is there unanimous consent to allow the Hon. Member for Winnipeg North to ask a question?

**Some Hon. Members:** Agreed.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski):** The Hon. Member for Winnipeg North.

**Mr. Orlikow:** I heard the Hon. Member defining the word "humanitarian" in his amendment. I did not hear him explain the three words following the word "humanitarian" which are "or commercial purpose". I wonder if the Hon. Member could explain that.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski):** Is there unanimous consent to allow the Hon. Member for York West to answer the question?

**Some Hon. Members:** Agreed.

**Mr. Marchi:** If the Hon. Member will check with the Table Officers, he will find that this was a typing error which was not part of the motion. It has been struck by the Table. The three words "or commercial purpose" should not be in that motion.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski):** The Hon. Member for Spadina on debate.

**Mr. Dan Heap (Spadina):** I rise to support the motion of my hon. friend from York West. I would have preferred to handle the same problem in a somewhat different way. I will discuss that at a later time.

It has been proposed that we should exempt from this law people who act for a humanitarian purpose. As the Hon. Member stated, the word "humanitarian" is one that is in legal usage. Governments, courts, and the public have found it possible to use this word with a known meaning in legal matters. Therefore, it is a possible way in which to resolve what many people see as an unclarity, a possible mix-up, or a drafting error in the law.

When we started debate on the Bill, I was very much of the mind that there was a drafting error. One of the chief drafters, the director of the legal section of the task force, gave me a briefing on this. He explained that Sections 95.1 and 95.2 hinge on the difference between the word "into" and the word "to". He spent approximately half an hour explaining to me that to bring a person "to" Canada is legal, to bring a person "into" Canada is illegal, always was, and should be.

Later the Minister told me he was wrong. I am not sure about the quality of a law that is drafted by someone who soberly and conscientiously told me one thing, and after hearing the Minister, had to admit that what he told me was not true in regard to the meaning of a crucial clause in the law.

It seems to me very ironic that this Government, no less than the previous Government, and possibly more, has actively

sought partnership with churches, unions, and all types of non-governmental organizations in the work of bringing refugees to Canada and helping them to settle here.

When the Hon. Member for Kingston and the Islands (Miss MacDonald) was Minister of Employment and Immigration, she told me that it was an important part of her plan to win that type of co-operation. In fact, at that time the host program began and it has continued. Churches and other such groups have joined with the Government in helping to settle refugees. Often they joined with the Government by helping very substantially to settle the refugees sponsored by the Government. Perhaps there is some confusion about how many the Government sponsored and how many the church sponsored, but one has to look at the whole picture and not pick certain figures out of context. It has been acknowledged by government officials that they have helped a great deal in providing information. The church has a good network and it is represented in places where the Government is not represented, and it is also represented in most places where the Government does have overseas posts. Therefore, information that the church has brought about countries has been greatly used by the Refugee Status Advisory Committee and by the Immigration Commission in trying to identify the type of problems that may generate refugees and attempting to clarify who are the refugees and what is needed in response to a real refugee who has been through some very terrible experiences.

All this information was actively sought by the Government, and I am glad that it was. The churches responded very positively, as did other groups. Many of those groups were *ad hoc* groups, for example, the Nanaimo Immigrant Aid Society and the Immigrant Aid Society in many other towns and cities. Without that assistance, the Government would have been greatly hampered in meeting its own goals in this matter.

In fact, this year the Government announced it was necessary to impose very harsh restrictions on the entry of refugee claimants into Canada over the American border. It announced those restrictions on Friday morning and on Sunday afternoon there was a great rally in the City of Fort Erie of over 300 local townspeople who were led by their clergy. For about half an afternoon in the park they held what they called a celebration of refugees. They told me that in the past two years they had billeted 500 refugees in the Town of Fort Erie. It started one evening a couple of years ago when one of our immigration officers on the bridge met a Salvadoran family, did the necessary paperwork and procedure and then asked, "Where are you going tonight?" They didn't know. The officer told them to wait. He phoned around and found them a place to stay with a friend, which by the way is the kind of thing the churches have been doing spontaneously. A committee was formed within a few days and that network billeted 500 people in a small city in two years. Southern Quebec at the same time sent a truckload of food and blankets to refugees who had been sent back to Plattsburg, New York, who had been stopped from coming into Canada. That competes with an action between Windsor and Detroit for