

Immigration Act, 1976

reforms and amendments and show some movement so that everyone can be happy with the legislation.

I would like to ask the Hon. Member if he can share with us his views on an appeal mechanism based on points of law rather than on the circumstances faced by the legitimate refugee in his homeland.

Mr. Berger: Mr. Speaker, I have heard the Hon. Member say on a number of occasions that the determination process is only as good as the appeal process. If you do not have an appeal on interpretation of fact, there is no appeal. This recommendation was made unanimously by all groups which have been heard from in the past several years as well as by the standing committee. It points to what the Minister is asking us to swallow.

● (1950)

I have heard him say publicly on a couple of occasions that this Bill is not perfect. I heard a Conservative Party member speak at a conference in Montreal last Friday night on the right of internal asylum and say that the Bill is not perfect. However, the Minister was quoted in the papers yesterday as saying that he will not amend the Bill. Perhaps he was misquoted.

What are we supposed to believe? He goes around the country saying he is a nice guy. Six months ago he told people that if a Bill was presented which he could not accept, he would resign. This Bill violates every basic principle which has been laid down and talked about for the past few years, yet he does not resign. He says, "I'm not perfect but I won't amend the Bill".

Mr. Weiner: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. The Hon. Member is making all kinds of statements about things I am alleged to have said or not to have said. Why does he not answer the question and not try to enter into debate on something on which he has no evidence or facts.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The Chair believes that is a matter of debate. The Member for Laurier (Mr. Berger) has the floor.

Mr. Berger: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is incredible that the Minister would go around the country saying that the Bill is not perfect and that maybe we can improve it, then say the next day that they will not amend the Bill. He wakes up one day and is Mr. Nice Guy. The next day he may have been kicked by his wife in bed and tells us that he will not amend the Bill. Is this the kind of basis upon which parliamentarians are expected to evaluate and judge a Bill?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Malépart: Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask a question and make a few comments to my colleague from Laurier (Mr. Berger), for I know he is open-minded about the immigrant and refugee issue.

Keeping in mind the fact that the Minister of State responsible for immigrants—and keeping in mind the open-mindedness of Montrealers and the ever generous welcome they extend to refugees, particularly in Montreal West, I should like to ask him this: How can the people of Montreal and the people of Dollard understand their Member now, when we know that the people of Montreal West have always been very generous with these people, always welcoming them, and now a former mayor of Montreal West who today is the Minister responsible has been making speeches in the Montreal region and trying to make people believe he has an open mind, whereas in fact here he is the most hard-hearted man for refugees, a man who has changed completely?

I wish my colleague from Laurier would tell me: Is it because the Minister is under supervision here, he does not carry any weight—all he has is a limousine and the extra \$40,000—he is powerless and has been given orders, or is it simply that he is showing his true colours here and showing his other face in his riding? I would like to know the opinion of my colleague on this.

Mr. Berger: I thank the Hon. Member for his question. It should be said that the people of Montreal West are not the only ones who have been generous to refugees and immigrants in the last several years. As I have already said, only a few years ago, in 1979 and 1980, Canadians welcomed with open hearts thousands of East Asian refugees.

The Minister makes generous speeches. He says that he is meeting all the expectations of the population and that he will treat refugees fairly. This is a spurious statement and this is why the government is deceiving the Canadian public.

Let me just quote the words of a Toronto lawyer who met with the Minister of State for Immigration (Mr. Weiner) and with various groups representing refugees in Montreal and other organizations from throughout Canada who were in Montreal a few weeks ago. This lawyer said: "You know, Mr. Minister, there are two Bills C-55. There is the Bill tabled in the House which we now have before us, and then there is the other Bill C-55 to which you refer in your speeches."

He added: "We have not seen this second Bill". As for us, Members of Parliament, we have to deal with the Bill which was introduced in this House on March 5. It is a fact that the Canadian public welcomes the speeches of the Minister because they deal with a bill that does not exist, except in his imagination.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Resuming debate, the Hon. Member for Chambly (Mr. Grisé).

Mr. Richard Grisé (Chambly): Mr. Speaker, I welcome this opportunity to make a brief contribution to the debate on Bill C-55, a very important Bill, which is concerned with equity, justice and compassion for refugees. And at this point I would like to extend special greetings to the refugees in the riding of Chambly, who are very well received, need I add.