

is clear that on that committee they did not vote against it. Presumably if they did not like it they could exercise their right, as members of the other place, to vote against it. In fact, they went along with that recommendation of the committee. I think that is to their credit and honour. I would only hope that Members of that same Party in the House of Commons could repeat and duplicate the same type of understanding and acceptance that their compatriots and colleagues in the other place have shown.

**Mr. Iain Angus (Thunder Bay—Atikokan):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have an opportunity to participate in this debate today. I think it is a very significant debate. It clearly exemplifies the inability of the Government to use its mighty majority to "Rambo" its way through policies that are obviously not supported by many Canadians. Quite frankly, if they were supported by a massive number of Canadians, Canadians who took the time to contact their Member of Parliament, or to lobby, then they would have gone through a long time ago. If there had been clear support, and if it had been clearly justified, it would have gone through. However, the opposite is the case. It is now over five months since the so-called emergency was declared and we were brought back to Parliament to debate the matter.

• (1620)

During the short time available to me I want to talk about the specific amendments which the other place has offered us, as well as my feelings about Canada and what we have been through in our very short life as a nation. Let me start about 80 years ago when we as a country turned away a boatload of Sikh refugees. I am not going to get into the game of which Party was in power, but we as a country, around 1908-1909, turned away a boatload of Sikh refugees who had arrived on the S.S. *Kamagata Maru* on our West Coast. They docked at Vancouver, were quarantined by the Canadian Government, and eventually sent back. When that boat got back to India, its original departure point, some of those Sikh refugees were killed by the British police.

Some 30 years later another boatload arrived. That one contained 900 Jewish refugees from Europe who attempted to enter Canada as a means of providing themselves with a safe place to live, one free not only from persecution but from death. I was ashamed last summer when I visited the memorial to the Holocaust in Israel to see the photographs of the people on the *St. Louis* that we as Canadians—and I emphasize "we as Canadians" because we tolerated the decision of our Government; it was our Government—turned away from our shores. We said to these human beings, "We don't want you". They eventually lost their lives to Nazism. We had a chance to take them in, to protect them, and to give them a new start.

Canada has recognized as its only honorary citizenship an individual who helped Jews escape from Europe by giving them passports to his country. We have honoured that man because we now recognize the goodness which was done by him in helping the Jews of Europe to escape.

### *Immigration Act, 1976*

In the last year we have helped to wipe the slate clean. We have allowed two boatloads of would-be refugees to land on our shores and to enter the process available under the law of Canada. Ironically one of those boatloads was from the same country which we refused more than 80 years ago.

As the Hon. Member for Winnipeg—Fort Garry (Mr. Axworthy) so aptly pointed out, the Government wants us to turn back the clock. It wants to get us back to the point where we can stop those people who, for whatever reason, find themselves wanting to leave their country and wanting to come to Canada and find the only option available to them is a marine mode of transport. So what if we have the same number arriving at Mirabel on any given weekend by regularly scheduled airlines? So what if we have others from Central America, perhaps not as large in number, arriving by automobile, bus, or train via the United States of America? No, the Government is targeting this one mode of transportation because it is more visible and brings out a certain reaction in a certain element of society.

This is why we in the New Democratic Party have aligned ourselves with all major church organizations—not individual congregations but the governing bodies of the churches—the Law Society, and other groups and communities across Canada which have evolved around support for immigrants and refugees, which have helped them to become part of Canada and have helped to bring them to Canada. They have offered a Christian hand of fellowship or brotherhood to people whose life is not as good as our life is in Canada. That is why we opposed the original legislation.

I compliment the Hon. Member for Spadina (Mr. Heap) for the work he has done, not just in the past five months or the last year but over many years, in terms of fighting for refugees and immigrants, fighting for the process which is so needed in Canada to ensure that our laws are adhered to and that human rights are recognized as an ultimate priority. This is why we moved amendments. This is why a number of us spoke during the various stages of debate. This is why we support the amendments which have come to us from members of the other place.

While we in the New Democratic Party may have a specific view about the over-all value, if not the existence of the other place, we recognize that under Canadian law it exists and has responsibilities which its members have clearly taken seriously. They have listened to thoughtful Canadians, the same ones from whom we heard in committee and the same ones we quoted in the House. They have come to the same conclusion, that a number of elements within the Bill violate the Charter of Rights and go against the spirit of what Canada has evolved to be. They have sent back to us a check-list of amendments and have said: "If you change this, this, and this, we will find the Bill acceptable and, if we find the Bill acceptable, Canadians will find it acceptable". It is a modification of the process to ensure that the benefit of the doubt is given to those who come to our shores, to ensure that they are not turned away before they have a chance to state their case, and to ensure, on