

Immigration Act

the relative is refused admission. The person applying is not given any reason. Why not? Surely that is common justice. Quite frequently they are not allowed to show the documents they have, work permits and so on, when coming from Asia, and there is no chance to appeal.

There are repeated examples of people in Hong Kong and India having to pay for medicals and other services in order to ensure that they will receive proper consideration. They offer to pay so that there will not be a long delay.

I have dealt with many cases affecting Asian immigrants. There is no question but that there is still discrimination against Asian women and those from Third World countries, not in law but in fact. This happens because there is only one immigration centre in India, for example. Those in Hong Kong find it difficult to make application. The people of Tonga cannot afford to fly to a distant country to make application. Those in the Pacific region do not have fair access.

I am proud to say that our party is on record as objecting to the visa requirements for Indian visitors. Indian people arriving at Vancouver airport are often forced to stay there for many hours until their relatives come and pay almost a head tax before they are allowed into this country as visitors. People from Europe are not treated in that way.

There are many other points I would like to make about immigration offices such as the long line-ups in order to obtain an appointment. Often people have to take two days off work just to make a routine application. Immigrants and their relatives are exploited by consultants and lawyers, often paying thousands of dollars for information that could be obtained from immigration services or Members of Parliament.

The refugee situation of the past two or three years has shown that there must be much more government planning in the settlement of people, especially when they come in large groups. It is very important that there be enough housing, especially for people who will settle where there is a shortage of housing and jobs. We do not want Canadians to suffer. We want them to welcome people from other countries, not feel tense about immigrants coming here. There should be a revision of the settlement service and the fee for that service. I have raised this a number of times in the House, but the Minister of Employment and Immigration (Mr. Axworthy) refuses to deal with this in a realistic way.

There should be more services for immigrant women, such as English classes, daycare and job training. However, the minister is cutting off funds for these kinds of programs.

The public media, such as the National Film Board and the CBC should produce more constructive programs opposing racism and promoting cultural relationships. The CTV "W-5" program and the National Film Board film "Bamboo Lions and Dragons" were both a disgrace. I am glad to report that a recent CBC documentary "Golden Mountain" was much more sympathetic toward the plight of the early Chinese when settling in this country.

In conclusion, from our point of view this bill is not worth supporting. However, there are many other changes to the Immigration Act that are vitally needed.

Mr. Douglas Fisher (Mississauga North): Mr. Speaker, normally when a government member stands up with 15 minutes remaining in private members' hour, he talks out a bill. This is one bill I would like to talk out. It is not well thought out. However, in this case there are a couple of other government members who want to take this golden opportunity to tell the author of the bill what a bad job he has done. The hon. member says he wants to put some backbone into the Immigration Act. I suggest he should have used the head sitting on top of his backbone before he went to work on this.

Let me point out one or two phrases in the explanatory notes which concern me. I quote directly from the bill:

The Bill would close off certain legal manoeuvres currently available—

What legal manoeuvres? In Clause 2 the hon. member would remove the existing discretion of adjudicators. He would make a deportation order mandatory. Under Clause 3 he would prevent the reopening of an inquiry. Under Clause 4 he would prevent the issuing of ministers' permits. Under Clause 6 he would limit the grounds of appeal, and under Clause 7 he would extend the powers of peace officers and immigration officials to apprehend suspected illegal immigrants without a warrant.

That is why we should not pay very much attention to this kind of legislation. It is a collection of scare tactics. I often run into these kind of scare tactics in my riding. That is why I asked for the opportunity to speak.

In Mississauga we get immigrants from all over the world, and we are pleased to have them. They enrich our community. We get people from India, the Philippines, the West Indies, people who have problems with the Soviet attitude to Jewry, refugees from some Middle East regimes, such as Poland, people from Latin America, as well as the boat people, refugees from Vietnam. How does this kind of legislation appeal to those people? It must terrify them. Thousands of people every year are screened very carefully by our officials. In the vast majority of cases they do a very good job.

What the hon. member has raised are the glaring exceptions, exceptions which he is trying to build up into a house of cards to play on the distorted fears of ordinary people. Let it be clear that thousands of people are handled and treated honestly by our officials, efficiently and carefully, and they are in this country properly.

The kind of fears aroused by the hon. member should not be allowed to go by unchallenged. We need to ask, to what extent do we want to distort our democratic principles for the sake of a few glaring examples. Those glaring examples themselves are entitled under our great democratic tradition to be given the due process of law.

● (1650)

Let me give you just one example from my own riding. In the past year, about 1500 people arrived in Toronto airport