

*Immigration Act, 1976*

between the promises and the actions of the Conservative Government.

We have a parallel in this situation. The Government is promising to fix the refugee determination process. Most Canadians have come to the conclusion that the process is not working. It is being used and abused by people who simply want to come to this country without going through the normal process. That is what so many Canadians find unfair. We all recognize that the process needs to be changed, that we need an adequate and just determination process. So the Government called the House back and brought forward its legislation.

Does the legislation do what it purports to do? It is clear that it does not. One thing it does do is to give the Government the opportunity to say it is coming down hard on the abusers. Of course it is, but in the process it is also tearing apart the democratic traditions of this country. We have heard from human rights advocates across this country. We have heard from representatives of the churches. We have heard Rabbi Plaut who did a thorough study of the refugee determination process. We heard the UN say that this legislation is going to put at risk the possibility of genuine refugees coming to this country. Therefore the legislation is not doing what it purports to do, that is, eliminate the abusers while at the same time allowing for a fair and efficient determination process by which genuine refugees can come to Canada.

In fact it breaks with a generous Canadian tradition of providing a sanctuary for those whose lives are threatened elsewhere. It threatens those who are struggling against the dictatorship in Chile and who are threatened with torture and death. It tears apart the Canadian tradition of sanctuary in the name of fixing a system that is not working.

Not only that, if passed by the House in its present form, which I doubt will happen, it will be torn apart in the courts. The effort will be wasted because it does not do what it claims it will do. It should be withdrawn and humane, effective legislation, which allows for the elimination of abusers while at the same time maintaining our compassionate and open approach to people who need sanctuary, introduced.

We call upon the Government to wake up and stop trying to rush this legislation through. It should realize we are not going to let this go through quickly because we want to make sure the process takes into account not only the abusers of the system but also the human rights of those who need sanctuary.

**Mr. Reginald Stackhouse (Scarborough West):** Mr. Speaker, if you and I were to examine the mail I have received from one coast to the other, along with telephone messages in my constituency office, and I am sure it is comparable to that received by other Members, we would see that there are certain common features to the expressions of opinion which have arisen without stimulation from those on Parliament Hill. One of those features is that there has been no racism expressed by the people of Canada in their opposition to the

ingress of what they see to be illegal immigrants to this country. Over and over again I have had it said to me that the concern of the population is not based on any consideration of race at all.

**Mr. Keeper:** None at all?

**Mr. Stackhouse:** None at all. The Canadian people cannot be accused of racism no matter what the Opposition, including the Hon. Member, may wish to suggest. The people of Canada are saying to us that, regardless of the race of the person concerned, he or she will receive equal treatment before the law and not special privilege.

The second feature is that they want fairness for all, including those who have been waiting patiently, not without frustration, for years in their attempts to gain legal acceptance in this country. The people of this country see what seems to be manifest unfairness in the possibility of someone gaining entry to this country by what appears to them to be a trick. They are asking Parliament and the Government of Canada to provide legislation which will make that kind of fairness possible.

• (1550)

Next, I find a concern among Canadian people for the rule of law. We are a law-abiding people. We are a people that have historically been characterized by a commitment to order as expressed by the laws of the country. It seems to people an utter affront to that tradition of law, that respect for order, that people at will, be it a large group or one or two or three, can somehow insinuate themselves into this country in a way clearly contrary to the demands of the law and the requirements of regulations. They are, therefore, asking us to provide the Government with the authority required to re-establish the rule of law in terms of refugees.

Further, I believe that the Bill before us should be supported, not only by the government Party but by every Member of the House, because there is clearly a demand from the people for action. They have been frustrated over an extended period of time as they have seen the laws broken, traditions flaunted, and unfairness apparently rewarded. We are told that they want some action. We are trying to hurry the Bill through the House but the Liberal Opposition wants to give it an extended examination, a six-month hoist.

We are faced with the utter dismay of the people of Canada at the prospect that once again they may be thwarted. They are appealing to us, and this Bill is an answer to that appeal, an attempt to give them action in the face of need. We have been called together to make a decision.

Along with that demand for action I take it from the mail and calls that I have received that there is an extraordinary but nonetheless impressive message from the people that they wonder if anybody is really in charge. They are demanding to know whether anyone is really in control of admission into the country. If you can just show up on a beach or at an airport