

Immigration Act, 1976

or girls and a population that is getting so old. How does the Hon. Member view an immigration policy for this country's future?

Mr. Gagliano: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague for those encouraging words. In the past, Canada has always had a family immigration policy. It is partly because of this policy that we all came to this country, and without offending anyone, I would like to point out that we all came here from somewhere else, either in the fifties, in the 19th century or at another time.

We therefore have to remember what we were, what we are now and what we want to become.

I believe that, first, an extended family immigration policy would promote family reunion. Second, it would allow a selection of immigrants more appropriate to the development of Canada, and third, it would enable Canada to increase its population. There is a serious decrease in the birth rate. If we close our doors to immigrants, we shall have serious problems in the next century.

Immigration is therefore a development tool for Canada, and not only a development tool, but also a means of survival.

● (1410)

[English]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): A very short question from the Member for Windsor—Walkerville.

Mr. McCurdy: Mr. Speaker, given that there is before the committee Bill C-55, a piece of legislation intended to speed up the refugee determination policy or process, and there is suggested as an alternative, and has been before the Government as an alternative, one variation or another of the refugee determination process recommended by the Canadian Council of Churches, does the Hon. Member really think that Bill C-84 is, in the final analysis, necessary?

If the Hon. Member regards it as unnecessary, would he be tempted to suspect, knowing that there is a great deal of fear because of unemployment and xenophobia and a measure in some quarters of fear mongering, that this Bill is not really intended to address the issue of abuse, abuse that is based on the extended time period heretofore required for refugee determination? Is it really a transparent effort to take advantage of a great deal of concern rather than to take the time to explain the cause for abuse and to communicate a better understanding, not only of the situation with respect to refugees and immigrants, but perhaps a better notion of where the future of this country lies if we are to continue to have a decreasing birth rate with its implications for the future economic and political stability of Canada?

Mr. Gagliano: Mr. Speaker, I will try to answer the questions briefly. I think some of the Hon. Member's questions I answered in my speech. I asked why we had two or three Bills, such as Bills C-84 and C-55. We need one policy in the

global picture of our immigration policy, and without it I do not think we will solve any problems.

As to the birth rate and future population development, as I answered my colleague, the Hon. Member for York West, a good open immigration policy—I spoke about family reunification—is the cornerstone of our future development. If we continue in the same direction we are in now, we will have serious problems because of declining birth rates and fewer immigrants, and I go as far as to say that the survival of Canada might be in danger in future years.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Questions and comments are now terminated. Debate. The Hon. Member for Edmonton—Strathcona (Mr. Kilgour).

Mr. David Kilgour (Edmonton—Strathcona): Mr. Speaker, about 20 years ago it was my honour to represent the Department of Justice and the Department of Immigration for the Immigration Appeal Board, and from that long time interest in immigration matters, I have some comments about why I will not be able to support this Bill when it comes to a vote, I take it, next week. I will not be here to vote in favour of this measure.

First, I fully support the fact that a legislative remedy is needed to the current problem of manifestly patent or bogus refugee claims being made in Canada. They are being made daily and in virtually every city in Canada. Indeed, Sir, the stated purposes of the Bill to protect genuine refugees in need of protection; to control widespread abuse of refugee procedures in light of organized large scale introduction of persons into Canada to take advantage of the refugee procedures; to deter smugglers and thereby minimize risk to and exploitation of persons seeking to come to Canada; to respond to security concerns, including our obligation to protect internationally protected persons, are widely supported, I believe, by people of good will across our nation. They set a good framework for what the Bill should contain.

For the most part, Sir, the objectives do not appear to me to have been addressed in the Bill. I understand—and if I am wrong, I hope I will be corrected—that the Bill was drafted in a hotel over a weekend *à toute vitesse*, and it contains many of its flaws because of that.

Let me give two examples of what I am getting at: first, on the interdiction of ships. Clause 8 of the Bill authorizes the Government of Canada to order ships thought to be carrying illegal immigrants to refrain from entering Canadian waters. If the ship is within 12 miles, the Minister of Immigration (Mr. Bouchard) can order it to leave.

● (1420)

One of my concerns, and I think the concern of many people, is that as worded and despite the accepted amendment of the legislative committee making it subject to the UN Convention, the clause will in practice do little or nothing to stop smugglers and minimize the risk to persons being