

*Government Orders*

Immigration officers want to force this father-to-be to leave Canada because his passport is no longer valid, having expired. The embassy of his home country does not want to renew it because he has not yet done his military service, which is compulsory in that country.

He does not want to return to the Middle East because he does not want to die there. His wife does not want to go to the Middle East because she wants her child to be born in Canada, where it can live in a peaceful society.

The members of that family want to live together, but our Canadian refugee system will force them to live apart for two to three years. This is another humanitarian reason that we could mention here, Mr. Minister. I hope that the proposed changes may improve such a situation.

It is surely not by fingerprinting and photographing refugee claimants, as the new bill proposes, that Canada will be perceived as a welcoming country. It is not by having the preconceived idea that refugees come here to cheat the government that those who decide on their fate will be more equitable. This part of the bill is particularly humiliating for those who come to Canada to flee political situations that are humanly unacceptable and to have a chance to work and live without fear.

Will their first contact be questioning by the host country? That is unacceptable. Why would we accept for others what we would find completely out of place for ourselves? It is a double standard.

I can only approve if the government wants to improve the immigration program, but deciding where newcomers must live and for how long before they are free to choose where to settle is surely contrary to human rights.

How can Canada define itself as an open and hospitable country when it fingerprints and photographs applicants for the record and tells them where to live for  $x$  number of years, which will probably be monitored very closely? That is a funny kind of welcome.

[*English*]

Many people have come out and said that the provision which would force immigrants to live in a specific region could violate the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. It would in effect be creating two types of immigrants: one group that is free to move as it pleases and another that is restricted to a specific area.

I have serious doubts as to whether this provision will stand up to a charter challenge. Why not try to find out first? Several immigration lawyers have said quite publicly that they did not believe this provision was constitutional.

If we are to be sure of the integrity of the immigration and refugee process then we have to make sure the law is constitutional. Immigrants, as well as Canadian citizens, have to know that the immigration law will be applied consistently and equitably across this country for years to come.

I sincerely hope we will be able to examine this legislation very carefully in committee. It is imperative that the immigration and refugee system we create follows some very basic principles. It must be a fair, compassionate and responsive system that meets the needs of Canadians, respects and treats with dignity those people from around the world who wish to join us, and helps us contribute to a greater Canada.

[*Translation*]

Of course, some of the proposed changes will make the immigration procedure more efficient, but the obvious flaws, that is, the inhumane proposals, must be corrected right now to give refugees and immigrants the greatest chance in this country. If they need us, we also need them. Only together can this country grow; otherwise it will die a slow death.

[*English*]

Canada is a vast country. We must realize that in a world that is overcrowded, where human rights violations are an all too often occurrence and where people struggle to better their lot in life, Canada is a natural choice. We have so much to offer and we must be generous. This generosity not only benefits the people coming to our shores but benefits us.

We cannot submit to the tiny minority of Canadians who because of misinformation are hostile to immigrants. Together, native born or naturalized, we have a role in building this country. Canada's immigration process must recognize this fact.

**Mr. Dennis Mills (Broadview—Greenwood):** Madam Speaker, I compliment my colleague from Saint-Lauré—Cartierville. She referred to the family from Afghanistan in her speech. I believe the parents were given