

Many people in my community want to see the government get the bill through quickly and bring about a process by which these people will be deported because they are a danger to Canadian society.

What else is the act going to do? As my colleagues have mentioned, it is going to give immigration officers the power to seize identity documents from the international mail that might be used by impostors for fraudulent and improper purposes. My colleagues have made the argument that the staff is under-resourced. Yes, it is. The police department can say it is under-resourced, that it does not have enough police to do the job. Does that mean that the law itself is bad? Does that mean giving them the power to do it is bad?

If the Reform Party wants to make an argument to spend more money on our immigration department, it should make it to the finance committee. It will be part of the budget considerations, and away we go; it may actually see something happen.

The act will make sure a person can have only one refugee claim process at a time. This makes common sense. Someone wanting to abuse the system can put in a refugee claim in Vancouver and perhaps open a file in Toronto or wherever. Also the act will make sure that any application for citizenship is put on hold until all immigration investigations or proceedings are completed.

I come to another point mentioned by my colleague. A citizenship and immigration—RCMP task force has been established in Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver to co-ordinate and ensure the removal of people with serious criminal convictions who have evaded removal orders. Local police will assist the task force to which 20 RCMP officers have been assigned: 12 in Toronto and 4 each in Montreal and Vancouver.

Again they can make the argument that it is not enough. They come up with a figure of 25,000 removal orders in Toronto. Let us say my friend sitting beside me is a landed immigrant whom we want to kick out and he says: "Fine, I will leave". We do not have a mechanism in place or we do not have controls at our border watching the people leave. It may well be that he leaves, but unless he tells us that he has left we do not know whether he has.

To suggest that because there are 25,000 removal orders none of these people have left simply on their own recognizance is really playing with the facts. It is trying to whip up hysteria in Toronto that there is a massive underground of illegal immigrants and dangerous criminals when the truth of it is not anywhere close to that. There is a problem. Let us deal with the

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problem but let us not inflame it with numbers like 25,000. It is ridiculous.

• (1345)

I come back to my point that 12 RCMP officers are not enough. If we give them good law to work with let us see how they do and we can come back in a year's time and take a look.

In addition, the Standing Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs is examining the question of how immigration should respond to young offenders who are not Canadian citizens convicted of a serious crime. That is a tough one. We are going to kick someone out who is 12 or 13 years old. Maybe their parents have not done anything, are permanent residents, landed and are not Canadian citizens yet. What are we going to do to a 13-year-old who commits a serious crime of assault? I do not know. I do not know that the minister knows. I do not know that any of us in this Chamber really knows. At some point we are going to have to try to exercise the wisdom of Solomon.

The government believes that immigration is a benefit to Canada and that Canada should maintain its international reputation for assisting refugees and welcoming immigrants. However, the government also believes that a good immigration program must promptly manage to protect Canadians. The government is committed to move as quickly as possible to make these changes to ensure the integrity of the Canadian immigration and refugee system.

In closing, I would point out to Canadians that I think there is real substance in this bill. Taking away the right to appeal on humanitarian and compassionate grounds in some very specific circumstances I think is the right thing to do where someone is clearly a danger to Canadian society.

When we talk to the immigrant communities they are tired of being tarnished with the brush of being what some people in the political spectrum want. They know when immigrants commit crimes that good, hard working new Canadians are often the ones who bear the penalty the most. They are the ones who want to make sure that hard working decent immigrants or new Canadians are the ones who want fairly tough criteria for deporting people and that serious criminals are actually deported promptly without much delay. If the Reform Party would actually look at the substance of the bill and do its homework it too would support the bill.

Mr. Art Hanger (Calgary Northeast, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I am very interested in the member's comments regarding the front end concerns about the Immigration Act enforcement. It appears the member never availed himself of the opportunity of going to a border crossing for instance and watching the process of refugee claimants coming in from the United States. They