

*Immigration Act, 1976*

look at Bill C-55. Fair, I doubt; fast, yes, everybody will be turned back at our borders; efficient, a moot point about which I still entertain some doubts. I have been asking myself this question for three months: Do we accept, do we want to accept refugees, yes or no? Do we still want to be party to the Geneva convention, yes or no? If so let us change the system, let us switch to a faster, more effective and better system, but definitely not Bill C-55.

Of course, when I rise in the House to debate Bill C-55 I feel vibrations in the House, and I would hope no one is trying to influence me with these vibrations to make me change what I intend to say. I introduced amendments to this Bill. Had the decision been left to me alone, I would have scrapped Bill C-55. Had I been selected to sit on the legislative committee I would have worked very hard to change it, set it aside, have it reconsidered by the committee of the House. But we do have this Bill before us and we simply must amend it to make it fair, fast and efficient. I said last week, last Friday, that Bill C-55 now under study does not reflect the ideas expressed in the fifth report of the Standing Committee on Labour, Employment and Immigration. Above all I did not say it did not faithfully reflect the report, but that roughly 80 per cent of the ideas or suggestions expressed in the fifth report are not included in the Bill. For openers, the fifth report of the committee of the House does not say anything about a pre-screening test. In addition, Section 45 prohibits the claimant from requesting refugee status at any time during his hearing before the adjudicator.

As I recall, it had also been suggested that a new division to be called the Refugee Division be created. Bill C-55 does this, but we have still kept a representative of the immigration services, an adjudicator who would have to rule before the claimant can present his arguments and explain why he claims refugee status. This claimant, who will probably be very nervous and afraid of being deported quickly or imprisoned, could forget to mention that he is claiming refugee status. If he does, after the investigation, he will no longer have the right to come back and say: Yes, I wish to claim refugee status, but for whatever reason, be it nervousness, fear or apprehension, I did not do so at the time of the hearing.

As I recall, the Fifth Report of the Committee suggested that there be two levels of selection. Last Friday, the former Chairman of the Committee on Labour, Employment and Immigration, the Hon. Member for Calgary West (Mr. Hawkes), who, I am sure, knows this report by heart, accused me of making erroneous statements. As he is very familiar with this report, I am certain, or at least I hope so, that when the Hon. Member said that the Hon. Member for La Prairie (Mr. Jourdenais) had made erroneous statements, he probably meant that I had simply omitted to say that Bill C-55 included at least 20 per cent to 25 per cent of the recommendations contained in the Fifth Report of the Committee. The report also recommended universal access, which is not included in

Bill C-55. Any claimant can present his case individually in person and will not be judged by an adjudicator, as I said earlier, but by a member of the new Refugee Division.

• (1600)

[English]

Bill C-55 was intended to be fair, fast, just, and efficient.

[Translation]

"Efficient" is a very big word. Those who believe that this is possible are not living in the real world. This is indicated by the fact that there are 77 amendments at the third reading stage.

I am sorry, but I do not recall the term for the stage before third reading. There are 77 amendment motions, and over 300 non-profit organizations dealing directly or indirectly with refugees have indicated that they disagree completely with this Bill. Could they all be incompetents, Madam Speaker?

Many say that it is unconstitutional and I cannot help wondering and thinking especially when I know that the Canadian Bar Association says the same thing. And in spite of that, we continue to want to enact this Bill.

[English]

As you know, Madam Speaker, in my riding of La Prairie I was democratically elected. As a matter of fact, I was elected twice during the same election. It is a long story, and I do not wish to take the time that I have on debate to explain that to Members. Any time after the debate anyone may come and ask. I wish to tell my colleagues that I was elected to represent the people of Canada, of Quebec, and of my riding, and to take different positions following my conscience. That is the reason I am presently speaking.

In my riding there are more than 40 different nationalities. One-third of the population is non-French or English speaking. There are Greeks, Italians, Poles, Indian, Chinese, Egyptian, Vietnamese, and many more.

In my riding, I have never heard anyone who is Canadian-born say that those refugees in my riding are terrorists or not good for Canadian society.

I really enjoy people from the different cultures. Two weeks ago, without flying anywhere, I attended two different weddings. One was Indian and one was Chinese. How great it is to live in a riding where there are so many different cultures and heritages! It is good to learn from them and to speak to them, except when they talk about Bill C-55. Many of those people are refugees themselves, and they are afraid that some members of their family will not be able to join them, that because they ran away from their countries they will not be accepted here because there is no longer universal access.

Madam Speaker, has my time expired? I see that you are impatient.

Motion No. 34 is very simple. We must delete the text because it states that whoever will judge the refugee present