

Immigration Appeal Board Act

he had a large confectionary with 18 people working in it, 11 of whom were Canadians in the sense that they were born here and the other seven were from Portugal. They were making the finest of sweets for which his establishment was well known. In other words, in three years he had developed a very flourishing business. I ask you, Mr. Speaker, would you send that man home? I doubt it. This is not an exceptional case; it was typical of at least two-thirds of the cases that came forward.

In Ottawa, for reasons which I cannot divulge, I discovered that there were no less than 86 illegal immigrants, if you want to call them that—illegal visitors to this country—working in two hotels in the city, and in all probability at below the minimum wage. This is the other side of the story, the exploitation of these people through fear of discovery, fear of deportation, fear of being sent home to a type of existence that means perpetual poverty. They prefer to work in a hotel for room and board and 50 or 60 cents an hour, plus whatever tips you and I deign to hand over when they serve us drinks.

One of the things that saddened me as minister was the attack on our immigration policy in Toronto, not by members, not by candidates but by people in the press who should have known better. I have in my office, if anybody wants to come in and see it, a cartoon from one of our leading newspapers which is the most racist piece of propaganda I have ever come across. Its message is unmistakable. I do not try to indicate or describe it, but it was in print when I insisted that 5,000 Ugandans should come into this country.

I say to the Minister of Manpower and Immigration, for whom I have the highest affection and friendship, that he should take up with his colleagues in cabinet the possibility of bringing in another 1,000 Ugandans who are in refugee camps in Europe and who would love to come to Canada because their mothers, brothers, sisters or friends have settled in this country and are readjusting well within a relatively short period.

If you look at the Ugandan people you will find that in every hamlet and town in this country, from Vancouver to Halifax, they are readjusting. In a very short period they have mastered the French language voluntarily in Quebec and those who are in Montreal are there to stay. You will find them in Winnipeg, Vancouver and Toronto, and in every case you will find they add something to the culture, dignity and prosperity of this country.

One of the great things about being a Canadian, about being a parliamentarian of any rank, of any party, is that we can say that as a nation we were the first country to spring to the help of the refugees in the late forties, the refugees from Auschwitz and the other concentration camps. They came to this country because the doors were open, and everyone knows the contribution they have made to the country. We did the same thing for the Hungarians in 1956, and we did it for the Czechs. We did it, as I have mentioned, for the Ugandans. This country will be a greater country by reason of the fact that we have an enlightened immigration policy. We should remain that way and we should not bow to the political pressure of the press who cannot see beyond the ends of their own noses.

[Mr. Mackasey.]

The election days were difficult for me because of the Ugandans and because I stood for what I believe in with respect to immigration. If I closed the door in November it was for a very practical reason, because I realized that hundreds and hundreds of people, perhaps thousands of people, coming into this country were the victims of unscrupulous profiteers, of travel bureaux who misrepresented the job opportunities here or misrepresented the procedures for becoming Canadians. People would arrive in Montreal and Toronto at one or two in the morning, pathetic, bewildered, not knowing where they were going, with nothing in their pockets except perhaps a return ticket back to Italy, Portugal, Peru, back to the other countries from whence they had come—and sometimes they didn't have even that much.

It is time the government understood we are an underpopulated country. It is time the government understood the importance of the Department of Immigration and let it stand on its own two feet, with its own minister, because it is a form of welcome to people. We have a shortage of people in many ways, with only 22 million people in a country this size. We have a way of life that is unique in the world, and sometimes I wonder if we are worthy of it. We have cut back our immigration from 230,000 annually to 110,000 or 120,000 people because of our manpower policies. This is wrong. Ironically and paradoxically it is wrong, with the shortage of people for our furniture factories, the garment industry, the beverage industry, the hotels and other service industries. That arises from the fact that Canadians now must have a high school education, and having acquired it they do not want to work in those jobs. This is the case not only in Canada but in every industrialized society.

However, there are people prepared to do these jobs if given a chance. They are immigrants from Portugal, southern Italy, Greece, the Caribbean and the countries of South America. These people are saying, "Let us do the job at \$1.25, 90 cents or \$2 an hour. We will fill the jobs if you will give us the opportunity." But you deny them the opportunity by setting up entry barriers because the Department of Manpower is made aware that the rate of unemployment is 6.2 per cent. This should not be the measure of success or failure of this government or perhaps the next government, whatever it may be.

• (1520)

An hon. Member: Conservative.

Mr. Mackasey: It is the quality of life that Canadians live that matters—not quantity, not production for productivity's sake, but the quality of life. Unless we get this ingrained in our thinking we will always be the victims of industry which says, "If you want us to create jobs you will have to look the other way if we create a little bit of pollution."

I say the time is ripe to bring in the unskilled, undereducated people who want to come to this country and fill the jobs that Canadians do not want nor should have to work at because they were born here and have an educational standard that should entitle them to better jobs which the government has a responsibility to provide. If the government cannot provide those jobs, then it is time for the people to throw the government out.