

Government Orders

with young people who do not have Canadian citizenship and have been convicted of criminal offences.

Finally, a memorandum of agreement was signed by the Department of Citizenship and Immigration and Correctional Services Canada in order to make deporting foreign criminals faster and easier. Hundreds of people have been tracked down and deported from Canada. RCMP officers and others have been posted in Canadian embassies and at major airports abroad in order to prevent criminals from entering Canada.

In November 1993, the recently appointed minister stated that he wanted to reduce political influence in refugee matters. He told *La Presse* that he wanted a system with as little political involvement as possible. Yet, this bill contradicts what he said in 1993. He wants to politicize even more the immigration and refugee determination process. He will issue statements to the effect that someone constitutes a danger to the public and will also stop appeals. This bill raises questions on the independence of the IRB and all administrative tribunals.

He also said that he wanted to introduce a more progressive approach and move away from Tory positions. Indeed, the minister's approach differs from that of the Conservatives. However, it is not because his refugee policies are more progressive, but because they are more reactionary and harsher than were those of the Conservatives. A Liberal minister is actually doing something the Conservatives never dared to do.

When the minister took over his portfolio, he immediately separated the immigration component from the department of public security, a measure which we welcomed at the time. However, Bill C-44 now links immigration to crime. Once again, the minister, like his government, does exactly the opposite of what he preached during the election campaign.

This bill gives the impression that all criminals in Canada are immigrants and refugees, which is utterly false and unfair. In fact, the crime rate among new Canadians is lower than that for those born in Canada. It should also be pointed out that, in recent years, the crime rate has been on the decline in Canada, which is of course a good thing.

Let me say a word on the issue of patronage at the IRB. In 1994, the government appointed, or renewed, the mandate of over 100 IRB members, including 65 new ones.

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The IRB was created in 1988 by an act of Parliament. Although the board is a quasi-judicial tribunal, it has been used, since the beginning, as a patronage instrument.

The board is the largest administrative tribunal in the country; it is made up of 210 members appointed by the governor in council, as well as 40 adjudicators, who are public servants.

Since the beginning of the 35th Parliament, the Bloc Québécois has been asking that the Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration fulfill its mandate and review the appointments of IRB members. It must be understood that, while the IRB is subject to the power of review of tribunals, it is also subject to the administrative control of Parliament.

Since January 1994, the committee's Liberal majority only once allowed a review of a dozen or so appointments. Although very little time was allowed for this exercise—just one morning—we could see to what extent the Liberals had reproduced the same kind of patronage system established by the former Conservative government.

Take the following appointments made by the present government. These are Liberals and friends of the party, appointed as members of the IRB with an annual salary of \$75,000: Auguste Choquette, former Liberal member for Lotbinière, Quebec, from 1963 to 1968, who was even temporarily disbarred by the Barreau du Québec; Joan Kouri, former Liberal candidate in Brome—Missisquoi, Quebec, in 1993 and former president of the Liberal Women's Federation; Philomen Wright, supporter of the hon. member for York West and current Minister of Citizenship and Immigration and member of the York West Liberal Riding Association in Ontario, a friend of the minister; Elke Homs, former assistant to various Liberal MPPs in Ontario; Sherry Wiebe, director of research for the Manitoba Liberal Caucus; Inderjit Bal, appointed in 1994, who had to resign following a review and revelations before the Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration, and who sought the Liberal nomination in the riding of Bramalae—Gore—Malton, Ontario, in 1993 and organized the campaign of the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration; Ravi Naqvi, who unsuccessfully sought the Liberal nomination in Mississauga West, Ontario; Patricia Davey, wife of a former aid to Pierre Elliott Trudeau; Ethel Teitelbaum, executive assistant to the former Liberal Minister of Finance, Donald MacDonald.

Some of these board members had no previous knowledge or experience of refugee problems, as we realized during meetings of the Standing Committee on Immigration and Citizenship. The case of Mr. Michael Schelew, former deputy chairperson of the board, appointed by the present minister, goes well beyond the most fundamental limits of decency.

Because of internal wrangling within the board between Liberal and Conservative factions, Mr. Schelew was suspended and a legal inquiry was ordered by the minister. Pressured to resign, he agreed to do so only the day the inquiry was to start