

consequences of immediately cutting off our diplomatic and other relations with South Africa.

[Translation]

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IMMIGRATION

ACCESS TO FEDERAL COURT—LEAVE TO APPEAL

Mr. Dan Heap (Spadina): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of State for Immigration. Why is the Minister trying to deny direct access to the Federal Court by any Canadian who thinks he has been harmed by a wrong decision of one of the Minister's officers? That is the effect of Bill C-55, Clause 83.1(1), which requires a person in that case to ask the Federal Court first for leave to appeal. Why does the Minister, in his haste to reduce the rights of refugees, also reduce the rights of all Canadians?

Hon. Gerry Weiner (Minister of State (Immigration)): Mr. Speaker, we are putting forward a process that will protect those in need. I have indicated clearly that those who require a safe haven will be granted one. There is somewhat less priority for those who already have one and they should be making applications as independent immigrants.

We will be going from an eight-step process to a three-step process. We have done it with fairness and we are putting forward a system that will do it quickly. There are steps whereby individuals will be heard.

JURISDICTION OF FEDERAL COURT

Mr. Dan Heap (Spadina): Mr. Speaker, this concerns the rights of all Canadians and not only refugees who come to Canada. Considering that the privilege of anyone who believes he has been wronged by an official to go to the Federal Court to have it corrected exists now in the Federal Court and the Federal Court Act, without the limitation of asking for leave, will the Minister not leave the Federal Court jurisdiction untouched even if it should mean giving a refugee the same rights in law as a Canadian?

Hon. Gerry Weiner (Minister of State (Immigration)): Mr. Speaker, we had a system that was not working. The heavy flow of phoney claimants was unfair. The chaotic system had to be managed and put in order. We have established that order. We want to curb the abuse and manage our resources effectively. That is what will be done.

Oral Questions

ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

DUMPING OF TOXIC PRODUCTS IN OTTAWA RIVER— GOVERNMENT POSITION

Mr. Jean-Robert Gauthier (Ottawa—Vanier): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of the Environment.

The media report that the Bank of Canada, the National Research Council, the Department of Transport, and Supply and Services Canada have been accused of breaking the law by dumping toxic refuse or toxic products in the Ottawa River. The federal Government's plea before the court is that provincial legislation does not apply to the federal Government. Does the Minister endorse this position, and what will he do to settle the matter so that federal Departments and agencies respect the law?

[English]

Hon. Tom McMillan (Minister of the Environment): Mr. Speaker, it is because we are concerned about matters of this kind that the federal Government has brought in, on a draft basis initially, and I hope for first reading in the House before long, a broadly based environmental protection Bill which will include many of the facets called for in the very question he has raised.

Concerning the matter he has brought to the attention of the House, we are working hand-in-glove, as a Department and a Government, with all the relevant provincial and municipal authorities.

Mr. Gauthier: I submit that new laws do not stop the application of the present laws. The Government has to clean up its act.

REQUEST FOR MINISTERIAL ACTION

Mr. Jean-Robert Gauthier (Ottawa—Vanier): Mr. Speaker, will the Minister take any action today to clean up the Ottawa River which is being polluted by federal government Departments and agencies, in direct conflict with laws of the Province of Ontario?

Hon. Tom McMillan (Minister of the Environment): Mr. Speaker, part of the over-all effort we are making, which includes tougher laws, is stiffened enforcement and compliance. To the extent that individual sources of pollution are within the federal government's jurisdiction, the heavy hand of the law will be brought down on them just as on any other sources of pollution.