

*Government Orders*

other areas. It could even effect us in the area of entrepreneurial or business class people coming here.

The reality right now is that Canada is the greatest country in the world and people do want to come here. But there are also some other countries that are beginning to clean up their act. We may end up, if we get a little tarnish on our immigration policy, losing some of these people to other countries. Within a very short period of time there is going to be, if you can imagine this, a competition for the best and the brightest people in the world. We have always had a policy of trying to attract the best and the brightest from all over the world, whether they are skilled people, entrepreneurial, business class, we have always been very generous that way.

• (1650)

I am afraid that we will send the wrong signal to the public servants, that we are cracking down on abuse and so we are going to back them if they make a quick judgment. If a public servant is overworked and on a Thursday or a Friday afternoon is bogged down and because he is frustrated and wants to get out, all of a sudden that deportation or that refusal stamp is a little too aggressive, then the system really begins to break down. That is just one note of caution I want to put into this.

It affects us as a community because we have a lot of problems in processing the unification of families. Not a weekend goes by in my riding when I am not approached by young married couples who say that they would like their mother and father to come and live with them. If you can believe it, some of them have waited two and three years. For those of us who have been here all our lives, I cannot imagine the frustration of waiting two and three years to be reunited with my mother or father. It is a very tough thing for these people.

I also think of the cases that are caught in between right now. I think of people who maybe came here before these amendments, are caught in the system and are on the long list. I think of many Bulgarians in my community who came here when there were problems in their country. While they are waiting for their applications to be processed things are much better in Bulgaria.

These people have made their way here, many of whom are skilled crafts people and they are caught in the process. There is nothing more emotional than to have

the owner of a business come to you and say: "This Bulgarian gentleman is one of the best mechanics I have had in 20 years. When he came here there was a legitimate problem regarding his refugee status and yet now because things are much better in his country I am going to lose him. If I lose him I am going to lose a lot of my business which has been built on his skill and contribution".

These are the kinds of things that really concern me about the amendments to this legislation. My colleague from York West said earlier today that this is a highly emotional issue. It really is a highly emotional issue when your kids come home at night from school and say: "Mr. and Mrs. Shakala are going to be deported but their daughter can stay here and be a part of our welfare system, almost part of an orphanage".

I know that not for a second would this minister not have compassion for these cases if he was in our constituency office in downtown Toronto. It is a heck of a lot different in the province of New Brunswick and I know that for a fact. It is just not the same thing. These cases come at you day in and day out, and again I am not talking about people who abuse the system. The Solicitor General talked about the Reform Party referring to cleaning up the riff-raff in the immigration system. For me riff-raff are people who abuse the system and I am opposed to people who abuse the system.

If the Reform Party meant it is opposed to people who abuse the system then I agree with that particular woman the Solicitor General was quoting. The Solicitor General said he was opposed to people who abused the system and he said it about seven times in his speech.

I would like to know how he would define that kind of person. He would probably call them riff-raff too because they are the people who give the whole system a bad name. In many cases they put a stigma on the whole immigration system.

I want to go back to the fact we are a multicultural nation where no culture is less than or greater than another culture. It seems there are cycles in our country. As the Solicitor General said earlier, the English and the Irish came here at a certain period of time. Then a large wave of Italians came, for example, to Toronto and then there was a very strong wave of people from the Greek community. Now we have many people from east India