

Routine Proceedings

and trying to out reform the Reform Party in policy, or at least that is the impression he has left.

In the last week the minister admitted to a cost to the taxpayer of at least \$700 million in family sponsorship breakdowns. He promised he would do something about it. This morning we found out that nothing has changed, nothing has been done. The consultations were a fraud. There has been a lot of talk, talk, talk, study, study, study, and it looks like the studying will continue.

For anyone who wants a lesson in old style politics, we are learning it right now. It is a lesson in trying to manipulate the media, a lesson in trying to manipulate the public, a lesson in trying to please everyone by not offending anyone. It is a lesson in government inaction.

One need look no further than this government and its minister of immigration to get a good picture of what has happened. Let me outline with no fancy language or rhetoric what the minister is going to do this year.

The percentage of economic immigrants with their families was 43 per cent. In 1995 that number will still be 43 per cent. The percentage in the family reunification class of those already in Canada was 51 per cent. This year it will still be 51 per cent. Other immigrants were 6 per cent last year. This year, surprise, surprise, it is 6 per cent. The total number of immigrants accepted this year is 230,000. The total number expected next year is up to 215,000, a change of only 6 per cent.

That is not a cut. It is nothing more than an expectation of lower application levels. The levels are so high that our sources in immigration tell us there are not enough applications to fill the slots. This minister wants to take credit for lower numbers and those lower numbers have nothing whatsoever to do with government action.

A bond for sponsors will be studied but no immediate action taken. During the year or so this government plans to study this issue, Canadians will have to fork out at least \$700 million more in sponsorship breakdowns. Where is the enforcement of what is happening here already to save those taxpayers dollars?

Changes to refugee policy, there are virtually none, except an ongoing amnesty that rewards those who can tie up the system for three years. There are no changes to control and enforcement, except for the defective Bill C-44 which is already pending in the House.

This minister said changes would be made that would make immigration work to the benefit of society. He said that more of an emphasis would be placed on independent immigrants. However this plan for the next year says that family reunification is still the highest priority of the government and that the ultimate goal of immigration levels equal to 1 per cent of the population still stands. We are talking about numbers in the vicinity of 300,000.

[Translation]

Mr. Mercier: I rise on a point of order, Mr. Speaker. I am sorry, but we cannot follow the debate because we cannot hear the simultaneous translation.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger): Order. We were having technical problems, which have now been solved.

• (1040)

[English]

Mr. Hanger: Listen to the minister's math on page 8. In 1995 accompanying family and sponsored families together are expected to make up about 80 per cent of total immigration from the broader vision immigration and citizenship outline. On page 9, economic immigrants, skilled workers and business immigrants will make up 43 per cent of the immigrant component for 1995. This percentage remains unchanged from 1994. If you add up family and independent immigration you get a whopping total of 123 per cent. That is Liberal math. Nothing changes. The numbers are fudged. No action is being taken. Today's announcement is pure smoke and mirrors.

This government thinks the Canadian people can be swayed into believing that non-action is action, that no real change in numbers means a cut, that tough talk equals tough action in the minds of the voters. Well I have news for government members. The people will not buy it.

Today's announcement says that enforcement will be beefed up and that removals will be clarified when in fact the minister has created a permanent amnesty for failed refugee claimants. That is pretty convenient. Those people who have tied up and backlogged the system with taxpayer funded appeals, with legal manipulation for three years get an automatic amnesty.

This government punishes those applicants for immigration who make a real contribution to this country, those who play by the rules, who fill out the right forms, who wait in queues that last for years in some cases. At the same time the government rewards those applicants who come in illegally, who work the system with legal aid lawyers and who can evade removal for three years. That is disgraceful.

Let us look at the numbers again. The 1994 plan calls for 30,700 skilled workers. The 1995 plan calls for 24,000 to 26,000 skilled workers. The 1994 plan calls for 6,000 business class immigrants. The 1995 plan calls for 4,000 to 5,000 business class immigrants. The total economic class was 97,700 in 1994. This year it is 71,000 to 80,000.

In other words we are looking at substantial cuts to those immigrants who can make an immediate and substantial contribution to the economy. There is no change to the level of those immigrants whose contribution is unknown and there is an amnesty for those immigrants who jump queue and abuse the system.