

mindset being what it is, I know that that is the way it will remain.

Senator Frith: Whatever party that opposition might be!

Senator Roblin: I guess I accept that, but I do not think, intellectually, that it is a position that my honourable friend would want to propound his reputation on, because I know him much better than that. I know he would not like to go down in history as the man who opposed every restraint measure the government proposed on the grounds that someone got hurt or did not get as much as they otherwise would have received—

Senator Frith: In fact, I have not!

Senator Stanbury: It is always the poor!

Senator Roblin: —even though the money they did get would continue to rise.

That is the situation we are in. When we say “restraint” it is not a four-letter word, but it might as well be as far as the people on the other side are concerned. They do not like restraint. It does not matter what it is, they will not go for it.

Senator Stanbury: It is always the poor who are affected!

Senator Roblin: I am feeling in a generous mood today so I excuse them. I understand their position. They are in the opposition and will not like anything that the government does. But in the Senate—

Senator Frith: We also want to speak for the people who are hurt!

Senator Roblin: —the one political institution of this country that might be expected to have a more balanced view of its responsibilities, to find that there is no support whatsoever for restraint is a matter that I find sad.

Senator Frith: It would be if it were so.

Senator Roblin: I find that some of us are not taking our duties as seriously as we should.

I do not mind people objecting to government policies, but one has to recognize that there are certain areas in which we have to put aside our differences and say, “For the good of the nation we have to do something.” This is one of those areas that for the good of the nation we have to do something.

My complaint, if I have one, is that the government does not do enough of this kind of thing. I can think of areas where they could cut a little expenditure without trying too hard. But we have to come to the conclusion that there are certain areas, certain times, and certain issues that we in the Senate, if nowhere else in this nation, have to put aside our natural political instincts and think of what may be good for the nation.

That is my sermon for today. That is about all I can say about the matter. But I do thank my friend for agreeing that this bill should go to committee. That is a good idea.

I admit that there is a lawsuit on this matter. I told the house the other day that there is a lawsuit pending.

Senator Frith: It is not a lawsuit anymore, it is a judgment.

Senator Roblin: Give me time; I will come to that.

The government lost round one. Round two is coming up, and they may lose that for all I know, but, again, they may not. It is quite appropriate that we should continue to deal with this issue. Indeed—if I could be so bold as to say it—we could pass the bill, because it is not without precedent to pass bills or to have bills that are under litigation, even though Parliament has passed them. I could name one or two of them if I had to, but I will not bore the house with those today.

I find nothing strange in referring this bill to committee, and I appreciate that my honourable friend—who, after all, has the numbers on his side—has agreed that we should do so. I think the committee can deal with it expeditiously.

Motion agreed to and bill read second time, on division.

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE

The Hon. the Acting Speaker: Honourable senators, when shall this bill be read the third time?

On motion of Senator Doody, bill referred to the Standing Senate Committee on National Finance.

IMMIGRATION ACT

BILL TO AMEND—SECOND READING

Hon. C. William Doody (Deputy Leader of the Government), moved the second reading of Bill C-77, to amend the Immigration Act.

He said: Honourable senators, this piece of legislation before us now is a proposal to amend section 119(3) of the Immigration Act. It is a pretty straightforward piece of legislation. It is designed to improve the government's ability to help refugees and immigrants needing assistance to settle in Canada.

The bill would remove the limit for advances to the transportation, assistance and admissibility loan program from statute and provide for the limit to be set by regulation.

This program is the main vehicle by which refugees can receive assistance and support to help them make their way to Canada. Since it was first established in 1951 it has been used to help finance the costs of medical examinations and transportation to Canada for hundreds of thousands of refugees. Without this program many of these refugees would never have made it to Canada, and we would be a much poorer country as a result.

Over the years funds advanced to the program have grown to meet the ever-increasing demand for refugee settlement. From an original statutory limit of \$3 million it has risen to \$30 million, then to \$60 million, and finally to \$90 million.

We should keep in mind that this money is lent. The people who tap into this fund are expected to pay it back over a period of time, and they do. This is money that is well invested. In fact, past parliamentary reviews have endorsed it as a program worth continuing.

Unfortunately, in recent months so many refugees have had to turn to the transportation loan program for assistance that