

*Immigration Act, 1976*

population of the Province of Quebec which I am proud to represent as Quebec caucus chairman for my Party, support an amendment like that. They urge us, not only the Progressive Conservative Party, but as the Government to make a decision as soon as possible to settle the problem once and for all by adopting Bill C-55 and Bill C-84.

**Mr. Gauthier:** Mr. Speaker, if the amendment proposed by the Hon. Member for York West (Mr. Marchi) is being debated at this time, it is because it was in order to make it two months or so ago, on June 18, the first day the Government felt it proper to call that Bill. There was one day of debate, one day of debate.

**Mr. Lewis:** How will you vote on it?

**Mr. Gauthier:** The Bill was introduced on May 5, 1987. They had three years to study the problem, and as disorganized managers—those are the new words for Tories, “disorganized managers”—they did not put a Bill before us. Finally they presented it first on May 5, and then we had second reading on June 18. Surely Canadians are entitled to know what the Bill is all about. We have put the amendment because they failed to tell Canadians what they intended to do, what they had in mind to do. We will try to explain that, I must admit.

[Translation]

Sure enough, Bill C-55 does have its positive aspects, but it contains a number of weaknesses as well: The concept of the third country where refugees will be sent back, the so-called refugees who will be coming to Canada, the preselection concept—the notion, I should say—of the safe third country.

[English]

I am referring to the safe third country concept. I want to ask a question about it, because the Government is putting forth an interesting viewpoint. We admit that a person, a human being, comes to Canada with rights; according to the Charter of our country every human being has basic rights. One of the rights he has is to due process. Another right he has is to be heard. The Government is saying “we will return him to whatever country”; the safe third country concept.

[Translation]

And I want to ask the Hon. Member whether he is prepared to wash his hands of—à la Pontius Pilate—of the problem of refugees in this world by telling a prospective refugee arriving in Canada: You will return to this third safe country. I should like to know what the Hon. Member thinks of this notion.

[English]

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski):** The Hon. Member for Chambly (Mr. Grisé) has 30 seconds to answer that question.

**Mr. Grisé:** I will be very brief, Mr. Speaker.

[Translation]

First of all, while we want to respect the international rights of refugees we must never ignore the rights of the Canadian

population, the men and women we represent. That is basic, Mr. Speaker.

[English]

The Hon. Member for Ottawa—Vanier (Mr. Gauthier) mentioned that they made that six-month amendment two months ago. Do they need two months or four months? Perhaps the Hon. Member for Ottawa—Vanier is now suggesting to his colleague from York West to withdraw the amendment. Is that what the Hon. Member for Ottawa—Vanier is suggesting?

**Mr. Gauthier:** Answer the question. That is why we need six months, because they won't answer questions.

[Translation]

Answer the question!

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski):** The time for questions and comments has expired. Debate. The Hon. Member for Ottawa Centre (Mr. Cassidy).

[English]

**Mr. Mike Cassidy (Ottawa Centre):** Mr. Speaker, I am sorry to be here. I think we all deserved a holiday, but because the Government has mishandled and bungled the whole issue of refugees, it is now trying to incite the public into fearing that somehow there is a need to act on a bad Bill, Bill C-55, which is currently under debate. The problems could have been tackled in a much more effective and humanitarian way beginning two years or three years ago.

We are not now talking about a Government which has inherited problems from the previous administration. We are talking about a Government which, on September 4, will have been in power for three years from the last election. Therefore, we are talking about problems which have been there for action by the Government.

I must say that I am very disturbed over the tone of the comments of the Hon. Member for Chambly (Mr. Grisé), because the Government is suggesting, fearing its very low position in the opinion polls, that it will somehow ride its way to popularity by inciting prejudice, by inciting feelings which may be racist, and by effectively trying to turn to Canadians to say, “We are going to be proud and strong and keep out those people coming into the country and therefore regain your support that way”.

The Hon. Minister of Employment and Immigration (Mr. Bouchard) acknowledged that there are problems in the immigration process, that the immigration process needs to be opened up in Canada for reasons of family reunification and for other reasons. In citing their support for Bill C-55, members of the government Party will be saying at the same time that they are not opposed to having legitimate refugees coming into the country.

However, they mislead the public, they mislead Canadians, if they argue that Bill C-55 is an effective way of achieving