

*Routine Proceedings*

The levels announced for 1990 are way off the mark, not only in terms of figures but also in terms of the various classes.

In 1988, the same minister tabled another shiny new plan which, according to her, would deal with the backlog of refugee claims that still exists today. Two years later, not more than 20 per cent of these cases have been settled, and now we have another plan, not for two years but five.

What these plans prove is that immigration in Canada is completely out of control. What we need is a return to principles. There was a time when immigration was subject to the vagaries of a changing economy. That is a thing of the past. Today, progressive minds see immigration as one of the major motors of our economy.

In a country with such a low population density, immigration, if dealt with intelligently, compassionately, and with sufficient planning, is an effective lever for developing our economic and human resources.

The fact is, we don't have too many immigrants in this country, Mr. Speaker. We don't have enough!

It is easy to fall into the trap of applying mainly economic criteria when analysing this question and to overlook the sociological and demographic reality we can expect in the decades to come.

The facts are clear, and the statistical projections are impressive. Basically, we have an ageing population in this country which does not reproduce in sufficient numbers to ensure replacement. For the past fifteen years, the birthrate has been below the levels required to maintain the present population.

At this rate, our population will increase during the next few years, reaching a peak of 28 million Canadians 25 years from now, and then dropping to 15 million 25 years after that.

Mr. Speaker, clearly we must take steps now to deal with the consequences of this demographic curve, because if our population ever dropped to that level, this country will face serious socio-economic consequences. Just consider the impact of the following: a dramatic reduction in our productive labour force with the resulting drop in tax revenue, plus the need to meet the demands of an ageing population. To survive and prosper, we must compensate for our falling birthrate and

maintain the labour force levels we need to maintain our level of economic activity.

[*English*]

We must decide now. Do we want Canada, over the next 50 years, to be an important country in the world, or are we satisfied to keep the *status quo*, becoming in the long run a marginal member of the global entity?

Today, everybody talks about our financial deficit. We do not have only a financial deficit. We have another deficit as important, maybe even more important. We have a human deficit which is increasing and becoming more threatening every day.

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The minister failed to outline a detailed action plan, specific objectives, and, last but not least, a budget.

[*Translation*]

In the document tabled today, the Minister puts great emphasis on her federal integration strategy, on Canadian values and national pride.

But it is only wishful thinking on her part since she failed to outline an action plan, specific objectives, and, last but not least, a budget.

Meanwhile, Mr. Speaker, the Canadian association of school counselors tells us that, due to a lack of resources, 125,000 to 150,000 immigrant children do not receive any education in French or in English. School authorities simply do not have the resources needed to deal with this sudden influx.

Mr. Speaker, this document does not say anything about a plan to make the Canadian population aware of the social changes related to immigration. We must act quickly to develop a strategy to inform and educate the Canadian public on the still unknown—and therefore threatening—issue of immigration.

Statistics show that roughly one Canadian out of three is reluctant, not to say unwilling, to welcome immigrants to Canada.

Information and education are the best guarantees we have against all forms of racism. This is one of the serious problems with this five-year plan.