

into the slower growth areas of this country and would have had a salutary demographic effect on the country.

● (1630)

Finally, I raise the question of one other urban priority. So far the government has been unwilling to use its lending power to push for proper land use in areas of this country which, in the long term, could benefit from such a policy. I am referring particularly to what is happening in the Niagara peninsula, the rich farmlands around Montreal—in fact, to rich farmlands around our major cities, farmlands not protected by provincial action. We should use the lending powers available to us under the National Housing Act. That is to say, we should abstain from lending or not to guarantee loans with respect to those areas of the country where, in our judgment, proper land use procedures are not followed.

I feel that we have not adequately considered what should be Canada's urban priorities. I suggest that the people of this country have a right to expect more far-sighted action from the government in certain areas than they have witnessed in the last few years. They expect the government to take action in matters which affect their lives, where they live and on questions such as commuting between work and home. That brings me to urban transit. One need not spell out the details of what is not happening. We all know what is not happening and what was promised. This is a sad story which I will not belabour. After the hon. member for Ottawa West (Mr. Francis) has spoken on my motion, I intend to rise on a point of order to request leave to withdraw it.

**Mr. Fairweather:** That sounds like a dirty trick.

**Mr. Watson:** I shall do this because my support of the recent Science Council of Canada recommendations outweighs my concern with the government's backtracking on decentralization of population, and I wish to stress that the Science Council of Canada has recommended limiting our future population growth to allow in 50,000 immigrant per year. That being the case, I do not want to open the doors wider than they are now open. If we grant immigrant status on certain conditions to people who would otherwise not be allowed in to this country, that is, if we grant them immigrant status only on the condition that they shall land in certain areas, we shall allow a greater number of people in per year. The Science Council of Canada has examined the question of the long-term availability of energy against the background of our northern climate and the impact on our standard of living of a larger population. In view of its findings, I suggest that if we are to maintain the present high quality of life in Canada and our present living standards, we shall have to think seriously about slowing down the growth of our population. The government thinks our population should grow at between 140,000 and 150,000 per year from immigration. I say our growth rate should be lower. I agree with the Science Council of Canada. I am agreeable to the hon. member for Ottawa West speaking, after which I shall rise on a point of order.

### *Immigration*

**Mr. Jake Epp (Provencher):** Mr. Speaker, I had not intended speaking on this motion, but having heard the hon. member condemn the government for its lack of immigration policy and blame urban congestion on immigrants, I felt compelled to speak. I agree with one thing the hon. member said. The government's attempt to rationalize population growth has been, to use his words, I think, a sad story. We tried to make the minister aware of this point, but he has not accepted our amendments concerning demographic policy. The point the hon. member for Laprairie (Mr. Watson) made in that regard is correct.

The special joint committee tried to bring forward a recommendation for placing a large number of immigrants in areas of the country with job vacancies. Unfortunately, the original draft of the bill did not incorporate that recommendation, possibly because the committee's intent was not clear to the minister and his officials. In any event, that suggested section was considered unworkable. During the committee consideration, the hon. member for Davenport (Mr. Caccia) was able to bring in an amendment for removing area criteria. Consequently, the news media reported that the hon. member for Davenport had won his war against area designation. With all respect, the press did not understand the situation and had not analysed what had happened. It left the impression that there was to be no area designation, which was not the case. If you take a look at the situation as amended, this is what will happen. We found it impractical to police the movement of immigrants to a specific point, and that they would have to stay there for six months. Longitudinal studies indicate that there is evidence to support what the minister said. These studies indicate that if a person goes to an area other than one of the larger metropolitan areas, the chances of his staying there are fairly good. That is fair enough—but the question of the policing becomes a difficulty.

I agree with the hon. member when he indicates that immigration is a privilege, rather than a right. When you get into the whole question of human rights, whose human rights are being violated? What is going to be done now is a workable compromise. For example, an immigrant who indicates that he is going to northern Canada will not have his landing completed in Toronto, which is the first point of contact in Canada. His landing will be completed at the nearest Canada Immigration centre or Canada Manpower centre. The fact that they will be obligated to complete landing at the destination of the immigrant will facilitate, to some degree, the movement of the people into that area.

Simply having an area designation requiring a person to stay for six months in a given spot, and virtually a given employment situation, can create exploitation of which we are not in favour. It has been indicated in newspapers that the area designation is now gone; but if I understand the regulations correctly, points will be awarded or removed depending on the area to which a person goes. It can be controlled somewhat in the regulations and the area designations as to the number of points. Up to the present time, not enough points were given for area designations. During months when unemployment was