

Government Orders

drop as soon as these amendments are passed. Last year in Toronto, for instance, about 70 packages containing status or identity documents were being located every week. In Montreal the volume was approximately 10 packages. In Vancouver officials found roughly 25.

This flows from a common sense application. Some months ago there was a *Globe and Mail* article that discovered officials from the Department of Justice telling officials from customs and immigration that they were in violation of the law for basically defending our borders through the interdiction of certain mail and fraudulent documentation.

We have moved to bring the law up to speed in order to render the system more accountable to its citizens. The amendments will also allow arrest warrants to be issued for no shows at immigration hearings and will provide an immediate loss of permanent resident status with all removal orders and not some of them.

It will also eliminate the possibility for any one person to have more than one refugee claim processed at the same time.

• (1220)

Why should that be any different? We have a good system and people should have one kick at that good system rather than taxing the system and taking away a place for another legitimate individual.

The legislation will also authorize the minister or his officials to approve or reject requests for rehabilitation rather than having the matters go to a full cabinet. In plain language this cuts down the rubber stamp aspect of rehabilitation and treats each individual on their proper merits. This will be far more cost effective, cut back the time needed to make a decision and prevent the issue and the individual from getting buried in a much larger cabinet agenda.

As I mentioned at the outset, there are other elements of bill C-44 that are very positive, valuable and worth supporting. I hope we will have an opportunity to discuss these issues not only in debate form in the House of Commons but with careful scrutiny in committee following second reading.

There are also other elements to limiting abuse within our immigration and refugee network that do not fall under any act or legislation. In this regard I believe it is important for all of us to remember that C-44 should not be seen in isolation but instead should be seen as a part of a more comprehensive package of initiatives to try to come to grips with the minority of those who wish to abuse the right of the many. Some of the fixes simply mean bolstering internal procedures and changing priorities.

Enforcement of immigration issues have been tightened and toughened in recent months. As always we remain cognizant of the rights of the individuals of due process upon which our society is firmly founded.

Our government has already started to streamline its own administrative system. Immigration has speeded and strengthened its liaison with the correctional services of Canada so that foreign offenders will have fewer opportunities to stay in Canada after they have served their time in jail or prison. Once again common sense dictates. Why was it not in place years before now, that somehow immigration Canada was more in sync with corrections Canada so that when those individuals were released from our provincial or federal facilities they could be deported?

Why is it that those individuals serving time in our penitentiaries who ultimately will be deported or served deportation orders enjoy day parole? That is an issue I have raised with the Solicitor General and with my colleague, the Minister of Justice. Again it flows from common sense. If there are individuals who are deportable upon completion of time in prison, why is day parole instituted for those individuals as well? They are not easing into the community. They are easing out of Canada. Therefore I question why day parole should be applied to those individuals.

My colleague, the Minister of Justice, has also made a commitment that the parliamentary committee when reviewing the Young Offenders Act as part of that mandate will also look at how the Young Offenders Act will apply to those young individuals within our country facing deportation. Again, this not a knee-jerk reaction but a studied reaction in this case together with the other issues that certainly will draw the attention of that committee.

Enforcement is a priority of my department. It is not an obsession of my department, it is a priority; a priority that is roughly 10 per cent of our budget which translates roughly into \$56 million for the year 1994-95.

Our system for blocking the entry of criminals has been for the most part been vigilant and effective. Last spring a special operations unit was set up, targeting members of organized crime groups and geared to improving our ability to prevent them from entering Canada.

• (1225)

For this purpose we have focused on Asian gangs, the triads, and the yakuza, as well as gangs from Russia and the Caribbean.

I am sure members are also aware of the special joint task force involving immigration officials, members of local and regional police forces, as well as provincial and RCMP forces. They have operational units in Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver, and their prime directive is to remove foreign criminals from our midst.

I believe that the concept of the joint force is the right approach, not because this minister or this government has deemed it so on July 7, but because in leading up to that decision we discussed the whole concept of the joint force with those who