

In the final analysis, the solution is to implement a refugee determination process which will achieve a balance between speed and equity. Such a process is provided in Bill C-55.

It will take some time before the provisions of this Bill can be implemented. This legislation deserves the consideration not only of Members of both Houses of Parliament, but also of all Canadians, men and women alike.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I would like to comment on an especially sensitive part of Bill C-84 which concerns the penalties imposed, especially on those who abet the illegal entry of people into Canada. There are already penalties attached to non-compliance with Section 95.1, and this has never given rise to any criticism or complaint.

Provisions relating to the abusive entry of people without the proper travel documents are already contained in the legislation passed under the Liberal government in 1976. Nothing has been changed. We are simply maintaining this part of the Act. What we are doing is to extend this provision to those who abet the transport or entry of people, especially in groups of more than ten, and I believe that Canadians understand quite well whom this is meant to cover. I do not believe that I have the power to determine who is guilty and who is not; that is up to the courts, and the Minister has no intention of appropriating that right. However, I believe that the law must be obeyed, and no Canadian will be exempt from its application, whoever he may be. This is the framework in which our courts will have to interpret the legislation, and in this regard, we are remaining within the traditions of Canadian law while keeping an open mind, as we have always done, and maintaining the Canadian tradition of welcoming authentic refugees.

• (1600)

[English]

Mr. Sergio Marchi (York West): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to respond on behalf of my leader and my colleagues in the Liberal caucus at the second reading of Bill C-84. Perhaps I have an obligation as well, because I believe we are entering into a very sensitive and important debate which the country is watching. It is a country that is opinionated and wishes its government, its Parliament and elected officials to show moral leadership and do what is right under the circumstances, not for today, or for this summer, but for the long-term viability of the characteristic that enables us all to call ourselves Canadians.

It should be put very clearly on the record of the House of Commons that no Member of Parliament, regardless of the Party to which he or she belongs, favours abuse, whether it is in our immigration and refugee policy, in our workers' compensation claims, whether that abuse is in our Canada Pension Plans or in our unemployment insurance programs. No Canadian, no parliamentarian, and no political party favours abuse. No one encourages fraudulent claims and no one rewards those who persist in circumventing the regulations

and laws of this country. Otherwise, it would jeopardize the very integrity of the system of government.

The Liberal Party is at the forefront of ensuring the integrity of the refugee determination system and of protecting the claim for the legitimate refugee who is escaping torture, persecution and death in all parts of the world in which there are countries facing internal and external upheaval. It is a question of war and peace that is at the source of the refugee movement. They do not wish to live in a country other than the one in which they were born. Everyone, whether an immigrant or refugee, would rather remain in their homeland and place of their birth, but because of circumstances affecting their existence as a human beings, they are forced to flee. They are not only going to Canada, but to countries all over the world.

In this global village, Canada is a recipient, with other countries in the world, of individuals who, in this international year of the homeless as designated by the United Nations, are seeking homes. Therefore, in order to protect the legitimacy of the individual claims that merit our consideration and support, we need to rid our system of abuse. We have repeated that assertion not only this summer, not only for the purposes of this emergency debate as defined by the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney), but clearly in the last two and one-half years of this Parliament.

We have repeatedly called for the Government to clamp down on the so-called immigration consultants and smugglers who are making thousands and thousands of dollars in trafficking on the desperation of human beings throughout the world. There were schemes and scams in Portugal on which we asked the Government to clamp down. There were scams in other parts of the world, such as in Turkey and then Brazil.

The cancer began to spread, but what did we have from the Government? There was laughter during Question Period, and there was ridicule during second reading of Bill C-55. The Minister did not respond to our questions and those from our colleagues in the New Democratic Party and certain Members on the Government side. We saw inaction, ridicule and laughter. The Government told us that we were exaggerating the circumstances of that abuse.

The system, this Parliament and Canadians are paying the price for that inaction. We are paying the price for a government that did not have the priority to try to address the refugee determination system in the proper context. Instead, the Government preferred to wait until May, clearly almost three years later, after the Plaut Report commissioned by the former Government, after the report of the standing committee led ably by the Conservative Member for Calgary West (Mr. Hawkes), after a report by our Liberal Party. There were reports from NGOs, reports from leading church authorities who came to Ottawa and suggested very specific solutions for giving our system a chance to work expeditiously and properly for Canadians, and fairly for those who wish to access the system. The Government did it only in May. Only in the dying days of June before we all left for our ridings for the summer