This, of course, goes to the heart of one major concern of those who oppose Bill C-55—access. Yet, who is denied access under this legislation?

If the claimant is already recognized as a refugee by another country he or she will be denied access unless they can demonstrate a fear of persecution in the country which accorded them protection. If the claim has no credibility it will be denied access to the refugee determination system. If it is a rejected claim that has not been 90 days outside Canada, it will also be denied.

However, the legitimate refugee with no prior possibility of protection from another country will not be prevented from obtaining that protection in Canada and access will not be denied on the basis that the claimant simply passed through another country on the way to Canada. It will not be denied if there is the slightest danger of *refoulement*. The legitimate refugee in need of our protection is who we are obliged to help, who we want to help, and who we will help.

Every claimant will have an opportunity to argue why his or her claim should be heard. It is not correct that the initial hearing before an immigration adjudicator and a refugee board member is a prescreening. It is an integral part of the fair and impartial process which we intend to establish.

This question of screening or prescreening is more than a matter of semantics. It is unfortunate that materials released at the introduction of Bill C-55 used the expression because to me screening is what happens before the first stage. If there is a screening it is the initial examination by an immigration officer at the port of entry, an examination which cannot by itself exclude any claimant.

If you want screening, look to the border police of many European countries with records of humanitarian assistance equal to our own. Some can turn claimants around and send them back from whence they came in a matter of hours. Others have set aside a budget greater than Canada's federal government grants to NGOs for settlement services. That $5 million plus a year is to buy airline tickets to launch claimants back into orbit.

In one or two cases they put armed police on aircraft as they arrive to check papers and make summary decisions on any doubtful cases, decisions which expel such cases before they even set foot on the soil of the countries concerned, without formal hearings, without counsel, and without translation.

That is not the way in Canada. Under the initial hearing before an immigration adjudicator and the refugee board member there must be absolutely no doubt that the claim is false for the claimant not to be allowed to proceed—not some doubt, not hardly a doubt, but no doubt, none.

[*Translation*]

Never will we even take a chance of returning a legitimate claimant to a country where he might be persecuted or experience a worse fate still. This is why the provisions of Bill C-55 to set up an official list of safe third countries have been more carefully drafted than those of any other country where a similar procedure is followed.

The notion of a third country is definitely not a way of turning our backs to those refugees whom we would not be prepared to welcome here. On the contrary, mindful of the fact that genuine refugees often are educated people with good training and superior motives, I believe that many of them are precisely the type of people Canada would like to attract during a period when immigration is given more importance. As it happens, we are at the beginning of such a period.

But here is the important point, the distinction to make: a person who already enjoys the protection of another country or who has had enough means and opportunities to obtain such protection should not be able to enter Canada as a refugee status claimant. That person can very well file a standard immigration application and stands very good chances of being selected.

On the other hand, a refugee who is already under protection elsewhere may be sponsored by the Government or a private group for relanding purposes. Once Bill C-55 has been adopted we will continue to reland refugees with the same determination, without lessening our commitment in that respect. This year alone we expect to admit 18,000 refugees this way.

At the risk of repeating myself, I say again: By adopting the concept of safe third country, we want to extend through Bill C-55 all the resources of our refugee determination process to those who have nowhere to go and really need our protection. It is not a hard-noses means to exclude those we do not want to accept.

If such had been our goal, we would not have subjected the list of safe third countries to so many stringent criteria.

First, the Cabinet is directly responsible for that list. This is very important because if someone goofs or an error happens, or if pertinent information is not taken into account, the Cabinet will be responsible rather than the process.

[*English*]

Knowing the degree of scrutiny which attends its every single decision, I cannot think of a better safeguard than to give this responsibility to Cabinet. The Members of this House, the NGOs, the media, and the people of Canada themselves will know exactly who is accountable. It will not be some faceless bureaucrat and not the system, but the Ministers of the Government themselves.

You may be certain, therefore, that the list and the document centre which will be created to support it will be recipients of the most up-to-date information possible. It will come from our own External Affairs, from the United Nations High Commission for Refugees, from the Refugee Board itself, and from many other sources. It will be accurate and comprehensive.

It will not become a complex and impossible system to manage, as some have suggested, because of our absolute