

*Adjournment Debate*

Second, the treaty commits all states to work toward disarmament, including nuclear disarmament. Our long term goal is the complete elimination of nuclear weapons.

Third, the treaty provides the framework for the peaceful uses of nuclear energy by establishing a system of effective international safeguards. Our exports of nuclear technology under safeguard agreements have helped to sustain an industry that employs 20,000 Canadians directly and 10,000 Canadians indirectly.

Canada played a leading role at the NPT review and extension conference by marshalling the support of over 100 countries from all regions of the world for a resolution to indefinitely extend the treaty.

• (1905)

With the continued existence of the NPT no longer in question we have laid down the basis for long term security and stability, the essential elements necessary for further reductions in global nuclear inventories.

We have now turned the corner. The cold war is over and we are on the road to a world with fewer and fewer nuclear weapons. We have a long way to go, but we are on the right track. Without the NPT the world would be a much more dangerous place and Canadians would be much less secure.

We can be justly proud of the key role Canada played in securing the benefits of the NPT now and for future generations to come.

[Translation]

## IMMIGRATION

**Mr. Osvaldo Nunez (Bourassa, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, on May 11, I asked the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration about the enormous number of rejected applications for landing made by immigrants and refugees unable to pay the \$975 immigration tax at the Mississauga claims processing office alone.

The minister denied the figures published in the media but recognized that 3,800 applications were returned because the required fee was not attached and that 400 loan applications were made. He failed to say however how many of these applications were rejected.

In fact, both the minister and his officials refuse to see how serious the situation really is. His department has refused to provide us with accurate information. In the coming weeks or months, the minister will no doubt realize and be forced to admit that this problem is taking disastrous proportions.

The only figures available so far are for Mississauga. But what about the Végreville centre, the largest claims processing office in the country? The fact is that only 38 per cent of all loan applications are accepted. Rejections are motivated for the most part by the fact that processing officers believe that claimants are not solvent.

A few weeks ago, I visited a number of agencies that provide assistance to immigrants in the Montreal area. Among them were the Bordeaux-Cartierville support centre for immigrant communities, which is located in your riding, Madam Speaker, and the Service d'aide aux réfugiés et aux immigrants du Montréal métropolitain, or SARIMM. The people I met there told me they had seen people desperately looking for money in order to pay this tax. Some abandon the idea of having their spouse or children join them in Canada because they cannot pay. How can the minister ignore this reality?

Immigrants contribute more to the public treasury than citizens born in Canada, says Professor Ather Akbari, from St. Mary's University in Halifax, who recently testified before the immigration committee. His studies show that in 1990 immigrant families paid on average \$22,528 in taxes while they received only \$10,558 worth of public services.

Why should immigrants have to pay a tax even before they land here, on top of the \$500 fee required to have their record processed? In most cases, this is cruel, immoral, unfair, and discriminatory.

Many recognized refugees cannot get permanent residence in Canada because they cannot afford to pay the tax. What is their status, then? Nobody seems to know. In the meantime, they are not eligible to social benefits because they are not Canadian residents. How, then, are they supposed to become part of the Canadian society?

In 1988, a new program was initiated to help female refugees, especially from countries at war. Up to 1993, Canada has admitted only 655 women under that program. One of the barriers is that many of those refugees do not have the money to pay their fare to Canada. As a matter of fact, the government has refused to lend them money because they are deemed incapable of paying that money back.

The least the minister could do is make loans available to recognized refugees when they request that kind of assistance and want to bring their family to Canada.

• (1910)

**Ms. Mary Clancy (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I am greatly disappointed by the remarks made by my colleague from Bourassa. It is too bad, but what can you do?

[English]

The hon. member means well but his acquaintance with the facts is still at best nodding. The numbers that he quotes are very preliminary. The numbers in the press were not correct and even were they correct, too preliminary to create any kind of a trend.

It will take some months before we see the consistency of rate that can give us some idea of the trends. What is important, très important pour mon cher ami de Bourassa, is that since the