

dicial bodies. There are lots of times that the decisions that are mounted are irritating and frustrating and downright wrong.

There is an old story in a book about judges that was published some years ago. A particularly narrow minded member of the judiciary was giving a barrister a very difficult time. Finally he said: "I can only advise you to take your petition to the Lord", to which the barrister responded: "Thank you very much, my Lord, but I will take it to the appeal court and probably will do a lot better".

At any rate, the point is that the freedom and the balance of the law sometimes tip too far one way or the other. What we attempt to do through legislation, what we attempt to do through the administration of justice in this country is to keep the balance as fair as possible. It does not always work.

When I was in law school a professor who is now teaching at the University of Victoria used to talk about something called the universal theory of rough justice which is not terribly satisfactory. His theory as a professor was that 80 per cent of the time justice gets done.

I can remember as first year law students we were horrified at this because that meant 20 per cent of the time justice did not get done. He explained to us that by and large it was a pretty good average. To this day that still frightens and horrifies me, that in 20 per cent of cases justice does not get done.

In the 20 years that I have been involved either as a lawyer or a legislator I have yet to see another system that works better. That is not to say that we do not constantly strive to refine the system that we have, but we do not refine that system by taking away rights. We refine that system by ensuring its fairness and its balance. We refine that system by refining the basic theory of due process and justice.

With regard to Bill C-44, we have listened over the past year or more to a variety of people telling us where we needed refinements, particularly with regard to the criminal justice system and immigrants, and we listened.

My hon. colleague from across the way made the statement that we did not listen to the people who came to us at the committee. I would like to say with the greatest of respect to that member, we did listen. We brought in 11 amendments that reflected the majority of concerns of the people who came before us.

One of the things that I have learned in six years in this House, and I think it may be the most important lesson one can learn as a legislator, is again the lesson of balance. We cannot go too far one way or the other way. That probably reflects my own political philosophy. It reflects the political philosophy of the party of which I am proud to be a member. It reflects the political philosophy and the response of the vast majority of Canadians.

Government Orders

To quote the former Prime Minister, Mr. Trudeau, those of us in the Liberal Party were the party of the radical middle, the party of the extreme centre. To paraphrase a poet, William Butler Yeats, the Irish poet, the centre cannot hold.

• (1655)

In Canadian politics and in the affairs of Canadians, particularly those matters that relate to the criminal justice system, to maintain fairness and to ensure justice the centre must hold. It is our responsibility on this side of the House to hold that centre.

I want to say a few words in particular about immigration in Canada. I want to say that it bears repeating over and over that every single one of us in this House, every citizen of this country is of immigrant stock. Even both our colleagues who come from the north and several other colleagues from Manitoba, those of our colleagues who belong to Canada's founding peoples, the aboriginals, will admit that their ancestors first came here across the land bridge from Asia 5,000 years ago. Everybody in this country came from somewhere else.

We are a nation of immigrants. If it were not for the Scots, the Irish, the English, the French, the Germans, the Italians, the Ukrainians, the Poles and on and on, all of the different groups that came here and chose Canada, we would be a poorer country. We would be a weaker country. We would be a less tolerant and less fair country.

The vertical mosaic that is Canada is an amazing experiment, a terrific example to the rest of the world. The response to the vertical mosaic from other countries is the response that the United Nations told us, that this is the best country in the world in which to live. Obviously that forms part of the reason for people choosing to come here, but it is also something that we must hold on to as legislators as we pass laws that will affect the citizens of this country, the people we are here to represent.

I have been very fortunate in the year and a month that I have been parliamentary secretary in immigration and citizenship to travel all over this country. I was in the riding of Calgary Northeast on Friday with the hon. member opposite, the immigration critic. I was there for a symposium on immigrant youth. There were 350 I believe—and my hon. colleague will correct me if I am wrong—places at this conference. They were all filled and there were 100 on the waiting list to meet and talk about the problems and concerns of young people who come to this country from other places.

At the opening ceremonies that the hon. member and I attended there were about 100 people, most of whom represented service organizations, NGOs, government levels, et cetera, all there because of their concern for immigrant youth to ensure that they settle into this country, to ensure that their needs are met. These things are increasingly important because we hear over and over again when so and so came 100 years ago we did not have settlement groups. No we did not. Of course we