

Supply

Canadians by telling us what are the real numbers. It is useless to have lofty targets of 115,000, 120,000, or 125,000 people when only 80,000, 85,000 or 90,000 people will actually be coming into Canada.

Mr. Weiner: Mr. Speaker, I have met and will continue to meet many of the individuals whom my hon. friend has named. I look forward to seeing some of them at the meeting which will take place in Montreal at the end of the month, which the Council of Refugees will host. I continue to work with all groups to explore avenues of being more helpful to the real refugees of the world. Let us not try to exploit the situation. Let us try to manage our resources in order to help them.

The Member talks about the unscrupulous counsellors. That highlights the fact that the citizens of at least three countries in the top six source-producing countries of claimants do not appear to be refugee producing. While we have not blamed the innocent citizens who have come here from Portugal or Turkey, and now from Brazil from where there are three flights a week, it is obviously the system, the eight steps, the guarantee that they will be allowed to stay here, which is encouraging them to come.

Forty thousand claimants came during that five-year period and followed the eight-step process. The determination took years. After that time only 650 were asked to leave. That is a 98.5 per cent chance of staying. If you cannot meet the criteria will you wait your turn like other honour-bound law-abiding citizens, or are you going to try to jump the queue? Are you going to try to buy a ticket? Will there be an unscrupulous counsellor who will try to subvert the credibility of our immigration laws?

We have been acting in a very immediate and spontaneous fashion on the information that these innocent people have been bringing forward. We have provided all the assistance we can. We have gathered that information and turned it over to the RCMP who continue to investigate. As each investigation is complete it is turned over to the Minister of Justice (Mr. Hnatyshyn). As far as I am concerned, any infringements are now in another jurisdiction. We look forward to action when the investigation is complete.

The Hon. Member for York West wants more information about safe third countries. He wants to discuss hypothetically the list of countries which Cabinet will be providing in the near future, based on very stringent criteria and the advice which will be given. I do not think anyone can be any more sensitive to the unacceptable human rights standards which are prevalent in the world today than is our Secretary of State for External Affairs. He has spoken out with great distinction everywhere he has travelled on how deplorable those human rights conditions are and how that affects our bilateral relations. He tells those countries to clean up their act once and for all.

We continue to maintain that the answer to the refugee problem is not to bring all the refugees to Canada. That is not the priority of the U.N. or of Canada. Our priority is to create

a peaceful and humane situation in the countries of origin. We want to enable them to return to their homeland and help them build up their socio-economic conditions. We will do all of those things.

The Member continues to maintain that my first step is some kind of pre-screening. I ask him to reread what I said because it is clear that it is step one. It is filled with discretion. There are two criteria, the first being objective and the second a very low threshold, low standard test. If an individual who makes a claim fears for his life, limb, liberty or security, he will be sent to step two for the beginning of a hearing within 10 days.

With regard to the levels for immigrants, the 125,000 which we indicated for 1987 will be met. I have received a report on the early part of the year and we are running right on schedule. The previous Government closed the door to independent immigrants. We reopened the door on January 1, 1986. It takes time for the independents to start applying again. It takes time to fill up the pipe. All of that is taking place. That is perhaps why last year we only reached 97,000 or 98,000, but we will continue to build the numbers.

We look forward with vision and vigour to the future when more immigrants will be brought to this country to continue to build our society with fairness and opportunity for all. That is what the greatness of this country is all about.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: May I have the consent of the House to proceed with two more short questions or comments before we recess?

Some Hon. Members Agreed.

Mr. Heap: Mr. Speaker, I want to ask a question relating to a section which the Hon. Minister quoted. Although I listened carefully I was not able to find the section. I would, however, like to comment on his remarks if he could cite that section for me. The Hon. Minister quoted it with regard to the claim that the two representatives at the border will be able to make discretionary decisions on the merits of the claim.

Mr. Weiner: Mr. Speaker, I quoted Section 48(1-2) in commenting on Section 48.1(a). It is clear that that is a notwithstanding clause. In addition, without trying to fine tune this piece of legislation, there is before the House a Bill which Members of Parliament will have an opportunity to examine further at committee. That is what Parliament is all about. That is the democratic system.

I certainly look forward to constructive input. There will be other forums, the House at third reading stage and the Senate. We look forward to the co-operation and help of all Members to get through the Bill in a speedy fashion.

Mr. Heap: Mr. Speaker, may I make the comment which I asked for leave to make? Subsection 4 provides what the refugee division shall consider evidence adduced at the inquiry, and it refers to two matters which have nothing to do with the individual case. It is clear from the way it is worded there,