

*Oral Questions*

• (1430)

If we put in more money as the member wants, we would just have the same problem we face today because we inherited a \$500 billion debt. Fortunately the NDP is not there or it would be \$1,000 billion.

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**REFUGEES**

**Hon. Warren Allmand (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce):** Mr. Speaker, this question is for the Prime Minister.

Yesterday the Minister of Employment and Immigration tabled his voluminous immigration amendments which included extensive management and enforcement measures but paid little attention to humanitarian concerns.

Since the minister had the opportunity, why did he not provide an appeal on the merits for refugees whose applications have been rejected, as recommended by many NGOs, churches and the legal community?

The Refugee Board is not perfect, and without an appeal process the system is seriously flawed. Now is the time for an appeal process.

[*Translation*]

**Hon. Monique Vézina (Minister of State (Employment and Immigration) and Minister of State (Seniors)):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member opposite should read the bill carefully and he would see that in subsections 114(2), (6) and (5) we seek the authority to apply selection criteria.

The bill tabled by my colleague responsible for employment and immigration maintains Canada's humanitarian tradition as it pertains to economic requirements and employment that we must use in the immigration model. I wish to assure this House again that we will continue to respect refugee claims.

The bill tabled yesterday simply adapts the act to the realities of 1992 so that we can have a fair, equitable and efficient system.

[*English*]

**Hon. Warren Allmand (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce):** Mr. Speaker, the minister did not even answer my question. I

was asking about an appeal on the merits process. She did not address that question.

[*Translation*]

As an alternative, why did the Minister of Employment and Immigration not specify and provide objective criteria for admitting refugees on humanitarian grounds? The minister almost eliminated this useful provision that allowed the most deserving cases to appeal. Will the minister or the government consider amendments to the bill to make better use of this provision and provide a fairer appeal process?

**Hon. Monique Vézina (Minister of State (Employment and Immigration) and Minister of State (Seniors)):** Mr. Speaker, the amendments made to the bill yesterday—or rather the suggested amendments, I should say, because we will have an opportunity through the parliamentary process to express our point of view—make procedures into regulations. So regulations rather than procedures will make it possible for applicants to appeal using the regular process. In any case, everyone in Canada will be able to exercise their right to appeal and each case will be heard on its merits.

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[*English*]**AGRICULTURE**

**Mr. Maurice Foster (Algoma):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Agriculture.

Last night we saw the spectacle on national television of B.C. vegetable producers ploughing down their crops because United States farmers are dumping low priced, low value vegetables into the Canadian market.

We know that the government in the free trade negotiation gave up the right to have a seasonal tariff. I want to ask the minister what the government is going to do. What action is going to be taken to keep these producers in business?

**Hon. Bill McKnight (Minister of Agriculture):** Mr. Speaker, I know my hon. friend did not deliberately misinform the House.