

**Bill C-4 Key Quotes from the House of Commons
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Hon. Vic Toews (Minister of Public Safety, CPC)

We have heard from ordinary Canadians that they want our borders to stay open to newcomers who play by the rules when they come to our country, but firmly shut against those who would abuse our generosity, threaten the integrity of our immigration system and pose a risk to our safety and security.

We have heard from experts in the field that **Canada is the destination of choice for human smugglers and that criminal networks are evolving and adapting to utilize more sophisticated ways of moving their cargo.** Canada, therefore, needs to be ever more vigilant and more aggressive in cracking down on the ringleaders of this worldwide criminal operation, not less, as some have suggested.

Bill C-4 would, first and foremost, crack down on those criminals who would abuse our generous immigration system and endanger the safety and security of our Canadian communities. **We are providing a strong deterrent to those who are organizing human smuggling operations** to jump the queue into Canada and we are ensuring the integrity and fairness of Canada's immigration system for years to come.

Under this act, our government would enable the Minister of Public Safety to designate the arrival of a group of persons as an irregular arrival and make those involved subject to the act's measures. [...] designated arrivals would face mandatory detention for up to one year to allow Canadian authorities to determine admissibility and illegal activity. **In short, the detention period would provide more time to identify those who had arrived in our country and whether they posed a threat to our national security.**

The measures which our government is proposing are tough, but they are fair. **They are fair to those who legitimately and legally wait, or have waited in line for a better life in Canada.** It is fair for all Canadians who rightfully expect that our borders and shores are protected and secure and our generous social systems are protected from abuse.

For those who want to jump the queue or target Canada for criminal gain, these measures are a message, clear and direct: Canada will not tolerate human smuggling and if one wants to come here there are fair, legal and legitimate means to do so.

It must be very frustrating to many of the new Canadians when they see criminal organizations bringing individuals here who jump that waiting time. That is disappointing for many Canadians who say that they are playing by the rules and are carrying out what they are required to do. They want to know why this is being allowed to happen.

Olivia Chow, (Trinity-Spadina, NDP)

Madam Speaker, there is one word to describe Bill C-4 and that word is cruel. [...] I say that because the bill would not punish smugglers. Under our present legislation, a smuggler would be jailed for life. **We have the most severe punishment for people convicted of smuggling. What could be more severe than putting them away for life?** We cannot get more severe. The bill is not really about the smugglers. It is about the refugees.

Immigrants are resentful because they are waiting longer and longer to bring their loved ones to Canada. Then they are told that there are people jumping the queue. **These people are not jumping the queue because they are refugees and there is no queue for them to line up in.** If they are in danger, they have to leave, unlike [immigrants'] parents, which is a completely different class of applications.

The mandatory detention for people arriving in Canada without any chance of review is at least 12 months, children or not. By the way, I do not know whether members of Parliament have read psychological studies of children being detained but studies done in the U.K. show that, **even in just a few months of detention, what happens to a child is tragic.** [...] Psychological scars are inflicted on children who are being jailed for not just a few weeks or months, but we are jailing them for at least a year. It is totally unjustifiable.

There is mandatory detention for 12 months. There is a denial of the right to apply for permanent resident status until five years have passed, and that is after a favourable determination of their protection claim. **These are genuine refugees. I am not talking about the bogus ones. If there are those who are determined to be bogus, deport them, that is fine.** I am talking about genuine refugees. They are not even allowed to assimilate to Canada because they cannot become landed immigrants.

Much has been said about the denial of detention reviews, because it is mandatory that they be jailed for at least a year, which breaches sections 9 and 10 of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms because these rights are supposed to protect people against arbitrary detention and the right to prompt review of detention. [...] Why are we jailing them? Normally a person is jailed because they are a danger to the public or that person is a flight risk and could disappear. In these circumstances, when we jail a child, a refugee or these people, the government does not have to prove that the person is a flight risk or endangering anyone.

It is interesting that this bill makes no reference to the human smuggling issues. Just a few months ago, the immigration committee dealt with several bills. It dealt with Bill C-35, which cracked down on crooked consultants. At that time, on behalf of the New Democratic Party of Canada, I expanded the amount of time that we could go after people who are smuggling from 6 months to at least 10 years. [...] As I said earlier, if convicted it means life imprisonment, so this has nothing to do with going after smuggling