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OFFICIAL REPORT
(HANSARD)

Monday, March 26, 2001

Speaker: The Honourable Peter Milliken

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Monday, March 26, 2001

The House met at 11 a.m.

Prayers

• (1100)

[*Translation*]

POINTS OF ORDER

OFFICIAL RECORD

Mr. Michel Gauthier (Roberval, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. Last week, as a parliamentarian, I asked the House of Commons to make a correction to what is commonly called “the blues”. These are the preliminary transcription of what is said here in the House and sometimes corrections are made to it, sometimes not.

I had asked for a correction. Mr. Luc Bélanger and Mrs. Louise Brazeau, an editor, pointed out to me that the correction I was asking for could change the meaning of what I had said in the House and that the only way to make corrections was to listen to the recording in order to see whether a word or expression makes no sense the way it is written down. The purpose is to make the record of what was said as faithful as possible.

The only corrections that can be made are to improve the quality of the English or French as the case may be.

In connection with this, I commented to House Services that I had often had the impression in the past that substantial changes had been made to *Hansard*, far more substantial ones than what I was asking for.

• (1105)

They swore that was not the case, that all changes were from the tapes and that never would the editor in question looking at a potential change decide to alter the meaning of remarks expressed here in the House.

I advised the transcription group that I would be watching the operations of the service very carefully, given that I had been treated unfairly compared with what I had seen done in the past. I did not have to wait long to see that there was a double standard at least in this service of the House.

I would draw your attention to what the Prime Minister said in the House on March 21, 2001. In what are called the blues, the Prime Minister said, and I quote “We had no financial interest in that company in November 1993”. That was the statement and it was very clear. It was limp.

In *Hansard*, we find: “Mr. Speaker, we did not have shares in that company since November 1993”.

I do not know under what authority the editor responsible for this or the head of the editing group changed “We had no financial interest” to “We did not have shares”. It is substantially different. The sentence was in perfectly good French and at no time was any correction whatsoever of the form necessary, as is clear from the blues.

In the corrected version the meaning has changed. Why? One might think that someone from the Prime Minister’s Office had stepped in, because that is how things are done, and requested that the House editors change the substance, not the form.

Why, when the Bloc Québécois House leader asks for a verb tense to be changed, is he told that it is impossible, that it is too great a shift, that it changes the meaning? Why are requests from the Prime Minister’s Office treated differently than requests from the office of the Bloc Québécois House leader?

That is the first point I would like you to clear up.

I am going to have to conclude that if the Prime Minister’s Office requested a change between what the Prime Minister said and the official House *Hansard*, it is because that office had a special interest, and what was that interest? It resorted to what amounted to a coverup of an answer given by the Prime Minister. Why did the Prime Minister feel the need to make a substantial change in the statement he made here in the House from “intérêt financier” or “financial interest” to “parts” or “shares”. The two things are completely different.

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Mr. Speaker, I therefore ask you to take my point of order into account. I think my parliamentary privilege has been somehow breached. I think the editors have not behaved appropriately. I think the influence of the Prime Minister's Office is so pervasive that it has managed to change the editing service's rules for handling our requests. Ultimately we will sort this out with the Prime Minister in oral question period.

The Speaker: The question asked by the hon. member for Roberval is very specific. I will inquire to determine if other members, whether it is the Prime Minister or another member of parliament, are treated differently than the hon. member for Roberval. I believe the question is properly put.

• (1110)

I hope to be able to provide the House with an answer after looking into the matter, but we must now proceed to the consideration of private members' business.

Does the hon. member for Roberval have another question?

Mr. Michel Gauthier: Mr. Speaker, obviously I would like the Chair to see whether the change was actually made. That is one thing.

I would also like the Chair to rule on whether the Prime Minister's Office had the right to ask for such a change. Why is a change of this nature rejected when it is asked by the opposition but accepted when it is from the Prime Minister's Office? Is there a special relationship?

The Speaker: I understood all of that in the question put by the hon. member. I indicated that the difference of treatment, if that is the word in French, can be explained if there is indeed a difference and that I will get back to the House on this issue. In my opinion, it is not necessary at this point to hear other members on this issue. This is an issue raised by the hon. member because of the way he was treated. I will inquire and I will get back to the House.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair): It being 11.12 a.m., the House will now proceed to the consideration of private members' business as listed on today's order paper.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[*Translation*]

INTERNATIONAL CHILD ABDUCTION

Mr. Bernard Bigras (Rosemont—Petite-Patrie, BC) moved:

That, in the opinion of this House, the government should show leadership on the international stage: (a) by taking action designed to increase the number of signatory countries to the Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child

Abduction; (b) by signing bilateral treaties that include commitments to respect custody and access orders as originally handed down by the courts; and (c) by taking the necessary steps within its own borders to combat international child abduction.

He said: Mr. Speaker, it is with considerable joy as well as considerable emotion that I rise to speak to Motion No. 219 which I am introducing today.

Although I am aware that it is not traditional to do so, I would like to begin by thanking the standing committee on private members' business, not only for allowing debate on this matter today but for making it possible for members to express themselves clearly in a vote that will be held very shortly in the House of Commons.

I will touch on a number of aspects relating to international abduction, beginning with a general picture of the present situation both internationally and in Canada. I will also list some of the programs developed by the Missing Children's Registry.

As well, I will speak about the convention on the rights of the child, an international convention containing a number of provisions aimed at combatting the illegal transport of children. In my opinion, this is something a number of countries should take into consideration if we are to expand the fight against international child abduction so that it is not merely a Canadian effort but an international one as well.

I will also be speaking about the Hague convention on the civil aspects of international child abduction, which has been signed by 54 countries. Unfortunately, too few countries have signed it yet at this point. Unfortunately too, it has certain flaws which need to be addressed if located children are to be returned to their country of origin.

I will also speak to the matter of bilateral agreements. In many cases, even if the international conventions have not been signed, particularly the Hague convention on the civil aspects of international child abduction, a certain number of countries have entered into bilateral agreements.

• (1115)

With respect to parents who are victims of child abduction, we will take a look at just how the conventions are applied to see whether parents can find an appropriate way to recover their child as a result of the signing of these agreements.

I will also look at the question of measures to be taken within Canada. It is not just a matter of showing diplomatic and international leadership on this issue, Canada must show leadership at home, within its own borders, in order to fight international abduction of children.

I will set out a number of appropriate measures Canada could consider and act on in order to fight this major scourge.

I will mention a number of recommendations appearing in a report drafted by the standing house subcommittee on foreign affairs in April 1998 when the House considered the entire question and proposed a number of recommendations. In my opinion, the government should have between 1998 and today noted the report and come up with a number of solutions and measures to fight this scourge.

Finally, I will note that the fifth special commission on the Hague convention on the international abduction of children is being held from March 22 to 28. The Minister of Foreign Affairs should have been in attendance at this commission in our opinion in order to improve various aspects and measures of the convention.

Therefore, the motion I have tabled today, which will be debated, demands that the federal government exercise some leadership in order to increase the number of countries that are signatories to the Hague convention on the civil aspects of international child abduction. It calls on Canada to sign bilateral treaties that include commitments to respect custody and access orders as originally handed down by the courts. Finally, it demands that the federal government take the necessary steps within its own borders to combat international child abduction.

Not only am I very pleased to speak to this motion today as a parliamentarian but from a personal point of view this debate also gives me the hope of seeing a fundamental issue finally resolved.

On January 17, 1993, my spouse's son, Karim, of whom she had legal custody for a few years, was abducted. He was three years old at the time. The father, a Canadian of Egyptian origin, took advantage of a Sunday outing with his young son to abduct him and take him to his native country. That was the beginning of a long process involving three lawyers and high legal fees, but above all, it was the beginning of a sad human and family drama that is still unresolved.

In Canada for 1999 alone it is estimated that 358 children were abducted by their father or mother, according to the number of cases reported to the Missing Children's Registry. Half of that number were the subject of a custody order from the court. In Canada, under our criminal code, such an offence carries a sentence of 10 years.

Unfortunately, however, the belief that abduction is the most serious violation of a child's rights is not yet widespread.

The Hague convention on the civil aspects of international child abduction, the only multilateral instrument against international child abduction, which came into force on December 1, 1983, has been signed or ratified by only 54 countries.

In order to protect the interests of children, each signatory country agrees to respect custody arrangements made under the laws of other countries and to return an abducted child to his or her legal guardian in the country where he or she resided before the abduction.

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Members must know, however, that the geographical scope of this convention is very limited since no country under Muslim law has signed it yet.

• (1120)

It would seem that Muslim laws and religious customs establishing the rights of parents and the influence of the family are the main obstacles to middle eastern countries signing the Hague convention. For instance, by law in Egypt, the child of a Muslim father must observe Islamic religious practices and a mother must be married to the father of her child for reasons of morality. In addition, Islamic countries apparently do not see the family as consisting of two equal partners, both with an equal right to access to their child.

The only recourse for parents whose children have been abducted are bilateral treaties with countries that are not signatories to the Hague convention, negotiations which could be conducted between countries and which could result in the conclusion of provisions similar to the convention. In this connection, it should be pointed out that Canada has signed a repatriation treaty with Egypt. Unlike the convention, this treaty is not binding and contains no obligation to comply with the custody and access order handed down by the initial court.

Canada must therefore show leadership on the international and diplomatic stage so as to increase the number of signatory countries to the Hague convention, and negotiate bilateral treaties with non-signatory countries by imposing legal obligations for the return of children to the country in which they resided before being abducted. In addition, Canada must take immediate measures within its own borders.

How is it that three year old Karim was allowed out of the country with his father, who did not have custody of the child, without the permission of his mother, who had a court order? What sort of document check was carried out, particularly with respect to the production of a passport for a child? Did customs officials and airline personnel have the required authority and training to prevent such a situation?

It is estimated that there have been approximately 200 cases where customs officials have suspected that a child was being abducted but were unable to stop the presumed abductors because they did not have the authority.

The fight against international child abduction is first and foremost a fight for the right of children and for the love of their parents. The solutions require the Canadian government to show international and diplomatic leadership and to foster close co-operation between the solicitor general, the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police and the provincial ministers responsible for law enforcement.

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As I said earlier, this is a general picture of what we are experiencing here in Canada. Moreover, we know that in 1988 the solicitor general and the government created the Missing Children's Registry. The primary roles and objectives of this registry, along with a program entitled our missing children, are to intercept and rescue children who have disappeared, have been abducted and have crossed international borders to publish lookout notices at the borders and to install placards of missing children at all Canadian border crossings. This organization also provides training to the personnel of law enforcement bodies and of other services, such as airline companies, so that child abductors can be found out.

The mandate and role of the Missing Children's Registry and of the related program did not achieve the results anticipated. The time has come to be more rigorous in the training provided to civil aviation staff.

• (1125)

The time has come to give more powers to customs officers. They must not merely monitor the importation and exportation of goods. They must also ensure that children do not leave the country without the previous authorization of both parents.

I referred to the mandate of the Missing Children's Registry. The mandate is even broader. The registry must also help, if necessary, all police forces during their investigations on missing children.

When victim parents appeared before the standing committee on foreign affairs in 1988, many of them told us that even though complaints were made to local police stations, it took more than 24 hours before an investigation was opened. It is important to realize that the first hours, the first days, the first minutes are the most important if we want to find the child.

We cannot wait 24 hours after a parent makes a complaint to his or her local police station to open an investigation. The protocol established for police has to be stronger and stricter to ensure that an investigation is undertaken in the first hours after a complaint is received and that the Missing Children's Registry officials and Interpol are informed. If the abductor is no longer in Canada, we should be able to station Interpol officers at various U.S. border crossings, if necessary, to anticipate the return of the child.

It is obvious that the protocol has to be strengthened, and of course that has to be done in co-operation with the RCMP, the Sûreté du Québec and municipal police forces.

Moreover, the registry's mandate is to check the Canadian Police Information Centre's file, also called the missing persons computerized system, to give more information or follow up on missing children investigations, as needed.

Would it not be more effective and better if customs officials had in their possession all the information on the custody order? If they saw that there was a custody order from a court and that a parent who did not have the custody of the child was trying to leave the country, that person could be arrested before boarding a plane belonging to a foreign airline. We should never forget that from the moment that the abductor parent and the child are inside the plane of a foreign airline company, there is nothing more we can do, even if the plane is still on Canadian territory.

Customs officials have a crucial role to play in the identification of abductors. They must be provided with all the means to do their job.

As we know, Quebec acts as the central authority in that regard, under the convention on the civil aspects of international child abduction. Quebec is responsible for the implementation of the convention. As I said, the administrative law branch of the justice department of Quebec acts as the central authority responsible for the implementation of the convention on the civil aspects of international child abduction, which helps to locate and repatriate children who are illegally taken to a foreign country by a parent.

• (1130)

Contrary to what is presently done in Canada, in Quebec we can identify, and this is easily accessible on the website of the Department of Justice, countries where abducted children have been taken.

This was one of the requirements made repeatedly to the House subcommittee on foreign affairs by organizations, namely The Missing Children's Network Canada, which come to the assistance of parents whose children have been abducted. They asked that a national register of children abducted in Canada be established to facilitate their identification.

We cannot help but note there is no such registry available that would allow us to intervene. As we know, Quebec has one. For example, we know of a number of cases in the United States, France, the Netherlands, Portugal, Switzerland, Venezuela, Zimbabwe as well as in Egypt. We know that a number of children have been abducted and taken illegally into these countries.

It might be high time we had a national registry, as requested by the groups that appeared in March 1998 before the House of Commons standing committee on foreign affairs, and by others as well.

We must also know what the terms and conditions of the convention are. It is not that simple. Before one's case can be examined under the Hague convention on the civil aspects of international child abduction, a number of conditions must be met.

I would like to point out a number of points I have brought forward but I want to remind the House that the fifth meeting of the special commission on the operation of the Hague Convention on the civil aspects of international child abduction is being held from March 22 to 28.

On March 5, I asked the foreign affairs minister to take part in that meeting. Unfortunately, we cannot help but notice that the minister will not participate. I think it would have allowed the government to show leadership at the diplomatic level, as my motion is calling for today.

I wish that all members of parliament could vote for this motion, which essentially calls for action, as I said earlier, for the defence of children rights and for the love of their parents.

Mr. Marcel Proulx (Hull—Aylmer, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to support Motion No. 219. International child abduction is a tragic phenomenon that affects too many Canadian families.

The motion calls on the Government of Canada to show leadership on this issue on the international stage. This is what Canada is already doing. Indeed, for many years the Government of Canada has been leading the efforts globally to find effective ways to prevent and solve international child abduction cases.

The Canadian approach toward child abduction has always been to ensure that children's best interests are a priority. The Hague convention on the civil aspects of international child abduction was drafted some 20 years ago and became a reality through Canada's efforts.

For a long time, Canada's priority has been to prevent international child abduction cases, whenever possible, and to find solutions when abductions happen. In the great majority of cases, these situations happen during or after the parents' breaking up, particularly when one parent or both have close family ties with another country whom they are citizens from.

Twenty years ago, Canada started negotiations that led to the drafting of the Hague convention on the civil aspects of international child abduction. The Hague convention came into force on December 1, 1983. Canada is still the first among those who are trying to broaden the application of the Hague convention, the only multilateral instrument providing for effective assistance to children who are victims of transborder abductions.

• (1135)

According to the objective and guiding principle of the Hague convention, the child's interests are best served by him returning promptly to his normal or regular country of residence.

In 1983, when the Hague convention came into force, only three countries signed it, including Canada. Thanks to pressure by

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the foreign affairs department, more than 65 states are now signatories of the convention and that number is likely to grow.

The Hague convention is the only international agreement that one can refer to when dealing with international child abduction. Its accomplishments are impressive and the commitment to make it work and to increase the number of signatory states remains one of the most important and constant priorities of the government.

The Hague convention puts the interests of children first.

In 1998 the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade published a report entitled "International Child Abduction: Issues for Reform." In that document, the committee recommended that Canada continue to promote the Hague convention and to increase the number of signatory states.

The Canadian government's reaction to the recommendations was positive. The Minister of Foreign Affairs stepped up his efforts and approaches to many countries in order to set forth the benefits of the Hague convention. Representations have been made internationally, especially with several nations in Asia-Pacific, Africa, Latin America and the Middle East.

For example, a team of officials of the foreign affairs and justice departments went to Vietnam in late February for bilateral consultations. Among the subjects discussed were the benefits of the Hague convention. Canada urged Vietnam to consider signing the convention and offered important practical advice on the implementation of the convention.

The same kind of initiative was taken several times in many countries throughout the world.

Canada has a leadership role in the preparation of the fourth special commission on the Hague convention on the civil aspects of international child abduction. This meeting will be the most important international operational review since the convention came into effect. Many options have been suggested. The international consensus is that the best option to prevent and remedy the problem of international child abduction is to abide by the Hague convention.

But we know that all countries party to the convention do not always implement it as it should be. Procedural delays, non-compliance with court orders to return children, contradictory domestic legislation and legal interpretations not always in accordance with the Hague convention are some of the problems that can arise when proceedings are taken in other countries under the Hague convention.

To maintain the confidence of the international community in the Hague convention, member states must commit to fully uphold-

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their obligations under the convention. To promote a cohesive interpretation of the convention, the justice minister will hand out a \$15,000 grant to the Hague child project in order to set up a data bank where will be stored legal decisions pursuant to the Hague convention.

The fourth special commission will be a crucial meeting where decisions on how to better implement and enforce the Hague convention will be made. Canada is sending to this meeting a huge multidisciplinary team: representatives of the foreign affairs and justice departments, provincial delegates in charge of implementing the convention and judges who have to apply the convention.

● (1140)

Canada is a world leader in promoting the goals of the Hague convention. We do everything we can to increase the number of signatories to the convention. In fact, we are taking all appropriate measures to make the Hague convention more efficient, to help the Canadian families of children who have been abducted and to ensure that abducted Canadian children are returned to Canada safe and sound.

With your permission, I will now examine the question of bilateral treaties respecting custody and access. Canadian consular authorities have growing responsibilities in the area of family matters, including the abduction of children by the father or mother and other types of matters where the wellbeing of Canadian families travelling or residing abroad is a source of concern.

This increased volume of family matters requiring consular assistance is due in part to the increased numbers of Canadians with dual citizenship and the high mobility of Canadians and Canadian families.

Encouraging countries to sign the Hague convention on the civil aspects of international child abduction remains Canada's method of choice in managing cases of child abduction. However, given the concerns raised by the Hague convention in many countries in the middle east, where Shariah family law is in effect, Canada has negotiated innovative bilateral agreements that constitute an effective way of dealing with such cases.

As cases of international child abduction are not covered by official agreements, they can drag on, be hard to settle and become bilateral irritants. Parents are separated from their children, and children are taken away from familiar surroundings. The parents of a family in conflict try turning to the justice system of one country in order to establish living conditions or terms of custody of members of the family that live usually in another country.

International child abduction is a crime. Canada has put comprehensive and effective measures in place to fight this phenomenon.

However, cases of abduction continue. The Government of Canada is determined to find new ways to prevent and resolve cases of child abduction. We must all work on this objective. It is in the best interest of our children.

[English]

Mr. Vic Toews (Provencher, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to speak today in support of the motion put forward by my colleague from the Bloc, the hon. member for Rosemont—Petite-Patrie.

In introducing the motion, my colleague has raised an important issue that few will disagree should remain a priority for the House, that is, the protection and best interest of the children.

For many years the international community has recognized the need for countries to co-operate in order to remedy child custody and abduction problems. In 1976 the Hague convention on private international law accepted a Canadian proposal to alleviate some of these problems. This proposal led to the Hague convention on the civil aspects of international child abduction.

The objectives of the convention are: first, to secure the prompt return of a child wrongfully removed to or retained in any contracting state; and, second, to ensure that the rights of custody and access of one contracting state are effectively respected in the other contracting states.

As a leader in these negotiations, Canada was the second country to ratify the convention which came into force in December 1983. To date, 53 countries, including Canada, have adopted the convention.

According to the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, over 300 Canadian children have been returned under the convention.

Although the convention is supported in principle by a number of countries and has been relatively successful in achieving its aims, some recent reports say that we are not doing enough.

Let us look at the 1999 report by the international forum on parental child abduction.

● (1145)

The report stated that although it:

—was a giant step forward in dealing with cases of international child abduction in a more uniform, consistent way. . . in too many cases, the Hague Convention appears not to be working as originally intended, and too many cases remain unresolved.

Some problems cited were: a lack of systematic data; wide variations in outcome and interpretation; undue delay in reaching resolutions; lack of public awareness; and lack of enforceability of return orders.

The Canadian government has not been entirely oblivious to these problems. The government's 1998 response to a committee report reviews 14 recommendations that address similar issues relating to the Hague convention, as well as domestic issues pertaining to child custody issues and abduction.

Many of the committee's recommendations are similar, if not identical, to the provision of today's motion, although it remains to be seen what action the government has taken to implement the recommendations.

The issue must not be left unresolved. Now that it has come up again in the House, we must find real solutions and initiate concrete action on behalf of children.

Let us consider the first provision of the motion that calls on the House to take action designed to increase the number of signatory countries to the Hague convention on civil aspects of international child abduction. There is no question how absolutely crucial this is. The convention can only be effective insofar as other nations are willing both to participate and to enforce once they have signed on.

Most of Europe and North America, as well as Australia and New Zealand, have signed on. However only five African nations are signatories. In Asia and the Middle East there are six, and in South America there are seven.

The difficulties in increasing the number of signatory countries are many. In particular, the laws of some Middle Eastern and African nations may make international co-operation on the matter more complex, especially in terms of parental abductions.

In many middle eastern and African countries, as my colleague from the Bloc pointed out, the father's permission is often required for his children to leave that country. The father will often have ultimate custody, despite the fact that the child may have dual citizenship in Canada or another country.

Bearing that in mind, it may be difficult to persuade countries with such laws to subscribe to or subject themselves to these principles. In taking any steps one must obviously bear that in mind. As my colleague from the Bloc has stated, Canada needs to show leadership.

Despite the difficulties, we must step up our efforts to persuade other nations that it is in their interest to co-operate to protect children both at home and abroad. It has often been said that it takes a village to raise a child. In this case, it will take all nations of the world working together to ensure that children's rights are secured and protected and that parents do not need to live in fear for their children.

The second provision, to sign bilateral treaties that include commitments to respect custody and access orders as originally handed down by the courts, is extremely vital. If we cannot persuade non-signatory countries to sign on to the convention, we must continue to negotiate bilateral treaties with those countries.

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The third and last provision of the motion is to take the necessary steps within our own borders to combat international child abduction. Of course, any international initiative must and should begin at home. Authorities, such as the solicitor general, the RCMP, the police associations and provincial and territorial ministers, should work closely together to develop a policy instructing police officers to report suspected child abductors to the missing children's registry.

• (1150)

All missing children reports should automatically be entered into the Canadian Police Information Centre, CPIC. Although this already occurs to some extent, our missing children's registry is nowhere near as extensive as it should be in order to be truly effective.

Within our own borders, child custody and abduction problems are extremely serious. Outside our borders, however, we have almost no control over what happens once a child is abducted. This must change if we are to give Canadian children the level of security and protection they are entitled to.

Accordingly, I would ask that all members vote in favour of the motion.

Mr. Bill Casey (Cumberland—Colchester, PC): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to speak to the motion today. I compliment the hon. member for bringing it forth. He has a long track record of dealing with issues that concern young people in Canada and around the world. He deserves a lot of credit and recognition for his work.

It is obvious to all members that young people are our most precious resource and that child abduction is reprehensible. Whether a child is abducted by a parent who does not have custody or by someone else, using children to accomplish one's own purposes is wrong.

We compliment the member for his work. He has a long track record of bringing up issues with respect to young people and children. He has taken an avid interest in adoption laws, especially issues surrounding immigration and international adoptions. My party supports the motion and will be behind it all the way.

The Hague convention on the civil aspects of international child abduction signed in 1983 was a multilateral treaty to protect children from the harmful effects of parental abduction and retention across international borders and boundaries. The convention provides a procedure for attempting to bring about the prompt return of children. Sixty-five countries have already signed the treaty, including Monaco, Canada, Ireland, Great Britain, France and the United States.

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The convention is one of three signed at the Hague with the aim of protecting children. We think the motion, if successful and turned into policy by the government, would enhance and increase the protection provided by the convention. That is one reason we support the motion and feel that it should be done through The Hague process. The motion, if passed, would certainly ensure the rights of custody and protect children.

The Hague convention applies to children under the age of 16. How can children under 16 look after themselves if they do not have protection or a choice of where to go if someone abducts them? The convention is certainly appropriate.

If a parent believes a child has been removed or retained in breach of their custody rights, they can apply to a central authority under the convention. The convention also details some exceptions to returning the child to his or her home state. For example, if in returning the child it could cause further harm, then the child may be able to remain in the new state, which is again appropriate. There is flexibility in the convention to protect children no matter what the situation.

To facilitate the return of children, the Permanent Bureau of The Hague Conference on Private International Law has established the international child abduction database which makes accessible all judicial decisions taken around the world on the abduction convention.

Motion No. 219 by the Bloc has three parts, and we support them all. One, the federal government should take action to increase the number of signatory countries to the Hague convention on the civil aspects of international child abduction. Sixty-five countries are signatories at present, and that is not enough. We would certainly like to see more countries sign on. The federal government should take the initiative on that.

In the wake of the fatal car crash in Ottawa involving a Russian diplomat, I have risen in the House on several occasions and asked the minister of foreign affairs to initiate a dialogue on changing the Vienna convention with respect to diplomatic immunity. Although we brought it up time and time again, the government shows no interest in taking that initiative. The same type of initiative could be taken with respect to the motion to bring more countries under The Hague convention. The government has an obligation to act and should act. I hope it acts in both these cases.

• (1155)

The second part of the motion says that the federal government should show leadership

—by signing bilateral treaties that include commitments to respect custody and access orders as originally handed down by the courts;

Such treaties would be as important as the overall convention, and more powerful in many cases, because they would involve one country dealing directly with another.

Third, the federal government can show leadership by taking steps within its own borders to combat international child abduction. The government can never do enough to protect children, yet its record leaves something to be desired. More children live in poverty now than 12 years ago when the House passed a motion to eradicate child poverty by the year 2000. Years after the motion to eradicate child poverty, the government has still not addressed the issue.

In Liberal speeches from the throne, children's issues are mentioned. However I am not sure anything concrete has been accomplished or that any tangible action has been taken.

The PC Party has been concerned with this issue for many years. When we were in power we spearheaded the missing children initiative. In May 1980, before the convention was signed, a former colleague of mine, Mr. Benno Friesen, member for Surrey—White Rock—North Delta, tabled a private member's bill dealing with parental abduction and custody matters. He had introduced it in 1976. The bill received the support of the government of the day and its wording was quite close to that of government bills introduced in 1978.

I will quote Mr. Friesen from *Hansard* in December 1980, 21 years ago.

I have had many representations received in my office regarding this type of case. These are cases involving virtually helpless parents who have had their children snatched from them by the other parent, usually, but not always, the father. The parent with custody granted by the court becomes a helpless victim. . . There seems to be no elementary or emotional security for these children in their formative years. They sometimes become scarred for life through such an experience.

That was said in the House over 20 years ago and still applies today. I mention it to show that was the case even before the Canada treaty entered into force on December 1, 1983.

The Progressive Conservative Party takes the issue very seriously. Because of this, we support the motion and congratulate the hon. member for bringing it forth.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Carole-Marie Allard (Laval East, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak to Motion No. 219, which deals with international child abduction.

Canada's record in solving cases of international child abduction by the father or the mother is well known not only here but worldwide. Let us not forget that in countries that are not party to the Hague convention child abductions are treated on a case by case basis.

Even though the desired outcome is generally the same, namely bringing the child or children back to Canada, each case must be dealt with based on its own particularities.

The main obstacles to the child's return may be related to the following: the relationship between the father and the mother and other close relatives; the marital status of the parents; the gender of the child or of the parent seeking the return of the child; family law and the religious system in the foreign country where the child is; and the nationality of the parents or of the abducted children.

The consular affairs bureau, which has a vast experience in dealing with child abduction cases in countries that are not party to the Hague convention, has succeeded in securing the return of children from foreign countries, including middle eastern countries such as Lebanon, Egypt, Kuwait, Syria and Iran.

These past few years the department has managed to reunite more than 30 children taken to non-signatory countries with their parents who had legal custody in Canada. No other country with a similar incidence of child abduction by the father or the mother has such a high success rate.

● (1200)

The consular affairs bureau works in close co-operation with other agencies, particularly with the partners involved in the our missing children program, namely the passport office, the RCMP, Customs Canada and Immigration Canada. The high degree of co-operation between these bodies plays a critical role when disappeared or missing children must be rescued.

While there is no single or easy solution leading to success, some measures have, in a number of cases, helped the return of children, or helped maintain contact between children and the Canadian parent left behind. The measures taken by Canadian police forces to lay criminal charges against the parent who abducts a child are important ones. International search and rescue activities conducted abroad by police forces can be greatly facilitated when criminal charges are laid.

Then there are the measures to maintain or facilitate contact and communication between the abducting parent, the children abducted and the parent left behind. Except for our consular agents, parents who are left behind often have no one to turn to in order to get information on their children and to maintain contact with them.

Thanks to these efforts, consular agents have managed to negotiate visiting rights for the parents left behind. Visiting rights can be essential to preserving the relationship between children and the Canadian parent during the years that it may take to settle such cases. These rights are also important to restore confidence between the parents, which can sometimes lead to a voluntary return of children.

Private Members' Business

Patience also comes into play. Some cases were settled years after the abduction and in rare cases the abducted child sought consular assistance to come back to Canada when he was old enough to do so on his own.

Then there are the representations made to foreign authorities. Consular agents contact authorities in foreign countries and closely co-operate with them to settle these cases. Since most countries that have not signed the Hague convention share with the signatories the desire to reduce the incidence of international child abduction, they are always disposed to support and discuss these cases.

Other countries frequently find ways to help us, within the limitations of their own systems. This approach has, for instance, been used by the Canadian department to negotiate two bilateral agreements with Egypt and Lebanon in order to facilitate the settlement of cases of children that have been abducted and taken to these countries.

Unlike the Hague convention, the bilateral agreements do not include any mandatory provisions relating to the return of abducted children. These agreements are not intended to replace the Hague convention, which is still the preferred means for handling international abduction cases, but they are one of the outcomes of the constructive co-operation shown by the governments of Egypt and Lebanon in consular affairs with the Government of Canada.

These agreements provide an official framework at the diplomatic level for discussion and information sharing on specific consular matters, including cases relating to child abduction and child custody. The agreements set up joint advisory commissions comprised of representatives of the Egyptian or Lebanese departments of foreign affairs, justice and the interior, and representatives of the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade and of the RCMP.

These bilateral agreements constitute a new approach that has been adopted by the Government of Canada to overcome the difficulties presented by international child abduction cases.

● (1205)

Nevertheless, far too many children are being abducted by parent. When children are taken to other countries, the mechanisms that can be used to obtain their return to Canada are imperfect in that they depend, of necessity, on co-ordination between different national legal systems. This is why the Government of Canada has put in place the most exhaustive measures even taken by any government to help the victims of international child abduction.

The challenge we must face, which reflects the commitment we have made to the public, consists in making these programs and interventions still more effective.

Private Members' Business

Canada has always urged other countries to be party to the Hague convention which remains, as I said before, the only international instrument that can be used to prevent and solve international child abductions by fathers or mothers.

Moreover, Canada is number one with regard to international efforts to ensure that the Hague convention is properly implemented by other countries. As mentioned by the member for Hull—Aylmer, Canada will be represented at the special commission which meets in March 2001 to have a look at the structure of the convention.

New supplementary agreements have been concluded, for example the 1996 Hague convention on protection of children. Canada provides significant assistance to Canadian parents who are dealing with abductions to countries where the Hague convention does not apply, always to ensure that the child is returned to Canada safe and sound.

To solve the problem of international child abductions by fathers or mothers, the government has come up with several measures, including bilateral conventions and agreements. I would even add that what Canada is doing now goes further than the proposals included in the Bloc Québécois's motion.

Many of these initiatives have already been endorsed by the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade, for instance, the 1998 report entitled "International Child Abduction: Issues for Reform".

I will conclude by saying that all these initiatives show that the Government of Canada has for some time made determined efforts to find ways to prevent international child abductions.

Mr. Pierre Brien (Témiscamingue, BQ): Mr. Speaker, it is with pleasure that I support the motion moved by the member for Rosemont—Petite-Patrie. This is something that I would have preferred we not have to do but in the past five years almost 300 children in Canada have been abducted by a foreigner, which also shows that we have considerable difficulty recovering these children.

I listened closely to the debate and followed the issue, since my colleague brought it to the public's attention. Often refuge is taken behind the fact that there are agreements, conventions and so forth. It is all very fine and well to sign agreements and conventions, but some means of enforcing them is also necessary. That is the problem we are facing. There is little that can actually be done to get these children back.

The member for Rosemont—Petite-Patrie knows whereof he speaks because his spouse went through such a situation. I believe he is probably the member of this House who knows the most about this sort of situation.

It is unfortunate that the Liberal Party member seems more inclined to recite his briefing notes. Furthermore, I wish to point out to him that this is not a Bloc Québécois motion but a motion by a member which is being debated under private members' business.

I am sure all Bloc Québécois members and most, if not all, other members of the House will be pleased to support the member for Rosemont—Petite-Patrie, so that measures are much more effective than they are right now.

I listened carefully to my colleague earlier when he said that from the outset people often have to wait too long before action is taken. Not only must the federal government take action but the police must also review the way they operate and there must be co-operation in the exchange of information. Customs officials must also play a key role and their authority should be increased.

• (1210)

For example, we talked about measures as simple as issuing passports to children. There are very concrete actions. The rules could be tightened so that we would have an increased intervention capability that would help us prevent such incredible human tragedy where a parent is separated from his or her child. I do not need to make a long speech on this issue because everyone is aware of the negative and disruptive consequences that has on the child, on the parents and on the community. It is a human tragedy.

If only we could take measures limiting such tragedies because when we hear about a case in particular, we feel that it is very exceptional. I was very surprised to learn that there were around 60 cases a year, on average. When I said that there were close to 300 cases in the last five years, it was way too much.

I do not have enough time to speak in detail to each of the measures. My colleague has done a much better job dealing with the issue. I invite all members to unanimously support the motion. I invite the government to go beyond statements of principle and to take measures that have more teeth than what we now have.

I congratulate my colleague from Rosemont—Petite-Patrie and I assure him of my support, as no doubt all members of parliament will. Not everyone will get to speak but everyone will get the opportunity to vote and show his or her support for such an important motion.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair): It being 12.12 p.m., the time provided for the consideration of private members' business has now expired and the order is dropped to the bottom of the order of precedence on the order paper.

Government Orders

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[Translation]

YOUTH CRIMINAL JUSTICE ACT

BILL C-7—TIME ALLOCATION MOTION

Hon. Don Boudria (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.) moved:

That in relation to Bill C-7, An Act in respect of criminal justice for young persons and to amend and repeal other Acts, not more than one further sitting day shall be allotted to the consideration of the second reading stage of the bill and, fifteen minutes before the expiry of the time provided for government business on the allotted day of the second reading consideration of the said bill, any proceedings before the House shall be interrupted, if required for the purpose of this Order, and in turn every question necessary for the disposal of the second reading stage of the bill shall be put forthwith and successively without further debate or amendment.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair): The House has heard the terms of the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair): All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair): All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair): In my opinion the yeas have it.

And more than five members having risen:

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair): Call in the members.

• (1255)

[English]

(The House divided on the motion, which was agreed to on the following division:)

(Division No. 36)

YEAS

Members

Adams
Allard
Assad
Bagnell
Barnes
Bennett
Bevilacqua
Blondin-Andrew
Bonwick
Brown
Bulte
Carignan
Castonguay
Cauchon
Charbonneau
Collenette
Cotler

Alcock
Anderson (Victoria)
Augustine
Baker
Bélanger
Bertrand
Binet
Bonin
Boudria
Bryden
Calder
Carroll
Catterall
Chamberlain
Coderre
Copps
Cullen

DeVillers
Dromisky
Duhamel
Easter
Eyking
Gagliano
Goodale
Gray (Windsor West)
Harvard
Hubbard
Jennings
Karetak-Lindell
Knutson
Lastewka
Lincoln
Macklin
Malhi
Marleau
McCallum
McKay (Scarborough East)
Minna
Murphy
Nault
O'Brien (London—Fanshawe)
Pagtakhan
Patry
Phinney
Pillitteri
Price
Redman
Regan
Robillard
Savoy
Scott
Speller
St-Julien
Stewart
Thibault (West Nova)
Tirabassi
Torsney
Vanclief
Wilfert

Dhaliwal
Drouin
Duplain
Eggleton
Finlay
Godfrey
Graham
Harb
Harvey
Jackson
Jordan
Kilgour (Edmonton Southeast)
Kraft Sloan
Lee
Longfield
Mahoney
Maloney
Martin (LaSalle—Émard)
McCormick
McLellan
Mitchell
Myers
Normand
O'Reilly
Paradis
Pettigrew
Pickard (Chatham—Kent Essex)
Pratt
Proulx
Reed (Halton)
Richardson
Saada
Scherrer
Serré
St. Denis
Steckle
Szabo
Thibeault (Saint-Lambert)
Tonks
Valeri
Whelan
Wood—118

NAYS

Members

Abbott
Anders
Bachand (Saint-Jean)
Bellehumeur
Bigras
Brien
Cadman
Clark
Duceppe
Elley
Fournier
Gauthier
Goldring
Grewal
Guimond
Hearn
Hill (Macleod)
Jaffer
Laframboise
Lebel
Lunney (Nanaimo—Alberni)
Marceau
McNally
Merrifield
Pankiw
Peschisolido
Reid (Lanark—Carleton)
Ritz
Skelton
Spencer
Stoffer
Thompson (New Brunswick Southwest)
Venne—65

Ablonczy
Anderson (Cypress Hills—Grasslands)
Bailey
Bergeron
Breitkreuz
Burton
Casson
Dubé
Duncan
Epp
Gagnon (Québec)
Godin
Gouk
Grey (Edmonton North)
Hanger
Herron
Hinton
Keddy (South Shore)
Lancôt
Lunn (Saanchi—Gulf Islands)
MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough)
Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)
Meredith
Moore
Penson
Picard (Drummond)
Reynolds
Sauvageau
Sorenson
Stinson
Strahl
Toews

Government Orders

PAIRED MEMBERS

Asselin	Bourgeois
Bradshaw	Caplan
Cardin	Crête
Dalphond-Guiral	Discepolo
Farrah	Gagnon (Champlain)
Girard-Bujold	Guay
Ianno	Laliberte
Lalonde	Lavigne
LeBlanc	Loubier
Marcil	Matthews
McTeague	Ménard
Neville	O'Brien (Labrador)
Paquette	Perron
Peterson	Provenzano
Rocheleau	Rock
Roy	St-Hilaire
Telegdi	Tremblay (Lac-Saint-Jean—Saguenay)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Béclair): I declare the motion carried.

SECOND READING

The House resumed from February 14 consideration of the motion that Bill C-7, an act in respect of criminal justice for young persons and to amend and repeal other acts, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

Mr. Darrel Stinson (Okanagan—Shuswap, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the hon. member for Yorkton—Melville.

I am pleased to rise today to speak to the legislation. If the people out in the real world were listening earlier today, they would have noticed that time allocation has been forced on the House in regard to Bill C-7, a matter which is a foremost problem faced by myself, as a member of parliament, as it is I am sure for many other members in the House, since coming here in 1993. We are talking about the Young Offenders Act.

● (1300)

Let us just take a look at this. For well over seven years the government has been working on or promising to introduce new legislation with regard to the Young Offenders Act. For over seven years it has worked on this problem and this is the best it could come up with. It has come up with a piece of legislation that absolutely does not address many areas of concern that out there in the public when it comes to young offenders.

Not only our party but other parties in the House were involved in committee hearings that went on across Canada. We listened to different people and had witnesses come in with regard to this piece of legislation, yet the government has just about totally ignored most of these recommendations.

A government's first and foremost responsibility be to any country and to any of its citizens has to be safety and well-being. That should be the foremost responsibility of any government. This

piece of legislation does not come anywhere close to addressing that. We have a habit in this country of saying that children and our young people are precious gifts, which they are. They are also our responsibility, not only in regard to their safety and well-being but their spiritual, physical and mental well-being. That is our duty, as elected representatives, to them, to parents and to the rest of our citizens: to try to protect.

When we have pieces of legislation such as this that are supposed to address the problems in our country facing young people today and when we go out and speak in schools, I listen to the young people in the schools and they tell me that the Young Offenders Act is a joke, a laugh. These are young people who themselves are concerned about going to school, concerned about gang violence, concerned about losing their own personal property through theft or concerned about intimidation by their peers, by other young people. When we ask them about the penalties that can be imposed, they look at what has happened in our court system and start to laugh.

There is nothing out there to deter these young people—and there are a few of them but not a majority of them—out there committing these types of crimes. They look upon our judicial system and how we handle them as a joke and, when we go through it all, it is a joke.

Since the Young Offenders Act was incorporated, the violent acts of crime by youth have increased 100%. That statistic alone should tell the government that there is something wrong with the legislation it has been introducing in this regard.

When we hear people saying that the young offenders legislation should start taking in people from the age of 10 and up, we should be listening to them. Instead, we turn away from them. The government has been told this by every party in the House except the Bloc, and even its own members agreed to this in committee, and yet in this piece of legislation it has refused to address this.

I am not saying that all crimes committed by young offenders should be treated in that strict a manner. When we look at diversion or extrajudicial measures, which have been brought up, we see that they have been quite successful. For those who do not know what that is, it is merely a program whereby the accused young offender admits guilt and agrees to be dealt with in an informal manner through some form of community based committee. The committee may be made up of citizens of the community, if the accused and perhaps the victim are so inclined. The committee will talk over the case. The accused gets to acknowledge the damage and decides how best to show remorse and so on. Community service may be decided on. An apology may be written. The offender may either pay the victim for the damages or work off the damages by assisting the victim in some other manner. By successfully completing the program, the accused avoids a criminal record, which is good, and hopefully the community is satisfied with having been involved and with seeing how and why certain decisions were made.

Government Orders

• (1305)

This is all good, but the legislation was supposed to be for first time non-violent offenders. Yet this piece of legislation is not limited to first time non-violent offenders. That is why it is open to abuse. There has to be concern about that. There are some positive steps in the legislation, but it is extremely unfortunate that for the small steps it has taken forward there are still large loopholes left. Therefore we in our party cannot support it.

Liberal members come to us and ask us why we cannot support it, telling us to look at the good in it, but when we look at it, it is like asking us to pay the full price for a loaf of bread that is three-quarters rotten in order to get four good slices. It is unacceptable.

Yet when amendments come forward from other parties in the House they are totally disregarded. Instead of standing here and debating it, when a person can stand and talk for 20 minutes or a half hour and really get into the root causes, we are told there is time allocation on it. Our real concerns are not addressed. We do not have time for proper debate.

Let us take a look at clause 2 regarding definitions. A non-violent offence means an offence that does not cause or create a substantial risk of causing bodily harm. Non-violence would appear to include: drug offences such as trafficking; theft, including car theft; break and enter; perhaps even sexual touching; possession of child pornography; and fraud, just to name a few.

This is a very important definition because for these types of offences offenders will likely avoid custody. In fact it is also presumed that extrajudicial measures are sufficient and they will not even gain a criminal record.

We have to wonder what is going on here. Presumptive offences include only five offences: first degree murder, second degree murder, attempted murder, manslaughter, and aggravated assault. That includes serious violent offences for which an adult can be sentenced to imprisonment for more than two years, if at the time of the offence committed by the young person there have been at least two previous judicial proceedings where the judge has made a judicial determination that offences were serious violent offences.

When we look at that we realize that the list does not include violent crimes in which a firearm has been used or sexual assault with a firearm or even a knife. These can be quite traumatic to the victim, yet they are not included. Why?

We leave these pieces of legislation open to interpretation and we all know what happens when we allow the courts to start interpreting what we are supposed to be doing here. We run into a bigger mess than we already have.

Although there are some good parts to the legislation, much more has to be done before it would be a viable piece of legislation.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Pierrette Venne (Saint-Bruno—Saint-Hubert, BQ): Mr. Speaker, as we have been saying all along, the Bloc Québécois is totally against the bill introduced by the justice minister.

We cannot agree to the rigid model she is proposing because her bill goes against the values shared by all the people in Quebec and everyone working with children at risk. The government is ignoring years of efforts to implement programs to help young people facing violence in their daily lives. We are not about to backtrack on this.

The government is looking backwards by taking unnecessarily repressive measures without proposing acceptable alternatives to its strong action. To supervise and to punish seems to be the underlying principle of the bill but what about preventing and addressing the problems of our youth? The question remains unanswered.

Despite what the justice minister says, what makes a bill good or bad has nothing to do with the government being reelected but rather with the bill being in touch with reality. The minister is ignoring Quebec's experience in this area. By turning young people into criminals, she is rejecting the Quebec model and its proven success based on rehabilitating young offenders. In doing that, she is compromising an effective approach in favour of considerations on which there is no consensus.

• (1310)

Why is the minister being so hard on our young people who need to be supported and guided rather than punished? Why does she want to send our young people to crime school, which is what prison is? Why deprive them of any hope? Does she want to ruin their chances of getting back on the right track? Does she want to take away their future? These are the goals pursued by the Minister of Justice.

How can a government get swept up in such a piece of legislation, the severity of which is totally pointless? According to recent statistics showing a drop in violent crimes in Canada, such an attitude on the part of the minister, which she insists on keeping despite all opposition, is absolutely unjustified.

Our young people should have a chance to tackle life with more confidence, with proper guidance and supervision, but the government wants to do the opposite.

Government Orders

The bill opens the door to consequences that the government has yet to measure. Young people, gobbled up by this repressive system, will find themselves with their backs to the wall, with no choice but to try to survive in the prison environment. Can we believe that the measures contained in the bill would really have a deterrent effect? Does the minister truly hope to do society a great service by treating this way young people in trouble?

They are being pushed too far. They are left to fend for themselves. What other result can we expect but to turn these young people into future criminals? We must denounce the bill, which was drafted mainly to satisfy a visceral need for revenge which, in the long run, will do more harm than good to our justice system and, more to the point, to our young people.

We have repeatedly denounced all this during the many discussions and debates we have had regarding the bill. Despite our repeated representations, despite the statistics on youth crime—Quebec has the lowest youth crime rate in Canada—despite negative comments from people in the field, despite the success of the Quebec model, the government keeps on turning a deaf ear.

The justice minister, confined in her ivory tower, has chosen to attack the bill's opponents instead of showing its possible benefits, which everyone is still trying to detect. The warning issued to the minister by the Bloc Québécois failed to make her see the light, so strong is her determination to legislate at all cost in this field. We remain convinced that this legislation ignores Quebec's expertise in the matter and destroys everything that has been accomplished over the years.

The implementation of this new legislation would create more problems than it would solve. We would have to start again from square one and rebuild from a basis whose future efficiency is doubtful. What the Minister is proposing is nothing short of a radical change in philosophy. Nothing justifies tightening up the current act, which has a proven track record and, I repeat, has produced the expected results.

The minister has failed to take into account the criticisms, the objections and, more important, the arguments presented to her. She has come up with a bill nearly identical to the one she introduced in the last parliament.

A few changes here and there—in the French version, the term “infliger” in relation to sentences becomes “imposer”, a fundamental nuance if there was ever one—some of the wording may be slightly different, a few scattered sentences, this is the kind of frivolous changes the minister has the nerve to call improvements.

I cannot see any significant change, any change of direction, any notable redesign, which means that the minister has not seen fit to rethink her bill in the light of everything that has been said or

written on the matter. Her bill is based on a lack of maturity and the denial of principles dear to a majority of citizens.

Canada's reputation for tolerance, compassion and good judgement will not survive this new image that the minister is trying to give her government.

Is that the way that the government wants to go? Does it want to erode its reputation on the international scene by choosing a repressive approach over a preventive one?

The Bloc Québécois refuses to go down this path of an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, and would rather rely on the law as it is applied in Quebec which, together with adequate resources and programs, is the best tool to solve the problems that the minister's bill claims to be resolving.

• (1315)

No, we will not go for this because, in its current form and in light of the actions taken, the system is achieving the desired results. These actions are not dependent on interest groups, but on needs this bill is not addressing.

Why does the minister not accept the arguments of all the stakeholders concerned? Does she not take their expertise into consideration? If she insists on going about it the wrong way, she will have to shoulder the blame for destroying something that is working well. She will have only herself to blame.

Finally, I want to underline that the Bloc is still vigorously opposed to a bill that does not respect the public consensus in Quebec. The minister must not let the bill be used to promote the hateful agenda of a small number of people. I would advise her to re-examine her position and to think a little longer about the impacts of the bill on Quebec.

I will conclude by saying that, since it does not seem that the minister will let herself be guided by reason but by futile impulses, there is no doubt that she will go ahead as she has said she will in the last few days. She should at least consider giving Quebec an exemption allowing it to continue with the act as it is right now. I doubt that the minister will have enough goodwill and good faith to satisfy this demand, considering what she recently said on the Bloc and which all my colleagues and I still remember.

Since nobody has succeeded in bringing the hon. members to take a moment to think about what they are doing with this bill, I will end on a quotation by Montesquieu, hoping that he will. “Any punishment that is not absolutely necessary is tyranny”.

I would myself add that any legislation that is not absolutely necessary is unacceptable.

Ms. Carole-Marie Allard (Laval East, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the statements of the member are totally irresponsible.

Government Orders

Is she against the fact that under the bill young offenders would no longer be brought before adult courts?

Ms. Pierrette Venne: Mr. Speaker, progress cannot be made by making disparaging remarks and attacking members of parliament.

What the Bloc Québécois has been asking for, and what I also want, is for the current legislation, which is working very well, to continue to apply in Quebec. That is what my remarks boil down to.

Ms. Carole-Marie Allard: Mr. Speaker, how can the member believe that this government would pass legislation that goes against the interests of young Canadians? Can she assure the House right now that she has read Bill C-7 in its entirety before making the remarks we just heard?

Ms. Pierrette Venne: Mr. Speaker, I certainly do read the bills before making any comments about them. I can even tell the House that I attended the hearings of the Standing Committee on Justice, where several witnesses, experts and lawyers, told me how incomprehensible this bill is. They told me that even lawyers who read their fair share of such legal documents all agree that people in the legal profession would have a tough time understanding this piece of legislation. Can you imagine how tough then it is for people who are not really used to this kind of legalese—which could be the case of the member opposite—to understand this bill? As far as I am concerned, I stand behind what I have said.

Mr. Ghislain Lebel (Chambly, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I congratulate my colleague for this most interesting speech. She was just telling us that some people within the justice system were opposed to the introduction of this bill, whatever the member opposite may say.

I would like her to tell us who are these serious stakeholders who have spoken out against the bill. I would be interested in knowing if the Barreau du Québec, the professional body of which the member opposite who is shouting so loud is a member, has expressed its views on this issue. I would like the member to tell us.

• (1320)

Ms. Pierrette Venne: Mr. Speaker, a whole group of witnesses from Quebec told us unanimously that they were opposed to this bill.

Indeed, the Barreau du Québec appeared as a witness. We also heard from all the groups that are directly involved in this field. We heard from Cécile Toutant, a well known criminology professor at the Université de Montréal. She came to tell us how this bill would be harmful to our young people and that we should continue to

apply the law as it is in Quebec. I think that was a unanimous opinion in Quebec.

Maybe the member opposite has not heard those views but I think she will have the opportunity to hear them when the bill reaches committee stage.

[English]

Mr. John Maloney (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I should like to address some deeply disturbing comments that were made when the bill was last before the House at second reading.

We have heard many comments from the benches opposite about the need for decorum and restraint in the House. The line of parliamentary respectability was crossed when the member for Berthier—Montcalm singled out a particular official of the Department of Justice and attacked the individual personally. Perhaps he may not agree with the point of view of the individual, but he should not denigrate those who cannot stand in this place to defend themselves. It lowers the level of debate in the House.

If the member's arguments are so compelling against Bill C-7 on substance, let these arguments stand on their own. His views should be considered on their own value. We do not need to debase this place with personal recriminations. The member for Berthier-Montcalm made comments that were extremely unparliamentary and the individual targeted had no opportunity to rebut those allegations.

I will now address the youth criminal justice act. One may ask why we need a new youth justice legislation? The youth justice system under the Young Offenders Act is not working as well as it should for Canadians. Too many young people are charged and often incarcerated with questionable results. Procedural protections for young people are not adequate and too many youth end up serving custodial sentences with adults.

The overarching principles are unclear and conflicting. There are disparities and unfairness in youth sentencing. Interventions are not appropriately targeted to the seriousness of the offences. They are not adequately meaningful for individual offenders and victims or adequately supportive of rehabilitation and reintegration.

The proposed youth criminal justice act attempts to address these fundamental flaws. First, with regard to targeting responses of the youth justice system to the seriousness of the offence, Canada's failure to target the most serious interventions to the most serious crimes has resulted in one of the highest youth incarceration rates in the world. The proposed law would provide a statutory framework through principles, presumption, new sentencing and front end options, so that serious violent offenders are treated

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seriously and constructive measures are available for the vast majority of less serious offences.

The presumption in favour of an adult sentence for the offences of murder, attempted murder, manslaughter and aggravated sexual assault has been expanded to include repeat serious violent offences. While an adult sentence could be applied to youth 14 years old and above under the Young Offenders Act, the presumptions would now apply to them as well unless a province or territory opts for a higher age.

Privacy protections currently do not apply to youth receiving adult sentences, and this would be continued. Where a youth is convicted of one of the most serious presumptive offences and receives a youth sentence rather than an adult sentence, the privacy protections would not apply unless the judge ruled otherwise.

Enhanced options for police and crown discretion at the front end, together with statutory presumptions about when the formal court process and custody are not to be used, will lead to meaningful, effective and faster resolutions of the majority of less serious offending behaviour.

The overall effect of this targeted youth justice system should be fewer young people being put through the formal justice system and receiving custody sentences for less serious offences and an overall reduction in our youth custody rates. It would also clarify the principles of the youth justice system.

• (1325)

The proposed youth criminal justice act sets out the purpose of the youth justice system through its principles. Unlike the Young Offenders Act, the principles of the new bill would provide clear direction, establish structure for the application of principles and thereby resolve inconsistencies. The new principles would reinforce that the criminal justice system for youth is different from the one for adults. It emphasizes preventing crime, ensuring meaningful consequences for offending behaviour, and rehabilitating and reintegrating the young person as the ways it would contribute to the protection of society.

It would ensure fairness and proportionality in sentencing. The sentencing principles in the proposed law would provide a clear, consistent and coherent code for youth sentences. They are intended to reduce disparity and reflect a fundamentally fairer approach to sentencing. Unlike the Young Offenders Act, the new legislation states that the purpose of sentencing is to hold a young person accountable for the offence committed by imposing meaningful consequences and promoting the rehabilitation and reintegration of the young person.

To reverse the current unfairness, the new law would provide that the punishment imposed on a young person must not be greater than what would be appropriate for an adult in similar circumstances. Given the significant disparity between what similarly

situated youth receive for similar offences, principles of proportionality among youth sentences are included in the new legislation. Proportionality sets the framework or limits within which the needs of the young person committing the offence are to be addressed through the criminal justice system to achieve rehabilitation and reintegration.

It would respect and protect rights. The Young Offenders Act does not adequately respect the rights of young people. It would provide that a youth could be transferred to an adult court before conviction and lose age appropriate due process protections including privacy protections on the basis of an unproven charge.

Transfer proceedings have lasted as long as two years, which impedes access to a speedy trial. Once transferred into the adult stream, youth as young as 14 could be required to serve their sentences in adult provincial or federal correctional facilities at the discretion of the judge.

The proposed law would address these shortcomings by providing that all the proceedings against a youth take place in the youth court where age appropriate due process protections apply. The hearing on the appropriateness of an adult sentence would only occur after a finding of guilt and all the evidence about the offence had been heard. The youth justice procedure for the most serious offences would be speedier, retain age appropriate due process protection and be more respectful of the presumption of innocence.

Bill C-7 also includes the presumption that if under 18 a youth would serve an adult sentence in a youth facility. This is more consistent with the spirit of the United Nations convention on the rights of the child, which is expressly referenced in the preamble of the new legislation.

It would enable meaningful consequences aimed at rehabilitation. While youth may know that their behaviour is wrong, they may not fully understand the nature and consequences of their acts for themselves and for others. Some young people lack the structure, guidance and support in their communities needed to change behavioural patterns and overcome damaging influences.

Many of the new provisions in the proposed youth criminal justice act would allow for individualized interventions that instruct the youth. Police, crowns and judges would be given statutory authority to warn and caution young people that their behaviour was not acceptable and more serious consequences may follow if they repeat that behaviour.

Conferencing is encouraged at many stages of the process, which could allow the young person to be a participant in a process with victims, family members and others to learn about the consequences of his or her behaviour and to develop ways to make amends.

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The range of sentencing options would be expanded. In addition to sentences that allow the young person to attempt to repair some of the harm caused through restitution, compensation, community service orders, there would also be new sentences that provide for close supervision and support in the community.

Changed behaviour in the community is key to addressing youth crime. These sentences include attendance orders, intensive support, supervision orders, and deferred custody and supervision orders. The proposed law would also provide a new sentence for the most violent and troubled youth stressing rehabilitation and support. It is a serious commitment to the protection of society by making every effort to stop the recurrence of the most violent youth conduct.

It would support reintegration after custody. A major flaw of the Young Offenders Act is that it currently does not provide sufficient provisions for a safe, graduated reintegration into the community.

• (1330)

The proposed law would include provisions to assist a young person's reintegration into the community, which protects the public by guarding against further crime. It would provide that periods of incarceration will be followed by periods of supervision in the community through custody and supervision orders. To ensure truth in sentencing and clarity for the young person, at the time of imposing a sentence, the judge would state in open court the portion of time that was to be served in custody and the portion to be served in the community. Breaching conditions of the community supervision could result in the youth being returned to custody.

Studies demonstrate that treatment is more effective if delivered in the community instead of in custody. The reintegration provisions encourage continuity between the custody and the community portions of the sentence through increased reintegration planning, which takes into account the youth's needs throughout the whole sentence and, through reintegration, leaves for specific purposes of up to 30 days.

It would encourage an inclusive approach to youth crime. The youth justice system under the Young Offenders Act has been criticized for not appropriately involving victims, parents, family, community and representatives from other disciplines. Youth crime is often a complex phenomenon. Involving others can improve understanding and provide support for the victims, youths, families and communities in responding constructively and meaningfully to the offending behaviour.

The proposed law specifically encourages conferences at many stages of the proceedings, including those involving the police, sentencing judges and provincial directors. Some conferences may involve bringing together professionals such as child care workers, school psychologists or others who are already involved with the

youth to seek advice and verify continuity of services. Others may be in the nature of sentencing circles or family group conferences involving victims, offenders and their families.

The proposed law would also expand the possible mandates of youth justice committees. These are committees of citizens who can assist in any aspect of the administration of the act or in any program or service for young people. They can encourage community members and agencies to take an active role in supporting constructive resolutions to the victims, families, youth and others implicated by youth crime.

The proposed youth criminal justice act corrects fundamental weaknesses of the Young Offenders Act and will result in a fair and more effective youth justice system.

In the time left, I would like to comment on some of the specific provisions of the bill as they relate to the publication of names. This is a contentious element of youth justice policy, with some arguing for publication in all cases and some opposing it in all cases. Some argue the public needs to know who the criminals are in order to protect itself from them. They argue protection of society requires the press to publish the names of all those who commit an offence.

Before accepting the argument, we should also ask ourselves how much additional protection society gets from the publication of names of adults. Unless we know the person named, or the case is of such importance that it is in the paper for weeks or months, do we pay much attention when we read in the paper the name of a person prosecuted for or found guilty of a particular offence? I am not sure we do. In most cases, a few minutes after reading it, we have already forgotten the name. This hardly can be a factor contributing to the protection of society.

Another argument against the ban of publication of names is that it is contrary to an open justice system and to the freedom of the press. It is important to emphasize that the youth justice system is an open justice system. Members of the public can attend and the press can report every detail of the case and the rendering of justice, except for information which would identify the youth. I am sure that we all recognize that freedom of the press is an important element of a free and democratic society. It should only be limited by law and in a reasonable manner that can be justified in a free and democratic society.

The current legislation governing young offenders, the Young Offenders Act, prohibits publication in all cases where the youth is dealt with in the youth system. The provisions prohibiting publication were challenged almost as soon as the Young Offenders Act came into force. The courts have decided that the provisions were a reasonable limitation on the freedom of the press and therefore valid legislation. The courts came to that conclusion because they recognized that the rehabilitation of the youth was an important

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enough societal objective to require balancing the right to the freedom of the press with this objective rehabilitation of the youth.

The new legislation would continue to allow publication of offenders' names in all cases where a youth was sentenced to an adult penalty. It would also continue to protect the names of the great majority of youth who commit offences and are sentenced to a youth penalty. It will be an offence to publish their names even after they became adults, unless the youth court considers them to fall under two very exceptional circumstances. First, if a youth is charged with a serious offence and is considered dangerous at large and publication is necessary to apprehend the youth, then the case publication would be allowed for five days.

• (1335)

Second, the youth has asked to be able to publish and the court is convinced it would be in the best interests of the youth to publish information about his or her experience with the youth criminal justice system.

In the first case the judge will authorize the police to publish for five days the name of the youth wanted. In the second case the judge will authorize the youth who asked permission to do so to publish information or cause the information to be published on his or her being dealt with in the criminal justice system. Once the youth has made the information public it is no longer protected.

Under the proposed legislation the presumption in favour of privacy would not apply to a very small category of youth who receive youth sentences. The names of youth who would be given a youth sentence for a presumptive offence of murder, attempted murder, manslaughter, aggravated sexual assault or repeat violent offences could be published unless the judge prohibits publication.

The youth court judge would prohibit publication in two instances. First, when the youth or the crown applied for a publication ban and the judge considers it appropriate in light of the importance of rehabilitating the youth in the public interest. Second, when the crown gave notice that even though it was a presumptive offence, the crown would not seek an adult penalty. The crown would do so when it was convinced that the circumstances of the offence or of the offender did not warrant an adult penalty. In that case the judge would impose a youth penalty would prohibit publication.

The legislation would not only protect the privacy of young offenders but also prohibit publication of names of youth who were victims of young offenders, and the names of youth who were witnesses in a young person's trial. The youth victim or witness could only publish information on their role in the criminal justice system when they became an adult, with the permission of the court before that time, or with the consent of his or her parent.

I believe these provisions strike an appropriate balance between the freedom of the press, which is a fundamental right in a democratic society, and the interest of society in protecting itself by the rehabilitation of young persons who have committed offences.

I will address one other area on the issue of adult sentences. Under the Young Offenders Act, if a youth is 14 or older at the time of the alleged indictable offence, the provincial prosecutor can apply to have the youth transferred to adult court, as I have indicated. In addition, the Young Offenders Act sets out a category of presumptive offences which includes murder, attempted murder, manslaughter and aggravated sexual assault. It is presumed that the individuals charged with a presumptive offence who were 16 or 17 years old at the time the alleged offence occurred will be transferred to adult court and receive adult sentences.

When a youth is transferred to adult court, the rules applicable to adults apply to the youth and the special protections granted by the Young Offenders Act, including the ban on publication do not apply. In addition, a transfer hearing which takes place before the trial begins can significantly delay the start of the trial. Some transfer hearings, including appeals of the decision to transfer, have taken more than two years to complete. Such delays can be problematic because for most young people the consequences that follow closely after the offending conduct prove to be much more meaningful.

As under the Young Offenders Act, the proposed youth criminal justice act would allow prosecutors to seek to have an adult sentence imposed if a youth 14 or older were found guilty of an indictable offence. The youth criminal justice act maintains the category of presumptive offences in the Young Offenders Act, but extends the presumption to youths 14 or 17 and to serious repeat violence offences.

A youth charged with a presumptive offence has an opportunity to demonstrate to the youth court judge that the presumption should not apply. In addition, under the proposed youth criminal justice act, provincial prosecutors would have the discretion to waive the presumption in an individual case, in which case the judge must impose a youth sentence.

Under the Young Offenders Act the crown must make an application to waive the presumption and the decision rests with the judge. The provincial attorney general could also issue guidelines to prosecutors respecting the waiver of the presumption. Finally, through an order in council a province could raise the age of the application of the presumption from 14 to 15 or 16.

The bill eliminates the transfer to adult court and provides that all proceedings against a youth take place in youth court, where age appropriate due process protections apply, as I have already indicated. Hearings to determine whether a youth sentence or an

adult sentence should be imposed would be held only after the youth has been found guilty. Therefore, the youth court judge would make the decision whether to impose a youth or adult sentence after all the evidence regarding the circumstances of the offence and the offender were put before the court.

• (1340)

This bill is a good bill. We look forward to hearing the comments today and moving forward with this legislation. The bill was before the House in the previous parliament and it is now time to get on with it. Canadians are demanding it and we should respond to their demands.

Mr. Ken Epp (Elk Island, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, the member dealt at length on the issue of naming young offenders. We support the idea that a person who has done something wrong ought to confess to it, make it right and make restitution, if it is a property crime, and do everything he or she can do to restore and build their character.

I would like the member to give us his rationale for including in this legislation that which has been practised in Canada for a number of years now. I am speaking of hiding the identity of a person who has been charged and convicted. It seems to me that it is part of accountability when someone admits that he or she did something wrong and asks for help. If the community knows who that person is that person can then go on to make a good life for himself or herself. That is what should be done. I am puzzled by Liberal insistence on keeping identities of young offenders secret.

Could the member comment on that?

Mr. John Maloney: Mr. Speaker, I certainly agree with the preamble to the member's question.

There is a certain stigmatization that goes with knowing the name of a young offender, especially when he or she has committed a minor crime. That certainly counteracts rehabilitation and reintegration, not only within the youth's community but within school as well. These people get targeted. Little Johnny is a bad boy so we should not associate with him. How can that help with the individual's reintegration into the community?

With regard to serious offences, I have already indicated that names will be and can be published.

Mr. Reg Alcock (Winnipeg South, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, if I might add to the comment made by the parliamentary secretary, I think he is quite right in what he said about stigmatization.

We must remember that youth are, by definition, in a protected category. We do not assign to youth the same rights and responsibilities that we assign to other members of society. Children exist within families. Releasing the name of one member of a family who is having difficulties stigmatizes the entire family. The entire body of youth justice is built on the basis of rehabilitation.

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As the parliamentary secretary has indicated, it is true that there are circumstances in which youth who are determined to be a danger in the community may need to be identified. However, that is an exception rather than the rule.

Mr. Kevin Sorenson (Crowfoot, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, before I proceed to speak to Bill C-7, the youth criminal justice act, I would like to take this opportunity to commend my colleague from Surrey North for his prompt and critical review of this reshaped piece of legislation.

As a new member of parliament in this 37th parliament, I also want to commend him for the wealth of information that he made available to us, especially in the justice committee, and for the many times he has helped us out. We appreciate that. I would also like to commend him also for his diligent efforts over the last three years in holding the Liberal government accountable for its failure to bring about immediate and substantive changes to the young offenders act.

My Alliance colleague lends credibility to this debate. He turned a personal tragedy, the death of his son, into a crusade. Starting with the establishment of a new group called CRY, crime, responsibility and youth, the member for Surrey North succeeded in drawing attention to the inadequacies of the youth justice system and its failure to hold young people responsible for their criminal actions.

Since his election to the House in 1997, he has utilized his wealth of information and exercised diplomacy while working with members of all sides of the House to amend bills, especially those bills that preceded Bill C-7.

• (1345)

I also congratulate the member for Provencher for his election to the House and for his appointment as lead justice critic for the Canadian Alliance.

The former Manitoba attorney general's speech earlier this month clearly demonstrated his experience and knowledge regarding the Young Offenders Act. I also appreciated his references to federal-provincial financial agreements and how they have come to play a part in the bill.

In June 1997 the justice minister promised to make amending the Young Offenders Act a priority. Nearly three and a half years later Canadians are still saddled with an ineffective law that has failed to adequately hold young people accountable for criminal behaviour. In 1997 the minister realized the need to amend the act. She said, and it was publicized, that it was clearly the most unpopular legislation in Canada.

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More than five years ago, following the 10th anniversary of the Young Offenders Act, the Standing Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs initiated a review of the justice system. After months of cross country hearings, submissions and presentations by people with a vested interest in youth justice, and at a cost of almost half a million dollars, the committee tabled a report in April 1997. The report contained a number of recommendations to amend the Young Offenders Act.

In dissent, the Canadian Alliance presented a minority report which contained a number of recommendations we believed were important. Unlike those of the committee, my party's recommendations dealt with and fell exclusively within federal jurisdiction.

Unfortunately I do not have time to go into all the recommendations and details of our report. However I will use my allotted time to deal with some of the more important or significant points of it.

The most important recommendation was to make the protection of society the guiding principle of the youth criminal justice act. We live in a time when individuals, boards, committees and businesses are all looking to come up with a mission statement or guiding principle which, as they focus on the direction they are taking, they can keep in mind.

The top priority and guiding principle of Bill C-7 needs to be the protection of society. Appearing before the Standing Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs in October 1996, Mr. Victor Doerkson, a member of the Alberta legislature for Red Deer South, said:

In listening to Albertans, one lesson became very clear. The protection of society should take priority over all other considerations and there must be accountability on the part of all offenders—Alberta also recommends that the declaration of principles within the act be amended to give the protection of society and offender accountability priority over all other considerations.

The member of the legislature, who spoke on behalf of many Albertans, said the people were telling him that protection of society must be the guiding principle. Bill C-7 does not do that. It does not, as recommended by the Alberta MLA and many others who appeared before the standing committee, make protection of society the first and guiding principle of the youth justice act.

According to the declaration of principles, safety and security of Canadians is secondary to the rehabilitation and reintegration of the offender back into society.

The Juvenile Delinquents Act came into effect in 1908. It created an informal juvenile justice system that was separate from the adult system. The guiding principles of the Child Welfare Act were that young offenders were not criminals but rather misguided children in "a condition of delinquency". Because of that condition of delinquency they were not to be punished. They were rather to be treated. That was the guiding principle of the Juvenile Delinquents Act.

• (1350)

Under the Juvenile Delinquents Act there was no specific sentencing and the judges had very significant discretion in dealing with young offenders. This meant that in some jurisdictions judges handed out extremely stiff sentences, including periods of incarceration for fairly minor crimes, while in other jurisdictions light sentences of open custody were given to violent offenders.

This is unfair. It is unfair to the offender. It is unfair to the victim. It is unfair to the public at large as there was no guarantee in the law that the offender would be incarcerated.

Recognizing that the exclusively welfare oriented focus of the Juvenile Delinquents Act was not appropriate and to reduce judicial discretion, the process of reforming the Juvenile Delinquents Act began in the 1960s. It was not, however, until the early 1980s with the introduction of the famous charter of rights and freedoms that major juvenile delinquent reform became inevitable.

The Juvenile Delinquents Act was inconsistent with the emphasis on due process that was in the charter. In particular, it was considered to be contrary to section 15 of the charter of rights and freedoms which came into effect in 1985. Section 15 guaranteed equality before the law.

Besides failing to make the protection of society the guiding principle in the bill, it would also effectively enact the contentious portion of the Juvenile Delinquents Act that wrongfully promoted an inequitable application of criminal law, in that it would provide far too much discretion to the youth courts.

We on this side of the House do not accept the Liberal government's chequerboard approach to the justice that appears to be at the very crux of the youth criminal justice act. We also do not accept the minister's outright rejection of what I consider to be the next two most important principles or recommendations of my party for amending the Young Offenders Act.

The minister has again refused to lower the age of criminality to encompass 10 and 11 year olds in limited circumstances. She has rejected allowing for the publication of the names of all violent offenders. The only way to ensure the safety of our children and grandchildren is to provide parents with the names of violent and dangerous offenders.

We do not have that right now. I listened with great interest to speech of the parliamentary secretary as he elaborated on what may happen if we had those rights. As parents, we need to know who in the school systems, for example, may be threatening our children or perhaps those in schools associating with our children that they need to be careful of. The only way to ensure the safety of our children and grandchildren is to provide the names of these children.

Also the bill does not, and I believe it should, allow the names of drug dealers to be put on that list. This category of offender has wrongly been missed in the new legislation.

Many Canadian schools, including public schools, are faced with serious troubles. We had representation from the school trustee boards that came around and visited with many members of parliament in the last week. They expressed the need to know who the students are in the school systems that perhaps have been through violent offences or are in trouble with the law.

Drugs are a serious problem in schools. According to a 1999 special edition of the province in Burnaby, British Columbia, police are seeing 13 and 14 year old kids selling crack cocaine. The report went on as well to say that girls of the same age were trading sex for drugs.

The same report revealed that 75% of high school students in Coquitlam, B.C., experiment with drugs. An estimated 10% of them misuse drugs on a regular basis and up to half of them have become addicted.

• (1355)

We as parents have the right to know who our children are associating with. We have the right to know if a convicted drug dealer is attending school with our children. We have the right to know if there is a violent young sex offender living three or four houses down the street.

We have the right to know. We must have the right to protect our children. That is why we on this side of the House believe that the names of violent offenders, including drug dealers, should be published.

With regard to lowering the age of criminality to 10, Professor Nicholas Bala of Queen's University, who appeared before the standing committee on justice, summarized a Statistics Canada survey of 27 police forces in Canada.

The data indicated that offending behaviour by children under the age of 12 was very significant. Despite this fact, authorities are powerless to hold these children legally responsible for their criminal actions. Although a number of provinces have a child welfare system that can and does deal with these children adequately, many provinces do not have such a program. Repeatedly witnesses came before the standing committee on justice and bore witness to the fact that violent offences with a welfare response was inappropriate.

Lowering the age to 10 does not mean that there will be a huge influx of 10 and 11 year olds into the system. It does not mean that we will be inundated with 10 and 11 year olds as they are drawn into the justice system. The system can divert most children of this age away from any formal response, particularly with the support of alternative measures or community based programs.

S. O. 31

By amending the age we will in the very few cases of violent offenders have the means to provide these children with the rehabilitation they need. As it stands now, the minister has abandoned 10 and 11 year olds who by committing criminal acts signal that they are in need of help.

As we researched a speech for an earlier debate in the House we noticed that many criminals were taking advantage of the fact that 10 and 11 year olds were not touched by the justice system. They were drawing them in to be drug runners in other ways. If these people are falling through the cracks they need to be helped.

Appearing before the standing committee during its indepth review of the Young Offenders Act, in reference to lowering the age, a representative from Citizens Against Violence said:

Preferably I would like to see the age in the Young Offenders Act lowered to 10, because there's a mindset among today's youth who are becoming well educated in the criminal field that they cannot be touched under the age of 12—We would like to see the age lowered so that the kids themselves know they have to face responsibility for their actions.

The last recommendation I should like to touch on today is the need to differentiate between non-violent crime and violent crime for the purpose of sentencing. We on this side of the House recommend that the minister restrict the use of alternative measures or community based programs to non-violent offenders who pose no threat to society.

We firmly believe that only through lengthy periods of incarceration, where there are effective rehabilitation programs including education, will violent offenders cease to be dangerous.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[English]

THE ECONOMY

Mr. John McCallum (Markham, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, one thing that drives me moderately up the wall is declarations on the Canadian dollar by that well known economic guru, the Leader of the Opposition.

[Translation]

The quickest way to get a 50 cent dollar would be a return to the huge deficits the Alliance was calling for during the last election campaign.

On the other hand, if a stronger dollar is what we want, the only thing that can be done in the short term is to raise interest rates, and that would be the worst possible thing to do.

*S. O. 31**[English]*

I have two suggestions for the Leader of the Opposition. First, he should do what good little right wing parties do and trust the markets to determine the value of the Canadian dollar, given that this is a time of U.S. dollar strength rather than Canadian dollar weakness.

Second, at this time of economic turbulence he should stop trashing the Canadian economy on the floor of the House of Commons.

* * *

• (1400)

HEALTH

Mr. Rick Casson (Lethbridge, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, the foot and mouth epidemic that has gripped the United Kingdom and parts of Europe continues to spread. This highly contagious disease, although not harmful to humans, has devastated the livestock industries in the affected countries.

Canada has been foot and mouth free for 50 years. It is critical to keep Canada a foot and mouth free zone. If foot and mouth were transported to Canada, our export of almost all livestock would be immediately curtailed. The costs of lost exports and the expenses of disease control are estimated to be in the range of \$20 billion in the first year alone.

I implore the government to take all the precautions necessary to protect our dairy, beef, hog and sheep operations, indeed, all our primary and secondary livestock operations, from annihilation. Producer groups and individuals are implementing their own precautions and need to be supported in their efforts by real government action.

A national strategy involving all government ministries is needed to battle this outbreak. Decisive action is needed now.

* * *

HEALTH

Ms. Nancy Karetak-Lindell (Nunavut, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am very happy to announce that the Government of Canada is investing \$3.7 million in the Ikajuruti Inungnik Ungasiktumi Network, which is a tele-health service developed by the Nunavut Department of Health and Social Services.

Given the distances involved in Nunavut, tele-health is a welcome tool in helping to provide accessible health care and related social services to Nunavummiut.

The \$3.7 million from Health Canada's infrastructure partnerships program shows how the federal Minister of Health is working together with the Nunavut minister of health and social services and showing a commitment to improving the quality and accessibility of health care for Nunavummiut.

*[Translation]***WINTER SPORTS**

Ms. Carole-Marie Allard (Laval East, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise with great pleasure today to congratulate one of the most acclaimed and recognized of our winter sports figures, Jean-Luc Brassard, a gold medal winner in the 1994 Winter Olympics.

Jean-Luc won the dual moguls event at the 2001 Canadian Freestyle Ski Championships this past Sunday at Mont-Gabriel in the Laurentians.

This is particularly good news, since Jean-Luc had surgery to his knee last year and is coming off rehabilitation.

Congratulations, Jean-Luc Brassard. We salute your perseverance and skill.

I would also like to report on an event I attended this past weekend, as part of the family cup.

For the third year in a row, thanks to the financial participation of our government, competitors from one family have been honoured and rewarded. I saw one race in which a 73-year old grandfather, his son and two grandchildren competed.

Congratulations to all the families that participated, and to the competition champions.

* * *

*[English]***ARTS AND CULTURE**

Mr. Mauril Bélanger (Ottawa—Vanier, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the members of the House who will be at this evening's special screening of a new Canadian feature film entitled *Café Olé*.

The story, written by Emil Sher, who will be with us today, is a romantic comedy about a young man whose universe revolves around the video store where he works and the funky little coffee shop, his home away from home, all of this until he meets Alicia, a delightful young Chilean woman who works at the bookstore across town and, to know the rest, members will have to see the movie.

The film is the product of Montreal based Ficciones Films, the director, Richard Roy, and the distributor, France Film/Equinox Entertainment.

We are pleased to have with us today the representatives from the production and distribution teams, as well as three of the actors we will see in the movie, Mr. Andrew Tarbet, Mme. Stephanie Morgenstern and Mr. Dino Tavarone.

Please join me in wishing success to all those who have contributed to the making of *Café Olé*.

CORRECTIONAL SERVICE CANADA

Mr. Gary Lunn (Saanich—Gulf Islands, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, in January 1998, Patrick Lees violently murdered his wife, Laura, in their family home. Once convicted, he was assessed by Correctional Service Canada and sent to the William Head Penitentiary. I find it deplorable that Mr. Lees could be sent to a club fed, condo style penitentiary to begin his sentence.

My office submitted an access to information request over a year ago to obtain documents on this case, yet to date we have not received one scrap of paper. In fact, I met with the director general of the Information Commissioner's Office and was told that staff could not release anything because it would violate the murderer's rights.

Our justice system currently grants more rights to murderers than to the Canadian public, the victims and their families.

I ask the solicitor general to direct Correctional Service Canada, which has complete discretion to reassign any inmate to any institution at any time, to ensure that all people who have been convicted of murder serve at least two years in maximum security, even those who have been sentenced within the last two years.

* * *

• (1405)

[Translation]

DAVID McTAGGART

Mr. Clifford Lincoln (Lac-Saint-Louis, Lib): Mr. Speaker, I wish to salute the memory of a Canadian and international hero, David McTaggart. He died before his time as the result of a car accident in Italy.

[English]

A giant of the global environmental movement, a precursor and a visionary, David McTaggart foresaw decades ago the threat to our planetary ecosystem as the defining issue of our time. At the risk of his life and displaying amazing courage, he challenged by his continuing presence the surface nuclear testing carried out by France in the South Pacific, which led to the eventual cessation of such tests.

This feat alone would have given him a place in history, but he was to go on to found Greenpeace International, no doubt the best known environmental organization and the most responsible for raising environmental consciousness in all parts of the world.

As Canadians, we owe a huge debt of gratitude to David McTaggart, environmental hero and a Canadian whose legacy will have marked not only our history but that of the world at large. I ask all Canadians to join with us in saluting his memory.

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[Translation]

UNIVERSITY HOCKEY

Mr. Robert Lanctôt (Châteauguay, BQ): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the Patriotes of the Université du Québec at Trois-Rivières have become the new Interuniversity Athletic Union champions. This is also the third time in their history they have won the championship. They beat the X-men of St. Francis Xavier 5 to 4 in the second overtime period.

I would like to congratulate the players and the coach, Jacques Laporte, and all who in one way or another helped these young people achieve their dream and share it with us. I congratulate them on their courage and their determination.

This is a fine example of courage and determination these young people have given us. It is an example that will inspire the young and not so young to go the extra bit and do it. This is the importance of sports.

Hats off to the Patriotes, to the UQTR and to Trois-Rivières.

* * *

FRENCH LANGUAGE SERVICES

Mr. Bill Graham (Toronto Centre—Rosedale, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member for Saskatoon—Humboldt has just introduced a bill to cut the delivery of services in French on the grounds that doing so is a waste of money.

In my opinion, this bill is a clear illustration of just how far the Canadian Alliance is out of touch with the concerns of Canadians living in a minority situation in one of Canada's regions.

There is the francophone community of Toronto and its cultural survival.

There are the French legal services currently being offered in Toronto and elsewhere in Ontario.

There is the work done by the Regroupement des jeunes filles francophones in my riding to provide social and medical services to young people in their language.

There are the needs of French speaking immigrants requiring services in their mother tongue in order to be able to contribute to their new country.

There is the issue of national unity. I must conclude that this bill flies in the face of what underlies our spirit of bilingualism in Canada, and I am surprised at the lack of understanding it represents.

* * *

[English]

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT BANK OF CANADA

Mr. Jim Gouk (Kootenay—Boundary—Okanagan, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, the owner of the Auberge Grand-Mère was turned down for a Business Development Bank loan

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because the inn was deemed a bad risk, but was later approved when the Prime Minister intervened. In contrast, an inn in my riding was granted a BDC loan on its own merits with no political intervention.

The Auberge Grand-Mère missed 12 payments and the loan was not called. The inn in my riding missed three payments on a low ratio BDC first mortgage during an exceptionally slow winter season and the loan was called.

Why is the government's Business Development Bank so reluctant to take action in the Prime Minister's riding and yet so quick to take action in mine? Obviously there are two standards, one for the Prime Minister and one for the rest of Canadians.

The other question that begs to be answered is why the Prime Minister interfered with the operation of a crown corporation to force it to provide a loan it judged unworthy of consideration. That question has been asked repeatedly, and although the true answer has not yet been given, the truth will come out. Unfortunately it may be too late for a small western inn that does not happen to be next door to a Prime Minister's golf course.

* * *

VIA RAIL

Mr. Peter Adams (Peterborough, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Transport announced a major injection of funds into VIA Rail and has initiated a study into the business case for VIA service between Peterborough and Toronto.

All the evidence suggests that we should get people off our roads. Passenger rail service reduces pollution, dependence on gasoline and highway accidents. It provides a predictable rush hour commute.

• (1410)

The rail track between Peterborough and Toronto is in a reasonable state and there is now a local freight rail company that has great experience of it.

The time has come to provide the people in Peterborough and those along this rail line with good commuter service and good tourist season service.

I urge the government to move quickly on this. I have the full support of the members for Haliburton—Victoria—Brock, Durham and Whitby—Ajax.

* * *

TOBACCO ADVERTISING

Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Leis (Winnipeg North Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I want to draw your attention to a flagrant violation of

Canada's tobacco laws and make an appeal to the government for urgent intervention.

Last week an advertisement appeared in daily newspapers across Canada promoting du Maurier cigarettes and offering a trip to New York City, but there is a hitch. One has to be a smoker to apply. The ad says "Live it up in the city that never sleeps".

Do not think for a minute that this ad was not designed to appeal to young people. Do not imagine for a moment that this was not another insidious attempt on the part of tobacco companies to have young people associate glamorous living with smoking.

It undercuts so much of the work we have done here and it is certainly contrary to the Tobacco Act.

I call upon the government to take action against du Maurier and to stand up against big tobacco companies and refuse to tolerate any violation of the laws of this land and the values of Canadians.

* * *

[Translation]

PRIME MINISTER

Ms. Christiane Gagnon (Québec, BQ): Mr. Speaker, after the many contradictory statements by the Prime Minister and his ethics counsellor, after last week's revelations, Industry Canada's dealings with respect to the golf club records, and the direct intervention of the Prime Minister's Office in the testimony of Mélissa Marcotte, this House is going through an unprecedented crisis of confidence, not only with respect to the person who holds the highest office in government, but also with respect to several ministers.

Out of respect for the office he occupies, the Prime Minister should immediately release all documents having to do with the golf club and the Auberge Grand-Mère, and agree to appear before the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs.

The time for ducking and hiding is over. The public's trust in the very office of Prime Minister of Canada hangs in the balance.

The Speaker: I wish to say that the Chair has already taken this matter under advisement. I am now preparing a ruling on the issue raised and mentioned by the hon. member. It is not for the House to discuss these issues at this time because, as I said, the Chair is now considering the matter.

* * *

[English]

CURLING

Mr. Joe McGuire (Egmont, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, sometimes it is not a sin to steal, especially in the great state of Utah.

A few weeks ago I stood in the House to congratulate Suzanne Gaudet's junior curling team from Summerside, P.E.I., for winning the Canadian junior women's championship and to wish them well in representing Canada in the world tournament in Utah.

Suzanne's Silver Fox Curling Club rink won the world junior women's championship for Canada. In a miracle last stone finish, the Gaudet rink finished this tournament with a record of 9-2 overall.

Inspired by flag waving fans from Summerside and Stephanie's red hair, the Canadian champions, Suzanne Gaudet, who skipped with poise and cool leadership, third Stephanie Richard, second Robyn MacPhee and all star lead Kelly Higgins, with Carol Webb and coach Paul Power, gave a great demonstration of strategy and shot making all week long.

In the championship game Saturday night, which I believe all P.E.I. watched, the young ladies from the Silver Fox Curling Club curled with poise as Suzanne drew—

The Speaker: The hon. member for St. John's West.

* * *

CURLING

Mr. Loyola Hearn (St. John's West, PC): Mr. Speaker, I think it is very appropriate that I follow the hon. member, because I, on behalf of my colleagues in St. John's East, the people of Newfoundland and all of us here, would like to congratulate Brad Gushue and his team from Newfoundland who yesterday won the world junior men's curling championship.

Brad Gushue and his team of third Mark Nichols, second Brent Hamilton and lead Mike Adam, on a final end last rock hit-and-stick, delivered the world junior championship, not only to Canada but to Newfoundland, where it was really the first official team sport championship that our province has achieved.

We are very proud of them simply because they are great people. Equally proud are the curling club in St. John's, the people of Newfoundland generally and the whole country. They are great Newfoundland champs, great Canadian champions and a great bunch of young men.

* * *

• (1415)

HERBERT RICE

Ms. Beth Phinney (Hamilton Mountain, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to acknowledge the retirement of an extraordinary soldier in my riding. A decorated reservist, Honorary Lieutenant Colonel Herbert Rice was honoured recently for his lifelong contribution to Canada's military. At an incredible 94 years of age, he has retired as Canada's oldest serving military officer.

Oral Questions

Lieutenant Colonel Rice joined the 14 Company, Canadian Corps of Signals, in Hamilton in 1922 at the age of 15, reaching the rank of major by 1936. During the second world war, he served in Great Britain, Washington and Halifax, leaving the regular forces in 1946. In 1980, he was named honorary lieutenant colonel of the 705 Communication Squadron, a reserve unit in Hamilton. He performed these duties with pride for 21 years.

I know all members will join me in recognizing the remarkable contribution this man has made to our country. I congratulate Colonel Rice and hope he enjoys his well earned retirement.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[English]

PRIME MINISTER

Mr. Stockwell Day (Leader of the Opposition, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, with the Prime Minister in the House maybe we can get a direct answer. So many facts have now come out that prove his statements over the last two years to be inaccurate. Every day there is more evidence that points to a possible conflict of interest and cover-up.

There is only one way to clear the air. Would the Prime Minister call an independent judicial inquiry to clear the air on the Shawinigate scandal?

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have said, and I repeat again, that I sold my share on November 1, 1993. Last week the lawyers for the company said that they had passed a resolution accepting the transfer of their share, and this is where we are. After that, the ethics counsellor looked into it, during which time he consulted with my lawyer and trustee at every step. He concluded that I never had any conflict of interest. I stand on what I said. They have asked the police to look into that. They have asked the ethics counsellor six or seven times to comment on that. They got answers. They were never satisfied.

[Translation]

Mr. Stockwell Day (Leader of the Opposition, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, even his own Liberal backbenchers are now calling for an inquiry. The cover-up and attempts at obstruction are no longer working. The Prime Minister must shed some light on Shawinigate.

Will the Prime Minister finally set up an independent commission of inquiry to determine whether or not he behaved improperly?

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the ethics counsellor appeared before the committee several

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times in 1999. He kept the committee informed about what was going on.

My lawyer, who is also my trustee, informed the ethics counsellor without fail each time she had to take a decision in order to ensure that we were within the established guidelines.

I wish to point out that the ethics counsellor was the assistant deputy registrar general, and that he was appointed to this position by the previous government.

[*English*]

Mr. Stockwell Day (Leader of the Opposition, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, he refuses to table the documents. He will not call an independent inquiry. He will not clear the air. In 1993, the Prime Minister promised to bring honesty back to government. He has betrayed this trust.

Does he not realize that his refusal to clear the air brings a cloud of darkness over the Prime Minister's office, over the government itself, over his reputation and the reputation of that high office?

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, from a man who promised a member of parliament \$50,000 if he were to quit his seat and who never paid him, from a man who had the taxpayers of Alberta pay \$700,000 because he had the foot in mouth disease, I have no lessons to learn from him.

• (1420)

I stand by my words. I want to inform the House that this morning I asked the ethics counsellor to release all the relevant documents he has, if he can get the consent of the private partners in the transaction.

Mr. Stockwell Day (Leader of the Opposition, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, for a man who ran up a \$2.5 million legal fee with Brian Mulroney, for a man who ran up a legal fee that continues with another citizen, for a man who cost us \$45 million in liabilities because of another contract cancelled, he talks about asking people to do things.

Would he give us some information on the person from his office who phoned Madam Marcotte and asked her not to talk anymore about the situation? Talk about asking people not to do things. Would he give us some information on that?

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it was Madam Marcotte who called my office to talk with me. She talked with my assistant who told her I was not available.

However, there is one thing I want to say which I have always said. I did work for my riding, not only on this file but on six or seven other files. I made sure that jobs were created so that the people in my district could benefit from the programs of the government. That is why after seven years the level of unemployment in the riding went down from—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Edmonton North.

Miss Deborah Grey (Edmonton North, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, dear knows what we will uncover next. For two years the Prime Minister has made contradictory statements about Shawinigan.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

The Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member for Edmonton North has the floor.

Miss Deborah Grey: Mr. Speaker, they sound like nervous Nellies.

The Prime Minister said that he had no decisions to make on it, but he was involved all along. He said that the loan was in a blind trust, but it was not. He said that he did not pressure the Business Development Bank, but he did. He said that no immigrant investor funds were involved, but they were. He has denied that he was a shareholder, but he was.

He wants Canadians to believe that he is open and honest. Why does he keep contradicting himself at every turn?

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have always said exactly the same thing here. I have never deviated. I am not like the member of parliament who went to her riding saying that all members of parliament who accepted a pension were pigs, and then became one after the election.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

The Speaker: Order, please. I caution hon. members on their use of language. The hon. member for Laurier—Sainte-Marie.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, at last the Prime Minister is telling us that he asked that all the documents be made public. It took him a long time to do the obvious thing.

The Prime Minister also finally admitted that he had financial interests in that business until 1999. His ethics counsellor told the Standing Committee on Industry that he was directly involved in the negotiations.

Does the Prime Minister realize that it was in his best interests that the Auberge Grand-Mère got funding and did not go bankrupt, so as to find a buyer after a 6 year search, and that he must explain his actions to the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs?

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I said many times, this is a jointly funded project, with a mortgage on the building being held by the Caisse populaire in Grand-Mère, by the Fonds de solidarité des travailleurs du Québec—and I doubt these people are my organizers—and by the Business Development Bank of Canada. The whole thing was guaranteed by a mortgage.

Oral Questions

In any case, a number of similar projects in my riding received help, not only from the federal government and federal agencies, but also from the provincial government, which is led by the PQ.

• (1425)

Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, it is the Prime Minister and no one else who contacted the Business Development Bank of Canada.

It is the Prime Minister and no one else who had the decisions changed. It is also the Prime Minister who had an interest in seeing that the Auberge on the adjacent lot did not go bankrupt, because it is easier to sell the golf course if the Auberge did not go bankrupt.

Will the Prime Minister admit that he must explain his actions before the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs, because there is every indication that there was a conflict of interest in this matter?

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I certainly did not influence the decision made by the Fonds de solidarité. I certainly did not influence the Caisse populaire, which are both on the same level in terms of the guarantee.

What I did, what I must do and what every member of parliament must do is to ensure that every government agency can be helpful to his or her constituents. This is what I did.

I no longer owned the shares after November 1, 1993. I did not want—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Roberval.

Mr. Michel Gauthier (Roberval, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister requires his ministers, specifically his Minister of Finance, not to intervene in any matter involving shipping, because of his personal interests.

He, however, is not shy about twisting the arm of the president of the Business Development Bank of Canada to obtain a loan, while he had considerable personal interest in recovering his investment.

How can something that represents a conflict of interest for the Minister of Finance not be so for him? That is what we want to know.

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member should understand that, since March 1993, six months before my election as Prime Minister, the Auberge was sold to a third party.

At that point, there was no longer a connection or relationship between the golf club and the Auberge. This is what the ethics counsellor said clearly at least three times before the Standing Committee on Industry where he has testified over the past two years.

Mr. Michel Gauthier (Roberval, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister's response is a little on the light side when we says there was no connection. The address of the head offices of the golf club and the Auberge is the same, the Auberge Grand-Mère. The connection tightens.

In the matter of the Auberge Grand-Mère, Industry Canada has had the books of the golf club corrected. The office of the Prime Minister has asked Melissa Marcotte to change her version of the facts. The Minister of Industry has tabled a letter including a significant error in date and, finally, the ethics counsellor is changing his position.

How does the Prime Minister think that he is being credible in this matter, with all the manoeuvring—

The Speaker: The Right Hon. Prime Minister.

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have said the same thing here right along.

As of November 1, 1993, I had no more interest in the golf club or in the Auberge. When I became Prime Minister, I handed all my assets over to my lawyer for her to administer and that is what she did.

She has always acted in consultation with the ethics counsellor, who is also the deputy registrar general and who has the responsibility of looking at all of the files of all ministers, parliamentary secretaries and all deputy ministers in government. It is his duty—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Acadie—Bathurst.

Mr. Yvon Godin (Acadie—Bathurst, NDP): Mr. Speaker, for more than a year the Auberge Grand-Mère affair has been taking up a lot of the attention of parliamentarians.

When is the Prime Minister going to table, for once and for all, all of the documents pertaining to his involvement in the Grand-Mère affair?

When is he going to free up this House to work in matters of importance to the people of Canada and stop hiding behind his partners?

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I agree with the hon. member that the House and the people of Canada would be happy to see the opposition dealing with this nation's real problems. The only thing it is interested in, however, is trying to destroy the person who is the Prime Minister of Canada.

I am pleased to tell the hon. member that we are going to help him, help them get back to the affairs of the state, because if the ethics counsellor can obtain permission, since he is required by law to respect the privacy of those involved, I have authorized him to make public all documents he has in his position, and if he gets permission—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Acadie—Bathurst.

Oral Questions

• (1430)

Mr. Yvon Godin (Acadie—Bathurst, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is the Prime Minister himself who is obstinately holding everyone up. Now he is hiding behind his partners.

If the Prime Minister is truly concerned about the debates that are going on in the House at this time, and if he is really concerned about the best interests of the Canadian public, let him table the documents that are being asked for.

But there is more. Why is the Prime Minister not in agreement for an independent inquiry to be held, if he wants to clear his name for once and for all?

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have said yes to his request. That is yes in English and oui in French.

The documents will be tabled if the commissioner gets permission from the other parties involved. I myself have authorized him to table all those he has. He must, however obtain the permission of the others. As for me, I have said yes to having them tabled.

[English]

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Calgary Centre, PC): Mr. Speaker, it has now been established by the ethics counsellor that the Prime Minister's agent, Debbie Weinstein, was actively negotiating the sale of his golf club shares between 1996 and 1999.

How many potential buyers did the Prime Minister's agent approach before Louis Michaud Investments agreed to take the shares? Were the shares shopped around for three years by the Prime Minister's agent, or did the Prime Minister only attempt to sell these shares when the heat was turned on in 1999 and the public became aware of his blatant conflict of interest?

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is obvious that the leader of the fifth party does not want to understand. From November 1, 1993, these shares belonged to Mr. Prince. It is clear. It was established by the letter that was transmitted by Mr. Paquet to the Department of Industry last week.

I have had no shares in any company of that nature, either golf or auberge, since November 1, 1993. Debbie Weinstein could not sell the shares. Mr. Prince wanted to sell the shares and—

The Speaker: The right hon. member for Calgary Centre.

[Translation]

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Calgary-Centre, PC): Mr. Speaker, in January 1996 the Prime Minister told the ethics counsellor that he had not been paid for his golf club shares, which he thought had been sold to Jonas Prince.

Can he tell the House why the transaction fell through? What explanation did Mr. Prince give to the Prime Minister for no longer wanting the shares in the golf club? Was it a bad investment, or was there some other reason?

[English]

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, what a fishing expedition. Again, I understand that he twice failed his law exams, so I will have to say this.

On November 1, I sold my shares to Jonas Prince who signed a bill of sale, and after that there was a resolution according to the lawyers passed by the company accepting the fact that I had sold my shares. After that I had no interest and there was nothing I could do about the shares that were not mine. They were Mr. Prince's.

Mrs. Diane Ablonczy (Calgary—Nose Hill, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister keeps repeating that he sold the shares in November 1993. I believe there is something he could do very quickly and simply to confirm that and to clear this matter up.

That would be to release the income tax records for his company, J&AC holdings, which would clearly show a sale and a receipt of money for the shares at the time the Prime Minister said.

• (1435)

The Prime Minister needs no one else's permission to do this. I ask the Prime Minister whether he will simply release those documents that are entirely in his control and clear up this matter.

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have asked the commissioner to release every document that he has to this effect. He has looked into that. He has stated carefully and clearly that the shares were not mine since November 1, 1993. He stated that there was no connection between the golf course and the hotel.

With your permission, Mr. Speaker, I would like to table a letter that I sent to the leader of the fifth party earlier today, explaining in detail all I can say on this that is pertinent. With your permission I would like to table this in the House right away.

The Speaker: The Prime Minister does not need permission to table a document in the House. Any minister may do that at any time.

Mrs. Diane Ablonczy (Calgary—Nose Hill, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, surely the House of Commons of Canada deserves more than a red herring. I say to the Prime Minister again that if he has his own tax records available he does not need anyone else's permission to table them.

The tax records would clearly show a sale of assets and receipt of money for those assets. If the Prime Minister really wants to clear this up, if he really wants to come clean with Canadians, will he

simply put those tax records for his company before the Canadian public and prove once and for all that his assertions he sold those shares are correct?

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, if the commissioner has the permission of the other parties—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien: There is nothing I can do. I gave him the authority to table the bill of sale and to table the resolution that was passed by the company on November 1, 1993.

After I sold my shares I just tried to be paid the money that was owed to me. As far as the auberge, in the letter that I gave to the Table you will find that in my district I concentrated a lot to create jobs in the tourist industry.

[Translation]

Mr. Pierre Brien (Témiscamingue, BQ): Mr. Speaker, referring to the 1996-97 period, the Prime Minister said in the House on Wednesday, regarding the golf club that, and I quote, “The Minister of Industry has stated that I did not own shares”.

However, officials of the Grand-Mère golf course stated that the Prime Minister’s name was on the shareholders’ register until 1999. Moreover, Radio-Canada learned that Industry Canada asked that the register be changed.

Could the Minister of Industry tell us whether it is the Prime Minister who asked that this change be made, the office of the Prime Minister or the minister himself?

Who asked that this change be made?

[English]

Hon. Brian Tobin (Minister of Industry, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in response to the member’s question, the answer to that specific question is no, the Prime Minister’s Office did not make any request.

Let me say further to the member and for the information of the House that last week I asked the deputy minister of industry to take control of this file and not to have either any member of my staff or myself involved in the discharge of the work of the directorship branch.

The deputy minister of industry is a man of integrity. For three years he was the chief of staff of the Conservative leader in the House of Commons.

[Translation]

Mr. Pierre Brien (Témiscamingue, BQ): Mr. Speaker, will the Minister of Industry confirm that before the changes recently made to the books of the golf club, one of the names on the shareholders’ register was that of the Prime Minister?

Oral Questions

[English]

Hon. Brian Tobin (Minister of Industry, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will have to say it again. The work of the directorate is being carried out under the supervision of the deputy minister. The deputy minister for three years was the chief of staff to the leader of the Conservative Party and for two years the chief of staff to the former deputy prime minister under the last Conservative government.

No directions have been given, none whatsoever. Business is being conducted as usual. When the work is finished the normal information will be posted for all the public to see.

• (1440)

Ms. Val Meredith (South Surrey—White Rock—Langley, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, I think the House has reason to have this matter clarified. I would like to ask the Prime Minister again if he would table the income tax records for J&AC Consultants for the year 1993.

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the relevant documents are the bill of sale and the transfer of the sale. The income tax return has nothing to do with it.

As to when the document will be made public, we said that in 1996 Mr. Prince had not paid the shares so at that time we were not paid. My lawyer, who is my trustee at the same time, took the steps that were necessary in discussion with Mr. Wilson, who said that in front of the committee last year. The deputy prime minister informed the House last year too that they were working with Prince to make sure—

The Speaker: The hon. member for South Surrey—White Rock—Langley.

Ms. Val Meredith (South Surrey—White Rock—Langley, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, there is a concern that this might have been a sale of convenience, and I think to clarify the issue it would be appropriate for the Prime Minister to table the income tax returns for 1993 for J&AC Consultants.

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.): This is a fishing expedition, Mr. Speaker. I put all my assets in trust. J&AC is a family company from which I resigned as director.

The lawyer became an executive director of the company. She made all the relevant decisions. She was completely authorized to do that. She was doing that on her own, making her own judgments after consultation with the commissioner and informing me because the debt was not subject, as Mr. Wilson said, to conflict of interest but she treated it the same way—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Beauport—Montmorency—Côte-de-Beaupré—Île-d’Orléans.

Oral Questions

[Translation]

Mr. Michel Guimond (Beauport—Montmorency—Côte-de-Beaupré—Île-d'Orléans, BQ): Mr. Speaker, last Friday, we learned that the Prime Minister had spoken to Méliissa Marcotte and apparently encouraged her to speak to the media to clear his name.

Can the Prime Minister explain why he asked Méliissa Marcotte to come to his defence, rather than tabling the documents, as we have been asking him to do for two years?

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have never spoken to Méliissa Marcotte, at least not for years. I did not speak to her last week, or the week before that. She is the daughter of one of my partners in 1993, when I sold my shares. I did not speak to her. I did not ask her to do anything at all. You saw her on television. She was harassed by journalists—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien: She said so herself. I saw her on television. I am not the one saying so.

What I am saying is that I maintain, once again, from my place, as I have always done—

The Speaker: The member for Beauport—Montmorency—Côte-de-Beaupré—Île-d'Orléans.

Mr. Michel Guimond (Beauport—Montmorency—Côte-de-Beaupré—Île-d'Orléans, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I am going to try to find someone else who was apparently harassed.

How does the Prime Minister explain the actions of Bruce Hartley, his advisor, who asked Méliissa Marcotte to change her testimony so as not to reveal that the Prime Minister had been a shareholder in the Grand-Mère golf club?

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I said this earlier, but they are not listening, because they have their questions prepared before they come to the House and they are not quick enough to change them themselves.

I repeat that at 7 a.m. on Friday, Méliissa Marcotte asked to speak to me, having been made aware of the allegations in the *National Post*. Mr. Hartley, who works for me, said that I was not available. She spoke with Mr. Hartley, not the reverse. It was she who spoke to Mr. Hartley, and Mr. Hartley, who is a polite man—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

The Speaker: The hon. member for Peace River.

[English]

Mr. Charlie Penson (Peace River, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday of last week the industry minister sent officials to examine the corporate registry of the Grand-Mère golf course.

• (1445)

He has had almost a week now to read the few pages that were given to him. I know he has been trying to distance himself from this file in the last couple of questions in question period, but could he now disclose the registry documents and tell the House whether any or all federal laws have been complied with and whether anything has been altered in those records?

Hon. Brian Tobin (Minister of Industry, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the director, Mr. Richard Shaw, has informed the deputy minister that he will shortly be completing his examination of the corporate records of 161341 Canada Inc. Once that information is completed, a letter will be sent in response to the ethics counsellor from whom the request came in the first place.

However let me say something. There has not been one piece of new information here today. The fact remains that the ethics counsellor has examined the matter. The police has opened and closed the books. What we have here is an attempt to smear. There is not one new piece of information. Members opposite should get back to the business of Canada and stop the business of smearing a Prime Minister who has done no wrong.

Mr. Charlie Penson (Peace River, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, what a complicated web they weave. It was reported that Jonas Prince's role was not one of a shareholder but essentially to serve as a parking place to buy the Prime Minister time to sell his shares.

If the Prime Minister's lawyer was trying to sell the shares for the Prime Minister, how could the Prime Minister say that Jonas Prince owned them?

Hon. Brian Tobin (Minister of Industry, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, there is a very simple reason why the Prime Minister and everyone else have looked at this and said that Mr. Jonas Prince owned the shares. He bought them in November 1993.

* * *

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Mr. Bryon Wilfert (Oak Ridges, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canada has recently announced re-engagement with India. There are concerns that our engagement with India will lead to further isolation of Pakistan and increase the possibility of destabilization of the sub-Indian continent.

Could the Secretary of State for Asia-Pacific affairs clarify for the House Canada's current policy toward the government in Islamabad?

Hon. Rey Pagtakhan (Secretary of State (Asia-Pacific), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for his question. Canada does not

wish to isolate Pakistan. We know there is a need for political stability and the absence of nuclear proliferation in that region.

In fact Canada has pursued a policy of selective engagement on a bilateral and multilateral basis since Pakistan tested its nuclear weapons in 1998 followed by a military coup in 1999.

We believe that selective engagement will allow Canada to help Pakistan in the transition to a stable economy and sustainable democracy.

* * *

MULTICULTURALISM

Mr. Peter Stoffer (Sackville—Musquodoboit Valley—Eastern Shore, NDP): Mr. Speaker, for years now the Solicitor General of Canada has been saying that government does not interfere in police investigations before, during or after.

We now have newspaper reports that indicate that the Secretary of State for Multiculturalism and her staff have been contacting RCMP officials regarding racism activities in British Columbia.

My question is for the Prime Minister. What she has done to the House and to the people of Prince George is absolutely scandalous. Her apology is not good enough. What ethical leadership will the Prime Minister show in the House to discipline that member for what she said to the good people of Prince George?

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in the House last week I said that the minister apologized to the House of Commons. She did that, just like the member for Edmonton—Strathcona. It is not for me to question what is done and all the plotting for this and that. He stood in the House and said “I apologize”.

After 36 years in the House of Commons, and in fact it will be 38 in two weeks, when a member stands and apologizes there is a great British tradition that we accept that and turn the page. I know it is not the tradition that the present opposition wants.

Mr. Peter Stoffer (Sackville—Musquodoboit Valley—Eastern Shore, NDP): Mr. Speaker, a few years ago Jean Charest sent a letter to a judge and was disciplined. The member for Fredericton had loose lips on an aircraft and was disciplined. The member for Edmonton—Strathcona did a little thing wrong with his assistant and was disciplined.

The member for Vancouver Centre contacted the RCMP in strict violation of cabinet code and everything else that is ethical in the House. I ask my question as a former British Columbian. What will the Prime Minister do to discipline the member for Vancouver Centre, to put some ethical treatment back into the House?

• (1450)

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have the right to know if there is any information that is public which they can give to any member of parliament. It is not

Oral Questions

an inquiry then to ask if anything has happened in the public in the past because it is subject to public record. If it is what she did, there is nothing wrong.

This is the first time I am hearing this allegation by the member.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien: I am saying that I heard about it this moment. I will check that, but last week I said that the minister after she had made—

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for Richmond—Arthabaska.

* * *

[Translation]

PRIME MINISTER

Mr. André Bachand (Richmond—Arthabaska, PC): Mr. Speaker, today the Prime Minister announces, in order to try to get out of the mess he is in, that he has asked the ethics counsellor to make public all documents on which the latter's decision to pardon him was based.

Could the Prime Minister at least ask the ethics counsellor to table a list—not the contents, just a list—of the documents the counsellor used to analyze the situation? Can he confirm to the House that his lawyer-trustee did inform him that his name had indeed been stricken from the golf club shareholders' list?

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have authorized Mr. Wilson to table all documents he used in reaching his conclusion that I had no conflict of interest and that the shares had been legally and actually transferred to Mr. Prince on November 1, 1993. I hope he will make them public, but he has to meet the obligations placed on him by law.

[English]

Mr. Peter MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough, PC): Mr. Speaker, there are numerous inconsistencies and contradictions on the public record by the Prime Minister over the Auberge Grand-Mère affair. One thing the Prime Minister has said consistently is that he wanted to get paid for his shares.

Will the Prime Minister simply inform the House what was the original asking price for the shares in the Grand-Mère Hotel, agreed to by Jonas Prince in 1993, and what was the final price paid to him by Mr. Michaud in 1999?

Hon. Brian Tobin (Minister of Industry, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I said a moment ago, the corporations directorate is nearing completion of its examination of corporate records of this company. Once that is completed the information that is appropriate will be conveyed to the ethics counsellor for his judgment as to their use.

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With respect to further information, the Prime Minister has just indicated that he has agreed, and hopes others will as well, to make information public and have that information released by the ethics counsellor as soon as possible.

* * *

MULTICULTURALISM

Mrs. Betty Hinton (Kamloops, Thompson and Highland Valleys, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, it appears the Secretary of State for Multiculturalism is making a habit of slandering British Columbians. Last week she denigrated the people of Prince George, but that was not the first time.

In 1997 the minister was quoted in a newspaper article saying "Crosses are burned outside Kamloops". That is absolute nonsense and my constituents are outraged. What proof does the minister have that crosses are being burned outside Kamloops or anywhere else in B.C.?

Hon. Hedy Fry (Secretary of State (Multiculturalism)(Status of Women), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it has never been my intent to disparage communities, either in British Columbia or in Canada. I deeply regret the hurt the statement I made last week in the House caused. I apologized for it and I apologize again for it.

Mrs. Betty Hinton (Kamloops, Thompson and Highland Valleys, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, the minister has a track record for making inflammatory statements that insult and embarrass British Columbians and all Canadians. She has no proof of crosses being burned outside Prince George, Kamloops or anywhere else.

The minister's role is to prevent racism, not invent it. Will the minister apologize to my constituents and tender her resignation immediately?

Hon. Hedy Fry (Secretary of State (Multiculturalism)(Status of Women), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased that the member across the way mentioned that. What I am sorry about is that this incident has detracted and moved us away from the attention that should be paid to the way communities across the country have been working to deal with issues of racism and hate within their communities. We have been working with them to do this.

* * *

• (1455)

[Translation]

PRIME MINISTER

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron (Verchères—Les-Patriotes, BQ): Mr. Speaker, during the election campaign, the Prime Minister's ethics counsellor took his side when he stated that he had seen all the books and that everything was in order.

How can the Prime Minister explain this statement made by the ethics counsellor during the election campaign, when last week his name was still on the list of shareholders of the golf club?

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, once someone has sold his shares he is not responsible for how the books are kept, since he is no longer a shareholder or a director of the company.

I stopped being a shareholder of that company on November 1, 1993. How the books were kept afterwards does not reflect the reality at all. The shares were sold to Mr. Prince on November 1, 1993, as confirmed by the company's lawyer last week and as confirmed repeatedly by the ethics counsellor.

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron (Verchères—Les-Patriotes, BQ): Mr. Speaker, in light of these facts, we can only conclude that either the ethics counsellor lied or that he did not check the books properly.

My question is very simple: On whose orders did he act like this?

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I just said that, as of November 1, 1993, I no longer had any right or obligation vis-à-vis the books of a company to which I was no longer connected.

I do not know what is in these books. This is irrelevant, because I sold my shares on November 1, 1993, as was confirmed last week by the company's lawyer. What went on with that company between November 2 and now is none of my business.

* * *

[English]

MULTICULTURALISM

Mr. Richard Harris (Prince George—Bulkley Valley, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, last week in the House the minister for multiculturalism stood and said that she had a letter from the mayor of Prince George about a cross burning incident in the city of Prince George. Then the next day she said "Whoops, I made a mistake; it wasn't Prince George".

I would like to ask a question of the Secretary of State for Multiculturalism. Was there ever any letter from any mayor about any cross burning incident in any city in B.C., or was the letter just a fabrication?

Hon. Hedy Fry (Secretary of State (Multiculturalism)(Status of Women), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I already said that I made a mistake with regard to Prince George, that I was very sorry and that I apologized to the people of Prince George.

Mr. Richard Harris (Prince George—Bulkley Valley, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, her apology referred to saying it was from the mayor of Prince George. That was it. The fact is we

believe that the minister deliberately fabricated a story about a letter.

I am asking her this question. Was there ever any letter, from any mayor about any cross burning incident in any city in B.C.? Was there a letter? Yes or no. Will she produce it? If not, will she admit it was a fake statement and resign her position?

Hon. Hedy Fry (Secretary of State (Multiculturalism)(Status of Women), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have already said in the House that I made a mistake with regard to Prince George and I apologized to the people of Prince George.

* * *

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Mark Eyking (Sydney—Victoria, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to bring to the attention of the House the environmental problem of Sydney tar ponds and coke oven sites in my riding. It is known that the population of Sydney is very concerned.

I would like to take this opportunity to ask the Minister of the Environment this question. What are the time lines regarding the clean up of the Sydney tar ponds and coke oven sites?

Hon. David Anderson (Minister of the Environment, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the local joint action group has more than a dozen proposals of companies which believe they have the technology and the capacity to clean up the tar ponds site. The technologies are currently under evaluation.

There is no way one can predict when that analysis by the local group will finish, but I can assure him we want to make sure that as soon as we have a decision by the local group of the correct technology we will proceed with the clean up of that site.

* * *

MULTICULTURALISM

Mr. Gurmant Grewal (Surrey Central, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, the minister for multiculturalism misled the House when she said she had a letter from the mayor of Prince George asking for help with cross burnings on lawns.

• (1500)

By Friday of last week, one day after her apology to the people of Prince George, the minister was still trying to build a case to defend herself. In fact, she ordered her officials to contact the RCMP and get information on cross burnings. Is that not enough for the Prime Minister to fire her?

Hon. Hedy Fry (Secretary of State (Multiculturalism)(Status of Women), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I repeat that I made a mistake with regard to Prince George. I apologize to the people of Prince George.

Mr. Gurmant Grewal (Surrey Central, Canadian Alliance) Mr. Speaker, the minister has a history of using that kind of

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paranoid statement against the people of Prince George and Kamloops. She is prejudiced against anyone outside her constituency. Canadians cannot trust her any more.

Would the Prime Minister fire her before her slurs hurt any more innocent Canadians?

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, with your permission, I would like the hon. member to repeat the question because I was talking with the House leader. I am sorry but I was not paying attention.

Mr. Gurmant Grewal (Surrey Central, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, I will repeat the question if the Prime Minister will listen to it carefully.

The minister has a history of using that kind of paranoid statement against the people of Prince George and Kamloops. She is prejudiced against anyone outside her constituency. Canadians cannot trust the minister any more.

Would the Prime Minister fire her before her slurs hurt any more innocent Canadians?

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we debated that last week. I said to the House that she made a statement, regretted the statement and apologized to the House of Commons. I repeat that we have accepted, in the tradition of parliament, her apology. The hon. member is not raising a new issue. He is referring to an incident for which the minister has offered her apology and for which we have accepted the apology.

* * *

[Translation]

PRIME MINISTER

Ms. Pierrette Venne (Saint-Bruno—Saint-Hubert, BQ): Mr. Speaker, all of the Prime Minister's lines of defence have fallen. There is now a very serious lack of confidence in the Prime Minister, not only in the House, but among the public and in his own caucus.

Does the Prime Minister realize that the best way to re-establish confidence, if this is still possible, is to agree to appear before his peers on the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs to account for his behaviour?

[English]

Hon. Brian Tobin (Minister of Industry, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, there has not been a single new piece of information brought forth today to substantiate this smear campaign.

As for the statement that the Prime Minister lacks the support of the caucus, let me say on behalf of every member of the caucus that

Routine Proceedings

we have full confidence in the Prime Minister. We will stand with him and beside him in the House.

* * *

PRESENCE IN GALLERY

The Speaker: I would like to draw the attention of all hon. members to the presence in the gallery of His Excellency Anatoliy Zlenko, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

* * *

• (1505)

POINTS OF ORDER

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Hon. Don Boudria (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Chair will know of course of the rule of the House whereby one member cannot accuse an hon. member on the floor of the House of making statements that are not true. In fact, this occurred during question period.

I am sure that when the informal *Hansard*, the blues, as we refer to it, comes out in just a few minutes, it will confirm that such an accusation was made by the hon. member for Edmonton North against the right hon. the Prime Minister.

I will not repeat the precise words. That would only serve to make the statement twice. My request through the Chair would be that the hon. member be given the opportunity to withdraw what she said.

Miss Deborah Grey (Edmonton North, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, I withdraw.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON INDUSTRY, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Mr. Peter MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough, PC): Mr. Speaker, I have a point of order with respect to the Standing Committee on Industry, Science and Technology.

It has come to my attention that the Standing Committee on Industry, Science and Technology, which is scheduled to meet at 9 a.m. tomorrow, Tuesday, the 27th, will be held in room 308 of the West Block.

Given the great general and public interest in having the meeting broadcast, I would ask that the chair of the committee use his office to facilitate the meeting in a room that will accommodate the large number of individuals and media who want to attend.

The Speaker: Question period ended a short time ago. If the hon. member had asked his question during question period it might perhaps have been in order. While he has made his point, it is not a question that is in order at this moment.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

PROCEDURE AND HOUSE AFFAIRS

Mr. Derek Lee (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present the ninth report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs regarding its order of reference of Tuesday, February 27, 2001 in relation to Bill C-9, an act to amend the Canada Elections Act and the Electoral Boundaries Readjustment Act.

The committee has considered Bill C-9 and reports the bill without amendment.

* * *

[Translation]

PETITIONS

MINING INDUSTRY

Mr. Guy St-Julien (Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36, I have the honour of presenting to the House a petition signed by residents and workers of the city of Val-d'Or and of the RCM of the Vallée de l'Or concerning the Sigma-Lamaque and Beaufor mines.

The petitioners are asking parliament to establish a financial assistance program for thin capitalization mines in Quebec's resource regions and the government, through its national highways program, to intervene in the McWatters project for the Sigma-Lamaque complex on the Trans-Canada, highway 117, in the municipality of Val-d'Or, through its Canada-Quebec-infrastructure program, part three.

[English]

KIDNEY DISEASE

Mr. Peter Adams (Peterborough, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise to present two petitions from people who are concerned about kidney disease in Canada.

The first petition points out that real progress is being made in preventing and coping with kidney disease. The signatories call upon parliament to encourage the Canadian Institutes of Health

Research to explicitly include kidney research as one of the institutes in its system to be named the kidney and urinary tract diseases institute.

The second petition is from citizens of the Peterborough area who are also interested in kidney disease.

The petitioners point out that kidney dialysis and transplantation have been successful for some people but for not for others. They point out that the availability of dialysis and kidneys for transplant are very limited.

• (1510)

They call upon parliament to support the bioartificial kidney, a research development which would eventually eliminate the need for dialysis or transplantation for those suffering from kidney disease.

VIOLENCE

Mr. John Cummins (Delta—South Richmond, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, I have a petition organized by a member of my constituency which calls upon the government to address the issue of video violence on the Internet and in video games.

The concern of my constituents is with the relationship in the criminal code between the words violence and sex, in that violence cannot stand alone as an issue in the criminal code. They think it should. They think the two should be separated and that the violence depicted in videos should be enough to disallow minors purchasing them.

[Translation]

IRAQ

Mr. Robert Lanctôt (Châteauguay, BQ): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36, the people in my riding would like to table this petition to put an end to sanctions against Iraq.

Of course, since Operation Desert Fox, in December 1998, over 10,000 air strikes have taken place against Iraq, producing an incalculable number of victims.

Whereas the continued UN sanctions against Iraq, considered to be the heaviest ever imposed, have devastated the Iraqi economy and resulted in the death of over 5,000 children a month, the people of my riding want the bombing to stop and serious peace negotiations to take place between Canada and the United Nations in order to increase efforts to provide food, medicines and infrastructure funding for the reconstruction of Iraq.

* * *

[English]

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

Mr. Derek Lee (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, before I ask that all questions be allowed to stand, I will indicate for the benefit of the member for New Brunswick Southwest that answers to Questions Nos. 1 and 2 are imminent.

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I anticipate that those questions could be raised and introduced in the House tomorrow. I therefore ask that all questions be allowed to stand.

Mr. Greg Thompson (New Brunswick Southwest, PC): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. It is refreshing to hear the parliamentary secretary anticipating answers to my questions. For the record, those questions will be celebrating their first birthday within a few short weeks. Not only have they survived two parliaments, but they have survived an election as well.

Do the assurances of the parliamentary secretary relate to the sale of not only the 40 Huey helicopters but of the 10 Challenger aircraft as well? I remind him that there are two questions that are close to being one year old. Is he entertaining answering both of them?

The Speaker: The parliamentary secretary indicates that he has given the answer. Shall all the remaining questions stand?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

YOUTH CRIMINAL JUSTICE ACT

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill C-7, an act in respect of criminal justice for young persons and to amend and repeal other acts, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

Mr. Kevin Sorenson (Crowfoot, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, we were speaking to Bill C-7, the amendment to replace the Young Offenders Act with the youth criminal justice act. We were speaking about the use of alternative measures or community based programs for non-violent offenders who pose no threat to society.

• (1515)

We firmly believe that only through lengthy periods of incarceration where there are effective rehabilitation programs including education would violent offenders cease to be dangerous.

We are encouraged that the bill would make these educational and rehabilitation programs mandatory. When and if young offenders are incarcerated, they would be forced to go through programs so that they could be integrated back into society thus making it a safer place to live. Protection of society is the key guiding principle of the Young Offenders Act or of the youth criminal justice act.

According to an old Statistics Canada fact finder a very small percentage of violent offenders are incarcerated. It means that a

Government Orders

very small percentage of them are actually held in custody. They are unable to go through those programs while a disproportionate number of non-violent offenders are incarcerated, limiting the space and resources needed to rehabilitate the violent offenders.

Prison is not necessary for young persons who commit minor offences. We are not asking that there be incarceration in that regard. In many cases it may be detrimental to them. They may be assaulted by other violent young offenders or they may also learn from the other ones in the prison system. After their release, depending on how we look at it, the educational program may also allow them to progress to higher levels of crime or lower levels of crime.

We fully support alternative measures but only for non-violent first time offenders. In 1995, with the passage of Bill C-41, the Liberal government legislated conditional sentences and alternative measures. My party fought adamantly but to no avail to amend the legislation limiting the use of conditional sentences to non-violent offences. As a result of the government's failure to make such amendments, judges have repeatedly handed out conditional sentences throughout the country to persons convicted of serious crimes.

There is one case that has been raised many times in the House. A man who abducted and viciously sodomized a young woman was given a conditional sentence. The young woman was scarred for life. She now lives with that in her memories and is plagued by that conditional sentence.

A few weeks ago in Ottawa, another case dealt with a woman who was convicted of attempting to hire a hit man to kill her parents and was given a conditional sentence.

The first and guiding principle of Canada's criminal law should be the protection of society. Without strict limits placed on the use of alternative measures or conditional sentences, whether it be for violent adults or violent youth, the tenet for the protection of society would be violated.

In closing I urge the government to take the step to realize and to recognize the importance of dealing with the protection of society within Canada's criminal law. Do we need changes to the Young Offenders Act? Yes, we do. We applaud the government and the minister for recognizing the inadequacies of the Young Offenders Act and for realizing that we need to make changes.

Bill C-7 falls short. It is short of what is required for the protection of society. We are dealing with our children. The throne speech dealt with our children. The protection of our children and grandchildren is paramount. Bill C-7, although it moves in the right direction, falls short of giving the tools we need to help protect society and our children.

Mr. Grant McNally (Dewdney—Alouette, Canadian Alliance): I congratulate my colleague from Crowfoot for his excel-

lent speech in which he mentioned diversion programs that may be applicable to helping young offenders.

I know of one such program in my own riding, a young diversion program, in which the member for Surrey North even as a sitting member is still involved and shows great commitment to. Could he indicate how youth diversion programs could be implemented?

• (1520)

Mr. Kevin Sorenson: Mr. Speaker, we all recognize the fact that we need to be able to divert non-violent offenders. Diversion should not occur from the judicial system because that is where they enter the system when they commit crimes. There are many community based programs, going back to the Juvenile Delinquents Act, that can be implemented for these young people. Some of them are probably living in the condition of delinquency.

We do not believe that for violent offenders we should be looking at some alternative measures, that there should be some community programs for violent offences. We believe that community based programs or alternate programs may be used for non-violent first time offenders.

Young people can make errors. They get mixed up in the wrong crowd or hang out with people who have bad reputations. They blend in and all of a sudden they find themselves involved in criminal activity on a first time offence. We should see how our communities can bring them back in.

The hon. member mentioned that there are already some community programs in place. Other community programs are being considered where the community itself, understanding their young people and the needs of the community, could probably do two things. They could educate them and help them integrate back into that community or for the safety of other young people could hold them in check.

We are not opposed to alternative measures, but we are opposed to those with third or fourth time offences going through alternative measures. We are opposed to violent criminal acts bypassing incarceration. They are placed in a community program where it is a slap on the wrist and we believe they should be incarcerated.

Mr. Reed Elley (Nanaimo—Cowichan, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, I remember a little nine year old boy coming down the street into my backyard one day. His pockets were bulging and overflowing with candy and stuff. When I queried him about it and asked him if he had any money to pay for it, he said no, that he had just helped himself.

What I did as a father was what any father should do with a child who has been caught shoplifting: I marched him back to the store. I made him apologize to the owner and give back the candy.

Government Orders

Fortunately he had not started eating it so he was able to give it all back.

Is it not public disclosure of the things we do wrong one of the best ways for us to make sure it does not happen again? Is it not true that most of the crime in the country occurs under the cover of darkness or takes place when other people cannot see what is going on because it is human nature to not want to get caught doing something that is wrong?

With regard to the public disclosure of names of children who have done something wrong, is it not common sense that if we published the names of these children a shame factor would come into play? Would it help prevent them from doing it again, or has society gone so far away from the shame factor that it does not matter any more? I would like the hon. member to comment on that.

Mr. Kevin Sorenson: Mr. Speaker, the publication of names does two things. It helps to protect society. I talked about that in my speech. As a parent, the publication of names would allow me to be very careful whom my children hang around with. It would let me know about someone living down the street or close by in the community that I would not want my little girl or boy hanging around with.

I could then do one of two things. I could be there all the time that my child is with that individual, or I could step in say that I do not want my child hanging around with those types of people. The publication of names is a good idea.

• (1525)

The fear of their name being publicized creates a deterrent as well. If they commit a crime or are involved in a crime they do not want their community to know. The hon. member is 100% right. It serves as a deterrent and a deterrent that we should not question. Over and above that it give us another tool to protect society and our young people.

We need to publish the names of all violent offenders such as the individual the hon. member came in contact with. We are not asking for the publication of names of individuals who have shoplifted or stolen candy from a candy store. That is not what we are asking for. We are talking about violent offenders.

The school boards said that they wanted to know the names of those involved in crime. It was information they could use to educate. It could also protect society. Other members said names of violent offenders were already published but not to the extreme they would like to see. Some information is provided to schools to a certain degree, but not to the community to the point where I as a parent would know that young Johnny who just moved in is a convicted drug dealer.

The whole issue of drug dealing is not mentioned under violent offences. We should look at what drug dealers are doing to the country. That is another area that should be publicized. It is ripping

our country apart. It is to a large degree driving young people into crime. Parents have said that we need to know who the drug dealers are and who is convicted of drug dealing.

Mr. Peter MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough, PC): Mr. Speaker, I have listened to the remarks of the hon. member. When he speaks of the issue of deterrence. I agree that general and specific deterrents are an important part of the messaging in the criminal justice system. It applies to youth as well.

Having looked at the bill he would know that it attempts to draw a line in the sand between violent and non-violent offences. It sets up the impression in the public sphere that somehow the bill would enable more to be done in terms of early intervention. There would be more programming available by virtue of the bill. There would be more attempts made to be proactive in our criminal justice system. All those things are certainly laudable goals. They are areas, he will agree, that we should be looking at.

The difficulty that exists in the bill is that the federal government through the Department of Justice has given no undertaking whatsoever to increase its share of the costs of the administration of justice, particularly pertaining to the young offenders system. As it currently exists in most provinces, the federal government is picking up less than half the cost.

My question for the hon. member is quite simple. If the new bill is raising expectations and putting in place mechanisms that put greater emphasis on early intervention and rehabilitation, goals that we should be trying to attain, yet at the same time is giving no commitment whatsoever to funding such programs, are we really not in some instances making things worse by dashing the hopes of dedicated people in probation and other dedicated workers who are trying to do more to help youth at risk?

Mr. Kevin Sorenson: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is absolutely right. As I read through Bill C-7 I did not understand the provincial jurisdiction and the federal jurisdiction. A lot of what the hon. member is referring to is true. Funding is definitely lacking.

Our lead critic from Provencher spoke about the provincial jurisdiction and the federal jurisdiction. As a new member in the House I have gone through the bill, but I have not been privy to all the witnesses and all the committee meetings. I have heard concern that we are stepping into provincial jurisdiction and that we are putting expectations on the provinces. We are not willing, as we used to say down on the farm, to put our money where our mouth is.

• (1530)

It is a huge problem when we download to provinces programs which perhaps they should be in charge of and there is no money

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available to help follow up. The whole thing should be looked at as far as the federal portion of funding is concerned. If they are willing to come with these programs, the government had better be willing to back it up with its wallet.

Mr. John McKay (Scarborough East, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will mention at the outset that I will be splitting my time.

This debate by and large generates more heat than light and has, over the past seven years of these last three parliaments, generated a great deal of heat. I do not know how much light we actually came to over the course of those three parliaments, but this occupied the 35th parliament. The justice committee reported in May 1997 on this issue and that formed the basis for the 36th parliament's Bill C-68.

In the course of dealing with Bill C-68, parliament was prorogued and that bill became Bill C-3. In the course of dealing with Bill C-3, we in the justice committee had extensive hearings, as did the previous justice committee, hearings that were nationwide. In the course of those hearings, we heard from pretty well every corner of the country and from every interested jurisdiction. Bill C-3 has now become Bill C-7 and we are now in the 37th parliament and back to debating this issue.

While I have some discomfort at times about time allocation, there comes a time when time should be allocated. I believe this is one of those occasions where we finally have to deal with the evidence we have heard, the testimony we have heard and the manner in which the government has put it forward in a bill after extensive hearings.

May I say that at the point where we were just about to get down to clause by clause in the justice committee, the Bloc Quebecois decided that would be a good time to filibuster. The Bloc took up something in the order of 27 hours of the committee's time on a filibuster which ultimately had to be returned to the House, with the net result that the bill was not heard and not dealt with prior to the election in November 2000.

I submit that we are not going to make everybody happy. There are times at which government just has to be government. Parliament does its thing and expresses its view because, after all, this is a talking shop. We do talk and we do advise, but ultimately it is the government that makes decisions.

I want to commend the Minister of Justice on her willingness to listen to evidence and to change significant portions of the bill based upon the evidence she heard at committee.

The first change is in the area of the preamble and principles of the bill. Members will notice that clause 3 has been changed. Again, this is as a direct result of what she heard at committee.

The first statement of principle will now read as follows:

- (a) the youth criminal justice system is intended to
 - (i) prevent crime by addressing the circumstances underlying a young person's offending behaviour,
 - (ii) rehabilitate young persons who commit offences and reintegrate them into society, and
 - (iii) ensure that a young person is subject to meaningful consequences for his or her offence—

As I say, a number of people before the committee said that we had the principles in the preamble as a declaration of principle and that was not correct. The Minister of Justice listened and the Minister of Justice has put that into the bill.

Second, the importance of timely intervention is recognized in the principles. In some respects that may be stating the obvious, but in testimony after testimony we heard that a youth would commit an offence in May of one year and not be dealt with until a year or 18 months later. At the best of times one has difficulty bringing together the consequences of one's activity with the punishment, and the result is that the youth loses all appreciation for the justice system, so the importance of timely intervention is right in the declaration of principle. Again, the minister changed this.

• (1535)

There is another change. A reference to the needs and level of development of the youth has been added to the principles. Subparagraph 3(1)(c)(iii) reads:

- (iii) be meaningful for the individual young person given his or her needs and level of development and, where appropriate, involve the parents, the extended family—

and so on.

Those are significant additions and, again, are based upon evidence we heard. Again I have to commend the Minister of Justice. She listened to the testimony. The changes were made in the bill.

When she attempts to come before the committee members opposite filibuster. I cannot quite see how that is being a responsible parliamentarian. Members are forever saying that they have no impact on legislation. Frankly, the justice committee did have an impact on this legislation. Frankly, the justice committee spent a lot of time listening to the evidence. Frankly, the minister reacted with significant amendments. Yet members opposite say that we have to debate this some more and that members opposite are irrelevant and do not have any impact on legislation.

With reference to the interests of victims, that was probably a flaw in the previous bill and has been referred to in the preamble of the bill where it has been incorporated by reference. It states:

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Canadian society should have a youth criminal justice system that commands respect, takes into account the interests of victims, fosters responsibility and ensures accountability—

I do not know what else can be said in terms of how to incorporate those kinds of principles into a bill.

We heard a great deal of testimony about how Canada treats its youth when they come in contact with the law. What became clear in the course of listening to our evidence was that we overrely on incarceration, particularly on incarceration for aboriginal youth. I can recall the testimony of one youth justice of the Northwest Territories who gave a rather sad commentary on our youth justice system. He said that one of the reasons he puts aboriginal youth in jail is that he knows they have no real alternatives, that they either go back on the street to dysfunctional families or go back on the street to no families at all. As a consequence, he saw it as his only option to put kids in jail. That is a pretty sad commentary on our situation.

Canadians would be interested to know that we incarcerate youth at twice the American rate. That is a pretty shocking statistic and is frankly something I had not heard prior to becoming a parliamentarian. That contrasts quite distinctly with the fact that Americans incarcerate adults at four times the rate Canadians do.

The other point of interest that came up in testimony had to do with learning disabilities. It became clear that a disproportionate number of youth offenders have learning disabilities. The low estimate was something in the order of 35%. The higher estimate was something in the order of 80%. More than one out of every two young offenders cannot read. In this society, people who cannot read will likely be marginalized. If they are marginalized, they are likely going to be hanging out with people they should not be hanging out with and doing things they should not be doing. The consequence is that they will be involved in conflicts with the law.

We also heard that young offenders drop out of school at twice the rate of their peers. At some level this is not really news and at another level it is a profound recognition of societal failure, which brings us into conflict between the needs of criminal justice and the needs of social justice. That is a kind of philosophical divide that we all straddle in some manner or another.

One of the pieces of testimony that really caught my attention was that of professor Allan Leishfield of the University of Western Ontario.

I know he is not from Queen's, Mr. Speaker, but he still probably has something to say in this area.

He states:

There is simply not enough evidence to support the notion that incapacitation through incarceration of relatively large numbers of youth is an effective way to promote community safety. The second is partly drawn from the first and that is that the

cost of providing custody for large numbers of youth is considerable and not justified given the poor outcomes recorded in the vast majority of the programs that rely on incapacitation.

● (1540)

Members opposite should know that it costs about \$106,000 a year to keep a youth in jail, whereas referrals to other non-custodial situations cost somewhere in the order of about \$9,500.

When something is costly and is not working, there is something wrong. When we are faced with that situation we have to look at other alternatives.

I respectfully submit that this bill has looked at other alternatives, that this has been completely and thoroughly debated by members opposite, and that it is time to deal with the issues that criminal justice presents to all of us.

Mr. Chuck Cadman (Surrey North, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague across the way for his intervention. It is a pleasure to again be back on the justice committee with him.

I have one question with regard to the provisions for what is essentially parole for young offenders, that is, mandatory supervision, which would equate to half of the length of the incarceration period of the sentence.

The initial idea was to mandate one-half the period. In other words, if there were a three year sentence, one year of that would have to be under supervision as mandated. There were some objections raised to that. I can understand that. I think we could all agree that for certain offenders, especially violent offenders, we would want to see some period of supervision after an incarceration period.

However, some objections were raised to that because it in effect reduced the incarceration period, which a lot of people were saying was too short as it was for violent offences. The government in its wisdom has decided to give that discretion back to the judge, which in effect now takes away any form of mandatory supervision for the most violent offenders.

I wonder if the hon. member would comment on that. What we would suggest is to increase the actual length of time of the sentence and impose the mandatory supervision. To reduce the incarceration period and then take away the supervision for the offenders who probably need it the most does not seem like much of a solution.

Mr. John McKay: Mr. Speaker, I believe the hon. member is referring to the presumptive offences, an area that is actually a fairly significant change in the bill. Now crown attorneys and defence attorneys will not argue as to whether a case should be tried or not tried in adult court. The crown will simply ask for an adult sentence at the end of the presentation of the evidence.

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The interesting anomaly was raised in evidence as to whether this would in effect, if there were an imposition of an adult sentence, result in the reduction of incarceration time, the time actually in incarceration, and a period of supervision. There was that anomaly.

I do not have a good answer for the hon. member's inquiry. I think it is a legitimate issue to raise. That was an area about which we all had some questions. It was rather a pity that the last committee did not get down to debating significant issues such as the hon. member raises. I am hoping that we do have the opportunity at the committee to raise that particular issue and arrive at a reasonable solution.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Denis Paradis (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to try to correct some of the information that has been circulating on the opposition benches since Bill C-7 was tabled.

Some are suggesting that Bill C-7 is too tough on young offenders, whereas others are criticizing it for being toothless. Bill C-7 is a departure from these two contradictory philosophical approaches and strikes a balance resting on three closely interconnected and complementary elements: first, crime prevention; second, accountability for young offenders; and third, the rehabilitation and reintegration of young offenders.

• (1545)

We have been consistently hearing comments to the effect that Quebec has taken the approach of treating its young offenders well, an approach which would be jeopardized by the implementation of Bill C-7. This is not quite the case.

Statistics show that Quebec tends to put its young offenders into custody even for minor offences. Statistics also show that between 1997 and 1998 Quebec was the province with the biggest increase in its incarceration rate, which jumped by 6%.

Everybody can benefit from Bill C-7. At the national level, our justice system's way of dealing with young offenders is such that our young people are detained in custody four times as often as adults and, at the international level, from 10 to 15 times as often as young Australians or Europeans.

Bill C-7 recognizes the difficult times some of our young people are experiencing. Although criminal legislation by itself cannot be an appropriate response to their problems, it can provide the necessary tools to bring in both health and youth protection agencies, and remedy the underlying causes of juvenile delinquency. This is exactly what Bill C-7 does.

The youth criminal justice act, Bill C-7, would allow the use of health professionals at any stage of the process to assess if the young person has health problems, physical or mental disorders,

psychological problems, emotional problems or learning disabilities, or if he or she is mentally retarded.

The diagnosis could then be used in sentencing or in determining extrajudicial measures to be applied. Bill C-7 even provides for a custody and supervision system that includes an intensive rehabilitation and reintegration program.

The bill would also enable a youth court to submit the case of a young offender to a youth protection agency so it could determine if he or she needed its services.

However, detention or custody cannot be used as a substitute for appropriate child protection, mental health or other social measures. Despite what some people say, putting young people in prison or in youth centres, even though it may sometimes be necessary, is not the only effective way of fighting crime.

We reject the statement that custody may be necessary to treat a young offender with problems even though the offence does not require such a strict penalty. Our response to that argument is threefold.

First, it is not necessary to have a young person in custody to ensure that he or she receives appropriate treatment. Treatment is the responsibility of the health and welfare system or the youth protection system, but it is not the responsibility of the criminal justice system.

Second, detaining a young person just because his or her particular condition requires an action by the health or child protection system, in cases where the offence is a minor one, would be contrary to the principle of fairness and equity.

Finally, this kind of approach would penalize a youth simply because of some unfortunate circumstances, not to mention the stigma of detention that could limit a young offender in his or her endeavours to become a productive citizen.

Bill C-7 was criticized for being prejudicial to what Quebec took over 20 years to build. As an elected representative from Quebec and a former president of the Quebec Bar Association, I approve the criminal justice system for young persons set out in Bill C-7. The bill commands respect but also protects the interests of the victims, promotes responsibility by providing positive opportunities and focusing on rehabilitation, keeps harsh sentences for the most serious offences and limits detention for non violent young persons.

Finally, let me review some of the elements of the bill that would improve upon the current system and reinforce the strength of the Quebec model while enhancing its approach.

• (1550)

In no specific order, these elements are the following. First, there is the exclusive jurisdiction of the youth justice court and the fact that young offenders would no longer be transferred to adult courts, as is currently done.

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Second, an adult sentence would only be imposed after a person is found guilty and the names have been published.

Third, in clause 4, the bill creates some kind of framework for the discretionary power of the youth workers on the front line. This is set out in clauses 4 to 12.

The following point concerns the emphasis on diversion and the means available to stakeholders to use it effectively.

Another point has to do with the notion of time, which is so important when correcting criminal behaviour. The current legislation, I note, is silent on this point. All signs are that Quebec will improve its response time, or at least maintain it, when faced with the requirement to act rapidly and effectively.

The following point has to do with the distinction made between the majority of offenders, who commit non-violent crimes, and the minority, whose crimes are violent.

Another point concerns the clarity of the objectives and general guidelines for each stakeholder in the system at all phases of the procedure, and the specific principles applicable to a particular stage or intervention.

A wide array of measures is available to stakeholders, whether they be the police, the crown, judges or social workers, to help young offenders take responsibility and adopt behaviour that is consistent with the values of our society.

The following point has to do with the recognition given frontline workers for their contribution to the youth criminal justice system.

The creation of committees of citizens, to be called youth justice committees, on which the bill confers duties and powers of recommendation, supervision, support, information and advice, is another point contained in the bill, as is the possibility of convening conferences to deal with a specific case. This possibility is given to a police officer, the crown and the judge.

Such a meeting would bring together the victim and his or her family, the young offender and his or her family, community organizations, school authorities, and other individuals concerned in determining specific solutions in a given case.

The bill also contains the principle of recognition of the victim and the obligation to forge partnerships with the community and the community organizations for a better understanding and resolution of the problems surrounding youth crime.

In conclusion, let us keep in mind that, in support of the efforts to implement the youth criminal justice act, Quebec would receive a substantial portion of the budget allocated for this, as well as an increase in the federal government contribution to the administration of justice.

I recently wrote an open letter in response to a letter from the president of the Junior Bar of Quebec. I sent this open letter to *La Presse* and invite them to publish it.

Mr. Antoine Dubé (Lévis-et-Chutes-de-la-Chaudière, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I have always respected the hon. member for Brome—Missisquoi but today I was both surprised and disappointed by his comments.

He based part of his arguments on the fact that he is a former president of the Quebec Bar Association. Listening to him, I got the impression that he was talking more like a Liberal member trying to support a minister who finds herself in a rather awkward situation.

As a Quebecer, he is well aware of that. I know he reads the newspapers. I was not surprised to see that *La Presse* did not publish his letter because *La Presse* must have realized that it did not reflect the consensus in Quebec.

Let me ask the following question of this former president of the bar association. I think *La Presse* should have noted that the national assembly, of which his brother is a member, agrees that this bill makes no sense in Quebec.

• (1555)

All the organizations, the youth centres, the representatives of the young people and the CLSCs say so. Everybody says so. There is a consensus, and the member for Berthier—Montcalm has shown this on a number of occasions. I even did so in the previous parliament. There was a very broad consensus among all the organizations concerned with young people in Quebec. They say that this law makes no sense, that it was introduced simply to please a certain western lobby, which wants measures to be more severe.

He surprises me especially where he expresses the statistics in national terms and notes increases in certain statistics. At the same time, he speaks of a 6% increase in detentions in Quebec, finding that this is serious and significant. Yet, the rate of detention is low—that is the way to see it—in fact, it is lower in Quebec than elsewhere in Canada. He said there was a slight increase and yet this is where there are the fewest detentions in Canada. His making a point of saying “It increased by 6%” in order to justify his remarks, I find unacceptable.

Is the member aware of the list of all those opposing his bill? Could he list, by memory, those involved with young people in Quebec who agree with what he says? Could he name a dozen

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organizations in Quebec that would agree? Does he remember all those opposed, when in fact there is a consensus, which includes the Quebec national assembly and his own brother?

Mr. Denis Paradis: Mr. Speaker, I understand that the member for Lévis-et-Chutes-de-la-Chaudière has a little trouble with ship-building in his riding but in this case I think he is missing the boat.

I draw the attention of the member for Lévis-et-Chutes-de-la-Chaudière and particularly of the member for Berthier—Montcalm to the bill before us. Earlier, I spoke about correcting some of the misinformation our Bloc Québécois friends are circulating right and left.

I urge them to read the bill carefully. Let us begin with the first page. It says:

WHEREAS members of society share a responsibility to address the developmental challenges and the needs of young persons and to guide them into adulthood;

That is the first “Whereas”. The second paragraph says:

WHEREAS communities, families, parents—

What do they have against families and parents?

—families, parents and others concerned with the development of young persons should, through multi-disciplinary approaches, take reasonable steps to prevent youth crime by addressing its underlying causes, to respond to the needs of young persons, and to provide guidance and support to those at risk of committing crimes;

That is the second “Whereas”. I could go on with the other paragraphs, which are along those lines. Members need to read the bill and to understand what is in the bill.

[*English*]

Mr. Greg Thompson (New Brunswick Southwest, PC): Mr. Speaker, before I begin, I want to thank our justice critic, the member for Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough, for the work he has done on this which extends way beyond this parliament.

As hon. members well know, this bill has been introduced and reintroduced. In fact, it goes back to three parliaments ago when it was originally brought in to update the Young Offenders Act, which we know has been a very troubled piece of legislation since its inception. I point out that the Young Offenders Act has gone beyond the life of young offenders. It is 17 years old.

• (1600)

The member for Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough pointed out on a number of occasions that the present Young Offenders Act does not deserve much of its present reputation. The government could do a number of things to improve the act.

He pointed out that Bill C-7, the youth criminal justice act, from the outset looked very encouraging. It talks about early interven-

tion. It talks about preventive measures on youth who could be embarking on a life of crime. That is of course what we want to prevent. A reversal of one's behaviour can come about only by interventionist activities on the part of professionals that can help steer young people in the right direction. That is very commendable.

However it is the sheer complexity of the bill with which most of us have some major concerns. The previous speaker had a copy of the bill in his hands. The physical size of the bill is double the size and the complexity of the existing legislation, the Young Offenders Act.

Quoting from a previous speaker, the member for Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough, in remarks made in the House on February 14:

This particular bill in its current form is so complex, so convoluted and cumbersome that were it to be enacted in its current form, the delays, the interpretations, the legal jargon and the manipulations that would result would be astronomical.

He and other members have mentioned the convoluted nature of this piece of legislation. That has been borne out by judges and others who have worked in the youth criminal justice system over the years. A number of opinions have been rendered on that. They simply say that interpretation of the act would be very difficult for some of our most skilled members of the legal profession.

We have other examples of what we should do and how the bill could be reconstructed, but basically the problem we see is that the present government has refused to give to police the tools needed to do their jobs and the proper resources to effectively implement the present act, let alone any new act. The government's failure to address the problem has allowed the Young Offenders Act to become synonymous with the problems involving youth crime in Canada. There is a need to restore public confidence in the system.

As I mentioned earlier, we have had over seven years of delay and numerous promises in regard to the bill. Originally the government, back in the early nineties, introduced it as Bill C-3. That was replaced with Bill C-68 in the last parliament. We are still talking but nothing is happening.

The bill was criticized by all parties, including the Liberal Party, and all youth justice experts around the country. The reasons were that the bill was too long, too complex and too expensive for the provinces to implement. If the provinces do not have the financial resources to implement the bill, what good would it be, despite its good intentions?

As a result of the frustration of members of parliament in the last parliament during committee hearings on the bill, the member for Berthier—Montcalm filibustered for 27 hours in a determined effort to derail this particular bill. The bill to which we are speaking has only minor technical amendments. Experts still think the bill is too long, too expensive and too complicated.

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• (1605)

One of the models we often point to is the province of Quebec. Certainly in terms of the treatment of young offenders, it has a lot of which to be proud. Quebec is certainly miles ahead of the rest of the provinces. The bill attempts to reflect that but without giving the provinces the resources to do it. It is going to complicate and exaggerate the differences between a province like Ontario with that of Quebec.

Bill C-7 does not offer any real disincentive for youth criminals. The Liberals say that crime rates are falling and that opposition parties are only fearmongering when speaking about the need to crack down on violent crime in Canada. Last July Statistics Canada announced that crime rates had fallen to their lowest level in 20 years. However, it did not mention youth crime.

The overall decline in crime masks a sharp increase in violent crime and a staggering rise in youth crime. While less serious crimes have petered off, violent crime is actually up by 57% over the last 20 years and violent youth crime is up by over 77% in 10 years. It is quite obvious that this is not fearmongering. It is a real problem when we look at an increase of 77% in 10 years.

I will not end there because the numbers get even more disturbing. Violent crime by young girls has risen 127% since 1988, with most of those statistics coming from categories such as murder and hostage taking. Obviously we have read about stories like that. There was one in the *National Post* on July 20, 2000, if anyone is interested.

Lack of accountability for the crimes committed by young offenders is no deterrent. Even when young criminals are convicted, they are often given a custodial sentence which can often be served at home. They are sentenced on average to a single month. It is not much wonder that 40% of all young offenders are repeat offenders.

Almost half of the convicted youths between the years 1998-99 were simply placed on probation. Seventy-five per cent of custody sentences were for three months or less, and 90% of those sentences were for six months or less. Only 2% of these convicted offenders got more than a year. We are talking about serious crime, not petty crimes. Only 0.1% of youth crimes made it to adult court between 1998-99. I believe the last point or the numbers are precise. Forty-eight per cent of those convicted had at least one previous conviction.

• (1610)

If we ask frontline police officers if things are getting easier, their answer is absolutely not. They say so called minor youth crimes are not being reported due to an overworked police force that is stretched to deal with too much crime. Too many young offenders are being dealt with through what they call extra judicial

measures. They do not become part of the government's statistics. If it is not reported, it did not happen.

Frontline victim groups are upset that under Bill C-7 crimes such as common assault are not considered by the government to be violent in nature. That would not be included in the violent crime statistics, thus helping to further massage the government's statistics to support its theory that violent crime is decreasing.

It is hard to believe that children under 12 years old are committing serious crimes and many of them are not being charged at all. I would like to give the House an example.

On August 23, 2000, Ms. Margaret Moore, an elderly woman in Calgary, was mugged and beaten at noon hour by two young girls aged 11 and 13. The 13 year old faces one charge of robbery and the 11 year old is too young to be charged under the Young Offenders Act. That is an important point to make. It is obviously a flaw in the Young Offenders Act.

Another example is an 11 year old boy walked into an Edmonton bank in broad daylight a few weeks ago and proceeded to rob it. The young boy was wearing a ball cap, sunglasses and carried a knapsack. He handed the teller a note demanding money. Being only 11 years old, the system has no means of dealing with this young offender.

Children under 12 and older youth are expected to be dealt with through provincially administered programs which are supposed to receive 50% of their funding from the federal government. Obviously they do not because every province, including my home province, is complaining about the lack of funds from Ottawa to help in rehabilitation. Under the present government, the provinces have seen their 50% share drop to as little as 30%. This decreased funding equates to children not receiving the services they need and rehabilitation does not occur. That is the key. If we want to look to any part of the country where rehabilitation has worked we would obviously look to the province of Quebec.

Victims of youth crime could give us stories behind these statistics. They could give us stories about the lives that have been taken and the hurt that has been caused. They could give us stories about the victims who have been left behind to fight for recognition from a Liberal justice system which is concerned more with the rights of the young offender than with the pain of the victims and the need to be accountable to the public, which is scared that these young offenders will continue to get off with a slap on the wrist.

There are not many weaknesses in Bill C-7. However, if we are reintroducing or bringing in a new bill, we have to provide the provinces with the tools and resources to implement it. The bill

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simply puts an impossible burden on the backs of the provinces, especially the poorer ones.

We have a couple of things that could happen.

First, judges could be given more power to impose mandatory treatment or therapy for troubled youth. The key is obviously treatment and therapy.

Second, serious violent crime offences involving young offenders could be automatically transferred to adult courts.

• (1615)

Third, we should enact a parental responsibility act to make the parents of young offenders financially responsible for the criminal acts of their children.

Fourth, we should lower the age of accountability to include violent criminals of all ages. Currently, as we well know, violent offenders below the age of 12 face no punishment for their crimes. At least in cases involving serious crime, the justice system should be able to bring a child under the age of 12 into the youth justice system in the same manner that a young offender can be transferred into the adult system for serious crimes.

Our party, although we risk being accused of this when we speak in such terms, does not intend to incarcerate youths in inhuman or cruel facilities. None of us want that. However we do support mandatory youth access to adult criminal rehabilitation resources and increased accountability for violent youth crime.

Through such services we hope to prevent young adults from continuing a life of anti-social criminal activity. We can make a positive change in the area of law enforcement by making a commitment to action in at least three areas.

First, we should reform the youth criminal justice system.

Second, we should build safe communities through the promotion of anti-violence and by providing adult mentors for our young people, especially our youth at risk.

Third, we should give law enforcement agencies the resources they need to do their jobs.

In the last parliament, as the House is well aware, we put forward a number of amendments. We will do the same in this parliament. We put forth amendments to Bill C-3 and Bill C-68, and we plan to do the same for Bill C-11.

The bill should be scrapped, but Liberal members are obviously unwilling to listen to the public. We hope they will at least take a close look at our amendments which aim at improving this piece of legislation.

Mr. John Maloney (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my

friend opposite made a comment that there are not many weaknesses in Bill C-7. I agree.

He refers to children 11 and under and says there are no repercussions. Is he not aware that all provinces, to my knowledge, have youth protection agencies that intervene on a regular basis for those individuals? Does he really want to jail a 10 year old?

His other point was about the frustration of our police officers. Under the act our police officers will be the gatekeepers. They will be at the front end. Under the advice of crown attorneys they will be able to use their discretion. Is that not good? Will it not address some of the concerns of the police at this time?

Mr. Greg Thompson: Mr. Speaker, I am aware of the point the member made. However the point we are making, if one follows the points our justice critic has made on the bill over the past months, is that the bill is fine in a perfect world. However nothing in the bill guarantees funding to allow provinces to encourage the counselling and mentoring of youths through various agencies.

We truly believe that must be part of it. If one thing has hurt our youth justice system more than anything else, it is the lack of funding. If the corrective approach is prevention, counselling and identifying children at risk, the hon. member has made a good point. However we must have the resources to do that. Unless they are there it simply will not happen.

• (1620)

Not only are our police forces going flat out to do the best, but so are our counsellors. I was a teacher at one time. The school systems simply do not have the resources to help young children at risk. If they did, it could make all the difference in the world.

If the bill goes through, I hope the money would flow through the provinces to make sure the bill could be enacted or enforced and that we could prevent youth crime from occurring in the first place. If it did occur we would have the rehabilitation services to move those young people on to better things.

Mr. Chuck Cadman (Surrey North, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for his comments. Reflecting on the fact that the member was a school teacher, the association of school board trustees was here last week lobbying each and every one of us to do something about the notification provisions.

I would like to hear the member's comments on the desire of teachers and school administrators that it be mandatory or automatic that they be notified when there is a violent offender or sex offender in the classroom. I would like to hear the member's comments on that.

Mr. Greg Thompson: Mr. Speaker, I have been out of the teaching profession more than 25 years but I know some things have not changed in the school system. When there is a disruptive influence in the classroom everyone is hurt. Unless we have the

resources to deal with the individual causing the disruption, everyone suffers. That has not changed. I know teachers have concerns about that.

With respect to the issue of violence I know the member has spent a tremendous amount of time on the bill. He is speaking from experience that none of us, thank goodness, have ever had to live through in terms of violence and youth crime and so on. However when we look at the shootings in various high schools and institutions over the last number of years, especially in the U.S. but also in Canada, the common theme is that they were done by troubled people who had no one to help them.

Without such help nothing changes because we have no idea, or we cannot say categorically, what kinds of homes those young people come from. Obviously some come from what we consider good homes. What happens behind those walls none of us know. I know parents do their best to deal with this, but teachers need professionals and support staff they can depend on. That would avoid a lot of this.

I know some young people are the victims of teasing, taunting and peer groups and so on. However putting up with young people who are subjected to that, and who then vent their emotions on an entire classroom, takes a lot out of a teacher.

The teaching profession, unless I am wrong, would be very supportive of interventionist moneys or resources to help the problem. Unless the problem is addressed and there is honest dialogue in terms of what is happening in the classroom, nothing will change. We must pay attention to the problem.

Let us put resource people into the classroom. Let us make the commitment to do that. Such commitment means moneys from Ottawa. We must identify the problem and the federal government must finally stand up and say yes, we have the resources to help. That is what we want. We want help in the classrooms of small towns, communities and cities across Canada. We want something to happen.

● (1625)

Mr. Geoff Regan (Halifax West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I listened with great interest to the hon. member's speech. I note, in relation to the principles and purpose of youth sentencing, that subsection 38(1) asserts:

The purpose of sentencing under section 42 (youth sentences) is to contribute to the protection of society by holding a young person accountable for an offence through the imposition of just sanctions that have meaningful consequences for the young person and that promote his or her rehabilitation and reintegration into society.

Does the hon. member agree that this is a reasonable and sensible approach to the sentencing of youth criminals? We are talking about people who have been convicted at this stage and are going on to sentencing.

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Mr. Greg Thompson: Mr. Speaker, to sum up, we are in favour of rehabilitation and identifying youth at risk. For the problem to end and violent crime to be addressed, a number of things must happen. Problems must be identified before they happen. There must be a sense of deterrent. There must be financial resources to allow all provinces to have a solution that would work from one end of Canada to the other. It would truly mean a financial commitment by the Government of Canada.

However the key to the entire problem is rehabilitation. We must provide the resources to bring about rehabilitation in the classrooms, and we must provide police forces the tools with which to work. Unfortunately it often comes down to financial resources, and that must be part and parcel of the package once the bill is passed.

Mr. Geoff Regan (Halifax West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to speak to the bill today regarding youth criminal justice. The bill will replace the Young Offenders Act. It is a key part of the Government of Canada's youth justice renewal initiative, an initiative that is very important.

I had occasion recently to speak with a person involved in the issue of restorative justice. We talked about the importance and the challenge of ensuring that justice is swift while at the same time guaranteeing the rights of an accused person. That is a difficult balance. We want to see matters brought to justice very quickly.

It is important for any person, but particularly young people, to understand there are consequences to a criminal act and to know what the consequences are. It is important that such acts be dealt with swiftly. Their consequences must be swift and the person responsible be held to account. They must face the victim if that is appropriate. They must face the community and confront the fact that their act has had a negative and terrible impact on the community. That is important.

If young offenders are to overcome and get beyond what they have done, recognize they have done something wrong and grow and learn and change, they must be confronted fairly quickly with what has happened. That is why restorative justice is a step in the right direction, and I am glad the Department of Justice is working on it.

However the other side of the challenge is that while justice must be swift we must ensure the rights of an accused person are protected. As a judge said many years ago, it is better that ten guilty people go free than one innocent person be convicted. That is one of the golden threads of our legal justice system in Canada.

● (1630)

The new act will incorporate some very important new considerations. It will incorporate the initiative's new approach to youth justice and it will form the backbone of a major restructuring of the youth justice system. This restructuring has been going on since

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1988. Let us look at the key elements of the new bill and the principles it applies.

The preamble of the bill underlines the values, rights and responsibilities both of society and of young people in relation to youth crime. Clearly we do have rights and responsibilities on both sides and our values are important. What we are trying to do, obviously, is to teach or to inject those values, so to speak, into young people. We are not always talking about people who are absolutely devoid of values. Often we are talking about people who have strayed from those values, who have learned the basics but perhaps have made an important and fundamental error, in some cases a very serious error, and have strayed dramatically from those values. However, in some cases, yes, they are people who do not appear to show any of the values that we think are important as a society.

The bill sets out the most important objectives of the youth criminal justice system. The objectives are to prevent crime, to rehabilitate and reintegrate offenders into society, and to ensure meaningful consequences for offences committed by young people so that they have the consequence of being confronted with their actions, of being brought to account to face the victim and recognize what they have done to someone, and also to face their community and recognize the impact on the community of what they have done.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to advise you, by the way, that I will be splitting my time with the minister of state for youth.

The principles of the bill recognize that these elements, pursued together, are the best way to protect the public and promote safer communities over the long term.

Let me talk for a moment about the provisions of the bill regarding sentencing. I mentioned a few minutes earlier, and I want to repeat, what subclause 38(1) of the bill says. I think it is a very important provision of this bill. It is important to understand what the bill is all about and what the idea of sentencing is all about within the new youth criminal justice bill.

Subclause 38(1) asserts that the purpose of imposing a youth sentence is:

—to contribute to the protection of society by holding a young person accountable for an offence through the imposition of just sanctions that have meaningful consequences for the young person and that promote his or her rehabilitation and reintegration into society.

That is very important. We have to consider that. Those who feel, for example, that all people under the age of 18 who are convicted of a criminal act should be in adult institutions, in adult prisons, ought to consider the impact of that. Surely if we put a 15 year old or a 14 year old or a 13 year old into an adult prison facility, what we are doing, in effect, is helping him or her to be trained to become a more proficient criminal. Surely that is not an

objective we ought to be endorsing or embracing for our youth criminal justice system.

As this legislation states, the key purpose of youth sentences is to hold young people accountable for their crimes. That is vital. It is vital that they be held accountable and have to confront what they have done. If there is any chance for reform or rehabilitation, they must first confront and be confronted with what they have done.

The other key purpose, of course, is to contribute to the protection of society. How can this be achieved? There are a number of goals that the bill sets out. For instance, it sets out that we can achieve these goals through interventions that are just; there must be justice in these interventions. This can be accomplished through community intervention, with incarceration for the most serious crimes. Community intervention may work well in some cases. I think it is important that we give it a try.

We have already seen the idea of restorative justice, whereby young people are confronted by the community and particularly by the victims they have injured and are required to make restoration, not only to the victim but also to the community at large. A crime is an attack not only on one person, on one family or on one resident, but is in effect an attack on our society and on the community in which the attack takes place.

• (1635)

Another important goal is that we ensure meaningful consequences. Clearly the youth must recognize the severity of the crime, and the punishment should suit the crime. These are very important objectives.

Finally, it must promote rehabilitation and reintegration.

It seems to me that the bill goes a long way toward achieving those objectives. Provisions in the bill will encourage community based sentences where appropriate, such as, for example, compensation for victims, community service and supervision in the community.

It will allow the courts to impose adult sentences upon conviction when certain criteria are met. It creates the presumption that adult sentences will be given to young people 14 and older who are found guilty of murder, attempted murder, manslaughter or aggravated sexual assault or who are repeat serious violent offenders. That is a very important provision, this presumption of an adult sentence, because it means that for serious crimes they will do serious time. It means that young offenders can expect this if they are involved in serious violent crime.

At the same time, because we recognize that there are different situations in different parts of the country and we recognize that different provinces have had success with different models in

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relation to these issues, the provinces will have increased flexibility in regard to the age at which this presumption will apply within their jurisdictions.

Lastly, it will create a new, intensive, rehabilitative custody and supervision sentence for the most violent high risk youth so that they get the treatment they need. That is so important. Not only is it important that they be confronted with their actions but, particularly with the most violent youth, there is a real need for serious treatment. These are people who obviously have severe problems and we have a great challenge in order to have a hope that people like this may at some point go back into society. It is important that we find a way to give them good treatment.

Mr. Chuck Cadman (Surrey North, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, I have a short question for my hon. colleague across the way. He refers to clause 38 under “Sentencing, Purpose and Principles”. I would ask the hon. member to explain to the House why we do not see any mention of deterrence or denunciation.

Mr. Geoff Regan: Mr. Speaker, I have talked about justice and I have talked about meaningful consequences. I think that when we talk about meaningful consequences, we talk about holding people to account and about the strong impact.

In fact, a moment ago I mentioned something that relates directly to this. I talked about adult sentences being given to people who are 14 years of age or older and who are found guilty of serious crimes. Clearly that is deterrence. Clearly deterrence is part of this bill and part of what the provisions provide.

Perhaps the member does not find it in this particular phrase, but it talks about “holding a young person accountable for an offence through the imposition of just sanctions that have meaningful consequences for the young person” et cetera. Those consequences are publicly known. The fact that there are these consequences becomes public. The person’s peer group is certainly going to be aware of these consequences. That is clearly a deterrent to further actions of this kind.

At the same time, there not only needs to be deterrence but also treatment and rehabilitation. There cannot be the imbalance of having one and not the other. There has to be that combination. That is the challenge before us.

Mr. John Maloney (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member for New Brunswick Southwest suggested to the House that there should be criminal sanctions to a parent for the offences of his or her child.

I would like to ask the member for Halifax West if he feels that punishing a bad parent is going to make him or her a good parent.

Mr. Geoff Regan: Mr. Speaker, it seems to me that this brings up a very interesting challenge for society, because how do we legislate good parenting? On the other hand, how do we penalize parents who have maybe been good parents when, in spite of their best efforts, one of their children has engaged in criminal acts, particularly in violent criminal acts?

• (1640)

I do not believe that this permits simple solutions. It might be attractive to say to throw the parent in jail or to penalize the parent in some severe way and that would solve the problem. I am not convinced that it will. I am not convinced that this suggestion encompasses the reality that is out there, the reality of parents who have been good parents or of parents who have done their best but who may have limited ability, for whatever reason, because of their own background, to provide the parenting we would like to see them provide, to provide the level of parenting we would like to see ideally.

It seems to me that the idea of penalizing the parent is one that is not well founded. At the same time, yes, we want to ensure that parents do a good job. Perhaps there is some way that provinces could improve parenting training and perhaps there are other things that could be done.

Clearly for children who are under the age of 12, where there are consequences under provincial laws, in some cases a child may be taken away from his or her parents because of this kind of situation. However, to say that we can impose on one person a penalty for what someone else has done is so contrary to the fundamental principles of our justice system and of our legal system historically that I think it makes no sense. I do not think we can we can go that far or accept that kind of a leap in that direction.

I think this bill does provide a good balance between the challenge of bringing the youth to justice quickly and the challenge of making sure that the accused’s rights are guaranteed.

Hon. Ethel Blondin-Andrew (Secretary of State (Children and Youth), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is my honour and pleasure to speak today on the new youth criminal justice act.

Moderation is an ideal of virtue. Aristotle is said to have defined virtue as the middle path between extremes of excess and deficiency. It is the way of my party. It is the middle path that we have chosen in placing the bill before the House.

The youth criminal justice act replaces and improves upon the deficiencies of the Young Offenders Act. It promotes what Canadians want to see in the youth justice system: accountability, respect, responsibility and fairness. The act intends to promote these values by protecting the public and by preventing crime.

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It ensures meaningful consequences for the full range of youth crime and, perhaps most important, ensures rehabilitating youth so that they can turn their lives around. It represents what some would call a tougher but more just approach to tackling youth crime.

It is not an excessive bill. It is a measured response to practical realities. We have not caved in to the banal desires of the members of the parties opposite whose quick fix proposals to youth crime would be neither quick nor effective. Might does not make right and justice should not be defined simply by whoever is strong enough to enforce it. We have an obligation to look beyond an individual criminal act to seek solutions, to seek justice.

The opposition, left to its own interests, would have us believe that compulsion is the only reason for obedience to authority, that jacking up sentences and restricting the youth justice process will lead to the reduction of youth crime. The facts simply do not support their arguments. If it were so, we would not have seen an overall reduction in crime rates in the last decade. Canada's national crime rate fell by 5% in 1999, the eighth consecutive annual decline. The youth crime rate is down 4% from 1997-98 and down 13% from 1992-93.

While last year's overall crime rate was down by 4% in the Northwest Territories, youth crime is up, as it is in many parts of northern Canada.

• (1645)

These reductions have not resulted from tougher sanctions but from improvements made in education and in living conditions. The higher youth crime rates in the north and among aboriginal people poses a much more difficult issue. Tougher sentences will not reduce the number of young aboriginal offenders. There are other mitigating factors. Many of them are social and others have to do with perhaps other disabilities that could be better addressed in another forum.

Improving the living conditions of northerners, including our large aboriginal population, is the way to reduce poverty and crime rates. It is a painful fact that aboriginal people represent an alarming 15% of the federal offender population but only 3% of the general population. It is more alarming when one considers that the aboriginal offender population increased from 1997 to 1999.

Tougher sentences will only ensure that aboriginal people will further increase their proportion of the federal inmate population. That is not justice. It is vindictive and ineffective. We cannot just lock people away and hope that the problem will go away. It has not worked, it does not work and it will not work.

That is why our party has taken a balanced approach. We have adopted an aboriginal justice policy that tackles these issues directly. Correctional Service Canada is working with aboriginal

organizations to seek new ways to heal aboriginal offenders. The legislation before us recognizes the unique needs of aboriginal young persons. It recognizes the cultural differences of young aboriginal people, and that there are more effective ways to deal with young people than simply locking them up.

Encouraging community involvement is one of the central components of our strategy. We believe that community involvement is central to repatriating the justice system to aboriginal people, a system that for too long has been seen as a foreign system by many aboriginal youth.

Some provincial correctional authorities report that aboriginal youth constitute 80% of the youth in their correctional facilities. In my riding of the Northwest Territories it is 90%. The statistics are shameful. However, the Leader of the Opposition's platform calls upon all Canadians to be treated equally regardless of race, sex, religion or ethnic origin.

In building safer communities, the leader opposite also wants to play a leadership role internationally. Can there be any better example of the ideological failure of that party and its platform? Which country in the international community does that leader want to impress with these statistics?

That is not all. He wants to get tougher on these aboriginal youth. Clearly, there is another way. It is found in the proposed legislation. The proposed act would provide that measures should respect gender, ethnic, cultural and linguistic differences and respond to the needs of aboriginal young persons and young persons with special requirements. Clearly there must be community involvement and we must try different approaches when dealing with young aboriginal people.

In my riding justice committees have been established in 70% of our communities. The act would encourage this practice. These community committees would continue to play an important role in the development of extrajudicial measures that would be provided for in the new act.

The new act would encourage the use of non-custodial sentencing for youth. This is in keeping with the Northwest Territories' commitment to apply a restorative justice approach. These extrajudicial measures would be particularly appropriate when dealing with first-time offenders who commit minor offences.

The new act would also provide for the use of conferencing which promotes community involvement in dealing with youth involved in the justice system. We believe that the new act would respond to the needs of our justice system. We believe the new act would be a marked improvement over the Young Offenders Act. However, laws that provide a more effective framework for dealing

with young offenders is only one small part of our government's approach to making Canada a better place for our young people.

We have adopted an approach that cuts to the heart of the problem. We have adopted a diverse and holistic approach to crime prevention, which attacks the social causes of crime. We are focusing on areas such as early childhood development, education and training for young people. That is why we have supported the aboriginal headstart groups and developed multi-youth purpose centres for aboriginal people. We are working to provide our youth with more opportunities so they will be less likely to come into conflict with the law. We share the same goal; a society that is safe, secure and respectful of all citizens.

• (1650)

It is sad but a true commentary that the Leader of the Opposition spends more time on locking up young people than supporting entrepreneurs. I had the opportunity to review the leader's aboriginal policies. He talked about aboriginal policies on one page, maybe one-quarter or half a page. That is all that was dedicated to aboriginal people. He talked about equality for Canada's aboriginal people. His definition of equality was as confused as his definition of justice. The opposition leader believes that he must take away aboriginal rights and benefits to make aboriginal people equal. What is more, this perverse logic is the cornerstone of that party's approach to social policy and the poor.

It reminds me of one of the statements by the world renowned economist, John Kenneth Galbraith, who is to be recognized as an honorary officer of the Order of Canada next month. In his book, the *Culture of Contentment*, Mr. Galbraith summed up the prevailing view of the contented middle class, and I believe the view of the party opposite: "To help the poor and middle classes, one must cut the taxes of the rich".

However the party opposite wants to further help youth, aboriginal people and the poor by removing the public support system that is in place for them, including training and employment assistance. That is not our way.

We believe in a more holistic approach. We believe that in addition to criminal sanction we must have a capacity and willingness to help young people when they get into trouble. Make no mistake, young people, including young aboriginal people, can continue to count on our government to help them obtain the tools and skills that will keep them out of the criminal justice system all together. That is our way and that is the Canadian way.

Mr. Jason Kenney (Calgary Southeast, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the hon. secretary of state, for whom I have a great deal of respect, for her heartfelt position on this and many other issues.

In her remarks she criticized the principle which guides the position of the Canadian Alliance with respect to the relationship

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between the Dominion of Canada and aboriginal peoples. She suggested that equality is not an appropriate principle for those relationships.

The principle of equality, which my party articulates in a classical small *l* liberal sense, is predicated on the ancient Liberal principle that ethnicity and race ought not to be a factor in a relationship between the state and the individual. This was a principle very strongly articulated by none other than the late right hon. Pierre Elliott Trudeau, and of course manifested in his 1971 white paper on Indian affairs, where he proposed a paradigm similar to the one articulated by the Canadian Alliance.

Could the minister reflect as to whether she thinks that Prime Minister Trudeau was wrong for advocating the same position? She says that the Alliance simply wants to take rights away from aboriginal people when in fact what we want to do is for instance grant individual aboriginals property rights which in many cases they do not currently have.

Rather than a kind of confrontational approach, would she consider that there is some merit, certainly Pierre Trudeau saw it, in the kind of approach that we are advocating and perhaps a more constructive dialogue would be a better way to go forward?

Hon. Ethel Blondin-Andrew: Mr. Speaker, there is a world of difference between the definition that the right hon. Pierre Elliott Trudeau had for equality for this country under the constitution and the charter. His definition was treating everyone the same does not equate to equality. Hence forthwith, Mr. Trudeau recognized that aboriginal people collectively had unique constitutional and legal rights and therefore recognized that in the constitution under section 35(1). Not only that but he took it one step further.

• (1655)

After a discussion at the constitutional conference and after listening and speaking to the great aboriginal leaders of this country such as George Erasmus, Jim Sinclair and David Ahenakew, Mr. Trudeau said that maybe they were right and that they should speak for themselves. He suggested they be funded so they could have their own voice. He therefore funded them. Hence we have the National Indian Brotherhood of Canada and the Metis National Council of Canada. Those organizations were born with the will of the people and with the definition that man stood for, which is not the same as the member's.

Treating people the same is not treating them equal. If someone requires a wheelchair in order to get to the door, do we expect them to walk to the door if they do not have legs? Do we expect people to perform the same? They are equal with us. Do we expect them to receive the same information if they cannot hear?

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My colleague from the Atlantic is an expert on the disabled issue. Treating them equally requires a different set of tools and mechanisms. We cannot treat them equally under the law and in the institutions by giving them all the same things that everybody else has. Perhaps there is a disadvantage. Perhaps there is a gap in the barrier that they need to overcome which requires something extra special. That is real equality. Equality is done with dignity and integrity. It does not denigrate and is not premised on a negative motive.

Mr. Garry Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, we do not have to look very far to realize that there is something terribly wrong in our society.

Statistics Canada reported in 1998 that 106,984 youth aged 12 to 17 were charged with a criminal code offence. One in five youth were charged with a violent crime. The rate of youth charged with violent crime is 77% higher than it was a decade ago. By comparison, the increase for adults was only 6%. Over the past decade the rate of female youth charged has increased twice as fast at 127% as compared with male youth which was 65%. Two-thirds of female youth were charged with common assault compared to just under half for male youth. Male youth tend to be involved in more serious crimes such as robbery and major assaults than female youth.

These are alarming statistics, but the newspaper stories about youth crime tell us the real stories behind the statistics. Here are just a few articles.

On December 5, 2000 a *Chronicle Herald* headline read: "Teen gets seven months for taking gun to school; Mill Cove kid thought it was a cool thing to do".

On November 20, 2000 a Calgary *Sun* headline read: "Gun incident again rocks Lethbridge high school".

On September 12, 2000 a Winnipeg *Free Press* headline read: "Hero takes shotgun from pupil".

On April 17, 2000 a Winnipeg *Free Press* headline read: "Police investigate three threats of violence in local schools".

On March 3, 2000 a Toronto *Star* headline read: "Teen charged in the seizure of handguns, a cache of ammunition and machete following a school fight".

On September 28, 1999 a Vancouver *Sun* headline read: "Students taking weapons to school are trying to protect themselves. Nine percent of grade 7 to 12 students surveyed said they have taken a weapon to school".

In October 1999 an editorial in the Peterborough *Examiner* stated: "Adding to the already strict gun control laws is not going to achieve safer schools. If laws aren't going to fix these problems what is?"

The statistics and the stories we read in our newspapers signal a dynamic societal change. We see it but we do not know what to do so we pass more laws. Instead of instilling in kids a sense of duty, we pass more laws restricting their freedom even more, which causes them to rebel even more.

Dramatic societal change such as illustrated in these news stories and statistics cannot be fixed only by legislation. Little of anything will be fixed by this particular piece of legislation.

When I was growing up this problem was non-existent. The guns hung in the rack in the backroom and the kids knew exactly what the firearms were for. We longed for the day when we would be old enough for our father to take us out in the bush to show us how to use the firearms safely. We longed for the day when we would join our father and uncles in the hunt for birds and game for our table.

• (1700)

Some of us took guns to school all right but it was for hunter safety training courses or to target practice in the shooting range in the school basement.

We did not have to lock our doors. No teenager would dare enter their neighbours' homes without being invited. We played cops and robbers and cowboys and Indians and wore our cap pistols proudly on our hips, and none of us became homicidal maniacs. The only violence in our schools was a bit of fisticuffs and the penalty for brawling was a few licks of the strap from the principal.

What happened in the last 30 years to bring about such dramatic change in how our young people act?

It will take more than passing more laws to bring about the changes that the public is demanding. Maybe we should be asking for the government to work with our communities and churches to develop programs to address the underlying reasons that are causing our young people to turn to violent crime.

What kind of programs might that entail? Studies have been done that show us the direction we must head. There are even programs that are showing dramatic results. They are not the programs that liberals and other left wingers will like hearing about, but I have the floor and I will tell them about them.

In July 1999, Charles Moore's column in the Calgary *Herald* was titled, "To Know Guns is to Respect Them: Kids didn't shoot up schools before gun control became all the rage". In his column he reported:

A study conducted from 1993 to 1995 by the United States Department of Justice's office of juvenile justice and delinquency prevention tracked 4,000 male and female subjects aged 6 to 15 in Denver, Pittsburgh and Rochester.

Among the study's findings: children who are given real guns by their parents don't commit gun crimes (zero percent); children who obtain guns illegally are likely to commit gun crimes (21 percent); children who get guns from their parents are less likely to commit any kind of street crime (14 percent), children who have no gun in the

house (24 percent), and are dramatically less likely to commit a crime than children who acquire an illegal gun (74 percent); boys who own legal firearms have much lower rates of delinquency and drug use than boys who obtain illegal guns, and are even slightly less delinquent than non-owners of guns.

After I read this article, I ordered a copy of the study from the U.S. department of justice.

The column goes on to quote Dr. Garry Mauser of Simon Fraser University who commented on the U.S. department of justice study. He said:

Socialization into guns for sporting and hunting purposes appears to have “inoculated” the adolescents against the criminal use of firearms.

Time magazine reported that:

—teachers and counsellors affirm that kids taught to use guns responsibly generally demonstrate more maturity, better manners and saner attitudes than their non-gun using peers.

Teacher Cesario Guerrero, who supervises hunting trips for programs for kids from tough, inner city neighbourhoods in Houston, Texas, told *Time* that these kids often “become part of a different crowd” as a result. “It gives them pride”.

It gives them pride. Would that not be something if we could give our young offenders back their pride?

Before I became a politician, I was a teacher. One of my greatest accomplishments would be those occasions when I could instil one of my students with pride. Hunting trips for troubled kids gives them pride. Who would have thought? Well, anyone who hunts understands this.

Randall Eaton, author of the book called *The Sacred Hunt: Right of Passage*, understands this. He was in Canada recently and did a number of media interviews. He even impressed Valerie Pringle on *Canada AM* with the results of his research. Eaton has proven that taking young boys and girls hunting is not only good for kids but it can also help rehabilitate young offenders. That is why I am bringing that up here today.

The New Brunswick *Telegraph Journal* reported on Mr. Eaton’s visit to Canada. Its article reported that Eaton is an American author and lecturer with standing in several universities, “has studied the role of hunting in behavioural evolution and cultural history. Respect for life starts with the food chain, and the food chain becomes a love chain when we participate directly in it”.

● (1705)

Eaton believes hunting can curb teen violence because when a kid takes an animal’s life they discover the consequences of pulling the trigger and are less likely than anyone to take a human life.

The Toronto *Star* reported that Eaton spoke about a 13 year program in Idaho for wayward boys that teaches them the benefits of self-sufficiency. Eaton said:

I know of three other such programs and I know they have turned around the lives of seriously aggressive young men. Going out into the wilderness connects a youth with nature in a profound way and it also engenders respect for life, paradoxically enough by taking a life.

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On *Canada AM* Eaton claimed that the Idaho program had an 85% success rate.

This is a program worth looking at. This is a program that every wildlife federation in every province would be willing to sponsor and manage.

This is a true young offender program, one that sets kids back on the right course and one that brings about real change, societal change. We should not only be thinking of passing more and more laws. We have been going down that road for the last 30 years and look where it has taken us. We need to try some other things, things that work.

After waiting seven years for a youth justice act, we finally have to ask: Is this all we get? I have offered a positive alternative that the government could incorporate in its legislation or practice. The bill is too long, too complex and too expensive. By following my suggestion, it could address all three of those problems.

In conclusion, I was listening to the government members as they argued in this debate that it was better to let 10 people go free than convict one innocent person. I would like to propose that it is better to rehabilitate 10 young people than to cling to one ideological system that is not working.

The government’s liberal ideas may help one person, but if it took my proposal, it could help 10 times as many for much less cost to the justice system.

The Deputy Speaker: It is my duty pursuant to Standing Order 38 to inform the House that the questions to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment are as follows: the hon. member for Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca, Health; the hon. member for Vancouver Island North, the Environment.

Mr. Lynn Myers (Parliamentary Secretary to Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I sat and listened to the member opposite speak and I wondered in my own mind what it is with the reformed Alliance people that they love things American.

During the election we had members opposite talk about a two tier health system like the American system. We knew they were going to strip away environmental protection laws, sort of like the Americans as well. They would rip apart the judicial system. They would scrap our great charter of rights and freedoms. They would go and rip apart the supply management system. They would do all those kinds of things in the name of something great and good that is American. I just do not understand.

Here we have the audacity of the member opposite to somehow link our young people with guns. I think what he actually said was that to set them back on the right road we should give them a gun. We have to think about this for a minute. We just saw not so long ago in California, not once but twice, kids walking into schools with guns. As a former school teacher and a former head of the

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Waterloo Regional Police, this is not the Canadian way. This is not the way we should be going in terms of our young people, by giving them a gun. It is outrageous and it is not in keeping with the values of our great country.

My question is simple. Why is it that the reformed Alliance people always, and this member in particular, want to somehow connect American style guns with our justice system? It does not make sense.

Mr. John Williams: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. The member is talking about guns. Last week he was on about racism and was caught lying in the House and has refused to apologize—

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for St. Albert has garnered a great deal of experience in his years here. That word is unparliamentary and I would ask him to withdraw it.

Mr. John Williams: I withdraw that remark, Mr. Speaker.

• (1710)

The Deputy Speaker: We will now continue with the question and comment period. Is the question of the hon. parliamentary secretary complete?

Mr. Lynn Myers: Mr. Speaker, why would we want an American style system? Why would we go down that path? Why would that member in particular and the Alliance in general want to advocate an American style system where kids walk into schools, pull guns and shoot other kids? Why in God's name would they advocate that?

Mr. Garry Breitkreuz: Mr. Speaker, I do not know where the member was during my speech. He completely misrepresented what I said. I do not think his question merits an answer.

The Liberals would rather accept the violence growing in our society than take an idea that the opposition might offer, run with it and prove that it actually works, as has been proven in many parts of the country.

Why would the Liberals want to mock a very good idea that really could reduce the violence in our society and help rehabilitate a lot of young people, by labelling it? When we label something in an attempt to not engage in a decent discussion, it really smacks of—well, I will let you fill in the blanks there, Mr. Speaker, because I do not want to engage in the kind of debate where we just throw labels at each other and we do not debate the ideas that I have seriously put forward.

Mr. Steve Mahoney (Mississauga West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, through you, I would just like to ask the member a question.

Your suggestion is, as I understand you—

The Deputy Speaker: I just want to remind the hon. member to please direct his question through the Chair.

Mr. Steve Mahoney: Sorry, Mr. Speaker. The member's suggestion, as I understood him, is that somehow gun control has taken away the ability for hunting trips to take place. I think the idea of involving youth in hunting activities, target shooting or anything of that nature is really not much different than involving them in hockey or other activities in the community.

I am curious as to why the member would draw the parallel that somehow gun control prohibits young people from being involved in that kind of activity.

Mr. Garry Breitkreuz: Mr. Speaker, again that is not what I said. I would ask the member to check *Hansard* and read it very carefully. A direct answer to what he just asked is that it is not the same as getting kids involved in hockey. This a very different program. I would ask the member to go and check the record because I do not have five minutes to re-explain it.

Mr. Larry Spencer (Regina—Lumsden—Lake Centre, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, I want to speak to the broader issue of dealing with youth rather than getting into the details of the amendment. I will do that by asking at least four questions, to which I will give some answers. I understand that in the House we do not always get answers to questions, so I will try to provide my own as I go through.

The first question is: With whom are we dealing? It sounds like a very simple question because obviously we know we are dealing with youth under 18 years of age. We are not sure whether that should go down to 12 or 10 years but we are sure that it is youth under 18 years of age. What does that mean? Who are these people?

I was severely shocked about 20 years ago when I walked out to my backyard in Regina and heard some kindergarten children and first graders using language that I had never heard in my youth all the way through high school. I came from the sticks, as the House can tell, but I had never heard that kind of language.

What I realized was that we live in an age where the age of participation in violent and vulgar activities is becoming lower and lower. It is a declining age of awareness and involvement. We are dealing with young people who are in that kind of time.

• (1715)

We are also in a time when young people are dealing a lot more than I ever did with the peer pressure trap. They sometimes get into situations where they must commit crimes to be in the in group. They play games of committing certain crimes.

Recently in my city I was at the police station one day and learned that overnight every colour of Jeep Cherokee had been

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stolen because that was the game of the evening for young people. A Jeep Cherokee of every colour was stolen, joyridden and then trashed or parked somewhere. That was the game of the evening. We have had the Oldsmobile gang in Regina. Now I understand it is the SUVs, the sport utility vehicles, and the Volkswagen Jettas that are the vehicles to have.

A group of people are doing such things to be in the in groups in our high schools. There is a group of repeat offenders. A couple of years ago one offender in our town was up on his 85th car theft charge. Something is wrong when we allow one young person to accumulate 85 car thefts charges in one lifetime in one town. We are in an age of when these things are happening.

We are also dealing with young people who are in some cases basically rebelling against any authority in their lives. Perhaps they are out and making a laughing stock of police, teachers, parents or any authority figure in their lives. That is going on.

There are also young people out there who are crying out for some authority to be exercised in their lives. They do not experience the restraint from teachers and parents that teenagers require to develop properly. We are dealing with that kind of a young person.

We are dealing with young people who commit crimes against their communities. We are also dealing with young people who have been victims of other young people's crimes. Almost two-thirds of youth crime is committed against other youths. We need to take a good look and get an understanding of what kind of person we are dealing with.

Before I go any further, let me also say who we are not dealing with. We are not dealing with some of the finest young people who have ever been born, some very bright students, some keen personalities, some who have tremendous athletic ability and academic ability and who participate in many things. We are told in our town that 80% of the youth crime is done by only 20% of the youths.

We have some tremendous young people in my riding. I would like to call attention to a young lady named Brea Burgess, a key player in the Regina Lady Cougars basketball team for the University of Regina. They won the national championship a couple of weeks ago. She attended the Dr. Hanna School as a young elementary student where my wife teaches and then Thom Collegiate. I know her parents Laurie and Spencer Burgess are very happy about this fine young lady who is not a young offender and who displays all this great talent. I commend those proud parents for their wonderful daughter.

Just how are we dealing with the youth crime problem? I believe that we insult their intelligence in the way we deal with the problem. They understand much more than we give them credit for.

I have an eight year old grandson. I have him come and visit us and stay with us about one weekend a month. Every once in a while he puts on the front of being a baby. He tries to convince me and his grandmother that he is a baby, and yet we know that he knows much more than that.

• (1720)

It seems to me that somehow the youth of the nation have been quite successful in duping adults into believing that they are not intelligent and that they are incapable of making adult decisions. At the age of 11 or 12 my youngest son, who is now 23, came to me and declared that he had known right from wrong ever since he was 10 years old or younger. He said when they say they do not know what they are doing, they are not telling the truth.

We have young offenders who certainly know how to work the system. They are smart enough to know that. Some years ago a man taught me how to finish concrete and he told me that learning to finish concrete was very simple. He said there was only one thing required: to be just a little smarter than the concrete.

When it comes to making laws and dealing with young offenders, perhaps that would be a good guideline for us too: to be just a little smarter than young people to be able to figure out how to best help them. I think we are failing them on that point. Lawmakers, enforcers, teachers and parents all need to be ahead of our young people.

We insult their intelligence. I believe we also strip them of responsibility and accountability. We take responsibility and accountability away from the parents. We take it away from the teachers. Then we take it away from our young people. We tell little Johnny, if he is bad, that we will not tell anyone. He will not be accountable. We do not want him to feel badly about it. We know he will grow out of it when he gets older. We turn our heads away and forget that they need a sense of responsibility and accountability. We simply pretend that they are innocent little kiddies, too little to understand, and that is not true.

We take away their opportunity to experience positive peer pressure, leaving them subject only to the others around them who are encouraging their offending activity. This is what I mean.

If someone in the community knows what is happening with a young offender, if someone knows what is going on in his life and that young offender knows the person knows, there is peer pressure on him, some kind of community pressure. If he knows the teacher knows, there is pressure on him. If he knows the other students know what he is like, there is pressure on him. It seems that we want to insulate him, protect him and keep him from having any kind of positive peer pressure, which only throws him to the negative peer pressure that is readily available.

I have in my hand some notes that were taken this past weekend as I met with some salvation army officers who had been flown to somewhere in southern Ontario to meet with the justice minister. There is a list of oppositions. Let me quickly name three of them. They oppose the legislation because there is no provision to make parents responsible. It fails to address the root cause of youth crime. There is no provision to reverse existing standards regarding rights.

Mr. Lynn Myers (Parliamentary Secretary to Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I listened with some interest to the member opposite. It seems to me that it was not unlike the usual position of the reform alliance, that it sees things in black and white

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instead of with all the nuances, especially in such an important area where there are incredible nuances when it comes to our young people and the protection of society and the security of our communities, our neighbourhoods, our provinces and our country.

I remind him, as I remind all members in the House, that not only is overall crime dropping but crime among our young people is declining. Why is that? It is because we have in place and we continue as a government to put in place the kinds of measures that are appropriate given the circumstances of the 21st century.

• (1725)

One thing I do know is that our young people have enormous capability to rehabilitate. Given the right circumstances and the right assistance, the kind of backing and crime prevention members of the government have put into place, we are on the right track.

Instead of making criminals out of young people as they would do, instead of dropping the age and making them pay and pay big, that real vengeance mentality which it seems only the reform alliance people have, and instead of trying to do those kinds of things in the most audacious fashion, we should be doing the things we are doing at present: rehabilitating with crime prevention and the kinds of programs necessary.

Would publishing names, for example, as they would do, embarrass the parents? Would it embarrass siblings so that when they go to school they get it rubbed in their faces? I do not think so.

That is not our Canada. It is not my Canada. I do not believe it is most Canadians' Canada. We want to ensure a good and balanced system. We want an equilibrium kind of system and that is what the government is presenting today.

Given the member's speech and his background, why do members of the reform alliance party in general want to fearmonger and scare Canadians into somehow believing that crime is out of control when it is not? What do they hope to gain by that kind of nonsense?

Mr. Gurmant Grewal: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I regret to interrupt but when the hon. member is asking questions with respect to the official opposition of Canada he always refers to it as the reform alliance. He should address it by its proper name, the Canadian Alliance, so that at least he is referring to the right party in the spirit of asking the question.

The Deputy Speaker: I do not think that is a point of order, but certainly I think everyone recognizes that each party should be called by its official name.

Mr. Larry Spencer: Mr. Speaker, I am not sure the hon. member across understands. I certainly am not a vengeful person. I am a grandfather and a father. I have worked with youth in the community for years. My wife is two years away from retirement as a school teacher. Many of her friends and my friends are school teachers. I hear what they say. I hear what is going on in the school grounds and the school systems as they deal with young people. I am friends with RCMP people and many others in my community.

It is the consensus of the people I know that young people are not being done a favour by being allowed to operate under a veil of secrecy. Peer pressure is very powerful in the life of a young person. If we do this properly we will allow some positive community pressure to come to bear on the young person and on the family.

As for the statistics, who is to say what the crime rates really are? In our town if there is a near riot of young people outside my window, which happens many times, or there is fighting going on and an exchange of drugs, if we call the police they do not come because they know there is no use dealing with young people under the Young Offenders Act.

Last summer I was approached by four young people in my own front yard and threatened simply because I wrote down a licence number. Night after night in that park there are drug exchanges and the police will not even bother because they know it involves young people and there is no use dealing with them.

• (1730)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Claude Drouin (Beauce, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, first I would like to advise you that I will be sharing my time with the hon. member for Mississauga West.

I am pleased to speak to Bill C-7, especially since I have taken a keen interest in the debate surrounding the proposed reform of the youth criminal justice act.

I got involved by reading and listening carefully to the concerns expressed by stakeholders in Quebec and by meeting with concerned stakeholders at the Centre jeunesse Chaudière—Appalaches last week. I am pleased to have been able to gather additional information on the substance of Bill C-7. I have thus been able to rectify some of the ideas which have been circulating regarding the scope of Bill C-7.

I am now in a position to say that the bill, which builds on the strengths of the current act which Quebec has taken advantage of,

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has allowed the province not only to follow through with the elements of its approach which have proved successful, but also to improve on its approach.

To illustrate what I am saying I will review some of the fundamental principles underlying Bill C-7. In parallel I will highlight some of the opposition's criticisms.

According to the Quebec coalition, this reform is not necessary. It suggests that the problem, if there is a problem, is the result of the Young Offenders Act not being properly implemented by some jurisdictions. Data from studies carried out over the last few years and extensive consultations with the provinces, territories and various specialists in the area have identified several problems in the way the current youth justice system is working.

It bears reminding, among others, that Canada has the highest rate of young offenders in custody, the highest one in the industrialized countries, higher yet than in the U.S. It is also four times higher than that for adults. Average sentence length for minor offences is longer for young offenders than for adults.

In spite of an approach which, in many regards, is consistent with the goals of Bill C-7, Quebec is not an exception to the rule with regard to the identified problems. Quebec has the second highest rate of custody for young persons found guilty of a first minor offence. The average custody sentence in Quebec is longer than the national average and the second longest in Canada. In fact, what is surprising is that the rate of participation in alternative measures is higher in western Canada than it is in Quebec.

To solve these problems, Bill C-7 focuses on diversion measures that still aim at making young persons more responsible. Bill C-7 is based on experiments carried out in various European countries as well as in Australia and New Zealand, that show that informal measures focusing on responsibility for one's own actions and restitution have more impact than formal court proceedings not only on the level of responsibility the young person is ready to acknowledge but also on the recidivism rate, which is almost nil.

The federal government's main goal in its reform is to reduce the use of the formal system in order to fight youth crime. We are providing various options and better tools to the workers on the front line, so that minor offences can be dealt with responsibly outside the court system.

What does that mean in real terms? The opposition argues that Quebec will no longer be able to take the appropriate measure at the appropriate time to fight early signs of delinquent behaviour. The opposition uses examples of young people committing multiple shoplifting offences saying that the only possible intervention by a police officer would be a warning, thereby ridiculing police

intervention and leading people to believe that Bill C-7 does not allow for effective intervention.

The most troubling thing about these remarks is that they are based on the assumption that custody can be used to rehabilitate young offenders and to turn them into responsible persons. This assumption goes against what can be learned from criminology research and what has been seen in other countries that have chosen less repressive measures to make their young offenders more responsible.

The bill favours diversion measures. These may vary, but they must be aimed at turning the young offender into a responsible person, at repairing any harm done and at rehabilitating him or her, which means changing his or her criminal behaviour as soon as it emerges.

• (1735)

In the case of shoplifting, to use the same example as the opposition, a police officer can exercise discretion under Bill C-7, which is not the case under the current legislation.

The police officer must first decide whether or not to make an arrest. If the decision is made to arrest the young offender, the police officer must then determine if the young offender qualifies for diversion measures or if he or she must be charged.

If charges are brought, the police officer must choose between release and temporary custody. If he or she chooses release, he or she will have to determine the conditions of such release.

If the police officer decides to make the young person take responsibility through a diversion program, he can choose, based on the circumstances of the offence and on the young offender, between a warning, a caution, a referral to a specialized educational program—for example to learn behavioural skills—or a referral to a community organization that can help the young person not to commit other offences. What is meant here is community work and other measures.

In a case of shoplifting, the police officer would probably give a warning or administer a caution after seeing that the goods were given back, to ensure that the young offender has taken responsibility and has made reparation. The warning or caution is given verbally and in writing, through a letter and a follow-up with the parents, to inform them of the young person's actions, of the measures taken and of the possible consequences should he commit other offences. This is the rehabilitation component.

Experience shows that the majority of young offenders who are subjected to this follow up do not commit other offences. Most

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parents take measures with regard to their young offender, thus increasing the chances for complete rehabilitation.

Such measures will be compiled in an automated retrieval system that will be accessible by other police forces through an agreement on the exchange of information. A \$9 million budget was allocated to the various jurisdictions to put in place or to improve the recording and management systems of automated files.

If a young person commits other offences, the police officer can lay charges or resort to extrajudicial measures. These are more formal extrajudicial measures, ones that translate into structured programs customized to correct the delinquent behaviour, hold the young person accountable, and have him or her make amends for the harm caused.

If the police officer opts for the laying of charges, it is then up to the crown attorney to take the case before the court or to have a program of extrajudicial sanctions drawn up. Once again, there will be follow up with the parents.

Another presumption that is worrisome to opponents of Bill C-7 is the suggestion that making a young person accountable for his or her actions must of necessity involve diversion, a judge and cautions. Such a presumption ignores the powers of frontline interveners and the effectiveness of their interventions, and underestimates the community's capacity to correct criminal behaviours as soon as they first manifest themselves.

Bill C-7 gives precedence to accountability outside of the formal system for less serious offences, because this is more effective and less costly, particularly since it allows intervention immediately after the offence has been committed and makes it possible for victims and communities to be involved in the process of healing and of social learning.

Obviously, such an approach requires the introduction of new tools and new resources. One might well believe that, with the \$221 million offered to Quebec over five years under the youth justice services funding program, including over \$25 million for implementation of the youth criminal justice act, Quebec would be in a position to establish customized programs to hold young offenders accountable, provide them with effective rehabilitation, and successfully reintegrate them into society.

Mr. Benoît Sauvageau (Repentigny, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I listened attentively and with interest to the speech by the member for Beauce. He said that he was making a comparison with the opposition, the nasty opposition. Everything was fine. If I listen to the other member who spoke before him, they are the only holders of the truth here in Canada, and maybe even in the universe. I can understand that they do not agree with us and that they have questions.

• (1740)

The hon. member began his speech by saying that he had been at his local youth centre, the Maison des jeunes. Now that he has tried to tell us why he was opposed, I would like him to tell us why members of the Bloc Québécois are not the only people in Quebec opposed to Bill C-7. Many organizations are also opposed, such as the Association des maisons de jeunes du Québec, leading criminologists from the Université de Montréal, the Innu, the Jeune Barreau du Québec, the Association des avocats de la défense, as well as crown attorneys, the Quebec National Assembly—which, through a resolution unanimously supported by the Liberal and PQ members, opposed it—the Centres jeunesse du Québec, the Institut Pinel, the Centre de criminologie du Québec, the Association des policiers et des pompiers du Québec, and CLSCs from throughout Quebec, plus another 20 or so groups.

Is it that everyone has misunderstood and that he is right, or is there a difference between the two?

Mr. Claude Drouin: Mr. Speaker, first I want to point out that I made no mention of a nasty opposition. That was certainly not my intention.

Second, I acknowledged in my remarks that the coalition representing all the groups mentioned by the hon. member was opposed.

However, since the bill on young offenders was first tabled, the Liberal caucus has worked to improve it. We have worked with the Minister of Justice and with the various stakeholders to ensure that our young people have the best means possible available to help salvage them in the system.

I have no doubt that Bill C-7 will prove indispensable. We certainly do not think this bill is perfect. Perfection does not exist. It will, however, improve the present system and enable people to salvage young people and make them better contributors to society.

Mr. Benoît Sauvageau: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for Beauce says that the Liberal caucus, particularly the Quebec Liberal caucus, clearly understood the objections of the individuals and associations that I mentioned earlier. They consulted in good faith and they amended the bill of the Minister of Justice.

Can the hon. member tell us if, after this long consultation process to introduce improvements and amendments, the coalition and the groups that I mentioned earlier are now in agreement with Bill C-7?

Mr. Claude Drouin: Mr. Speaker, this gives me an opportunity to make a correction by saying that I did not meet with the Maison des jeunes but, rather, with the Centres jeunesse de Chaudière—Appalaches—

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Mr. Michel Bellehumeur: They are opposed to Bill C-7.

Mr. Claude Drouin: The member for Berthier—Montcalm is talking while I am giving my reply. If he will let me conclude, he will understand.

I was saying that it is these Centres jeunesse that are responsible and they provided some arguments to the effect that there may be problems with Bill C-7.

However, we demonstrated, with statistics to back it up, that there was room for improvement and we are convinced that Bill C-7 will serve as a tool. I am convinced that Quebec will be able to make good use of it and remain a leader in certain areas, while improving the situation in others, since it is in last place or next to last place in certain areas. I think there is room for improvement when it comes to helping our young people.

[*English*]

Mr. John Maloney (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, there are some critics from Quebec who feel that Bill C-7 is too tough. On the other hand there is no hesitation in Quebec of utilizing the current transfer provisions under the Young Offenders Act to transfer young offenders from youth court to adult court.

Could the member for Beauce please explain this phenomenon and elaborate briefly on the current transfer provisions under Bill C-7?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Claude Drouin: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the question. Statistics for 1997-1998 show that Quebec and Manitoba were tied in first place for the number of transfers of young persons to adult courts, with 23. In 1998-1999, Quebec came in second, still with 23 transfers, behind Manitoba, while Ontario only had six.

Some measures will provide alternatives to young persons to facilitate their reintegration into society with as little damage as possible.

• (1745)

[*English*]

Mr. Steve Mahoney (Mississauga West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, there are a number of things that are obvious when we debate young offenders. The summary of the bill suggests that we want to try to increase public confidence in the youth justice system. One of the difficulties with that is there are certain crimes that occur in society that we take greater offence with than others. We had a debate in the House on the sex offender registry and there can be no crime more repugnant than that.

When young people get into trouble with the law, they cannot be named and they appear to get a slap on the wrist, headlines scream. People get upset and the flames get fanned. We get the impression

that the Young Offenders Act, which the bill is designed to replace, will not solve the problems. Young people will be running amok committing crimes, raping, pillaging, murdering and building a society that will fall apart.

The reality is that the vast majority of young people who commit crimes do not commit rape, assault, aggravated assault, attempted murder or murder. Surely to goodness we can arrive at an agreement on that. The vast majority of young people who do commit crimes, commit crimes that need to be dealt with seriously but dealt with in some new creative way rather than just punishment. We as a society should perhaps look at solutions on how to properly rehabilitate.

A member opposite spoke about a young offender in western Canada who had been charged with 85 car thefts. That is absurd and absolutely ridiculous. We need to find out why that is happening. We need to put a system in place that would allow society to address the problems that this young person is obviously having.

Perhaps we could agree that many of the people who commit youth crimes have other problems. They may have been abused or they may have grown up in a less than supportive family. There is no justification by any means, but perhaps there is an explanation as to why the young person went against the law. That is not what we talk about in this place. We talk about throwing away the key after three strikes.

I will check *Hansard* but I made notes on one of the speeches made by a member who quoted from a study. It stated that kids did not shoot up schools before gun control. He quoted another study that said that kids who have been taught how to use guns show more maturity and better attitudes. The member went on to say that there are programs being recommended by himself and others that would teach our kids how to kill an animal. They believe that it will somehow teach our young people the consequences of pulling the trigger.

Let me be clear here. I have nothing against hunting whatsoever. My oldest son, much to my amazement, hunts bears with a bow and arrow. I do not know how in the world he ever got into that, but he loves it and he is a good sportsman. He will go out with a gun with some friends and hunt for deer at the appropriate time. There is no background of that in my family, but that is his choice. I have no difficulty whatsoever with that practice.

• (1750)

I also recognize that hunting is an activity. That was the point that I was trying to make for the hon. member. It was the same issue as involving a young person in any organized activity. However, to suggest that gun control in some perverse way is preventing hunting clubs and other organizations from organizing hunting expeditions or taking young people out and teaching them how to target shoot is just absurd.

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If that is what people in some parts of rural Canada want to do to get their children involved in an activity, by all means. The difference is that under gun control they will be using a weapon that is registered. Is that awful? Maybe that would also teach them that it is no big deal and that maybe their parents should get over that fact.

I heard an hon. member say that he had heard some language that he could not imagine, that he had never heard before. I am sitting here thinking, what could they have said? We know all of the big bad words. I raised three boys and, as a result of that, I had the wonderful opportunity and privilege of having young children around our house all the time. We were involved in all the different activities in the community. I am afraid I have to admit that the odd time we may have heard something a little stronger than ah, shucks come out of the mouths of some of these young competitive individuals.

Did any of them go astray? We had young children come through our lives who got into trouble with the law, who may have been mixed up in some drugs. Fortunately in most of the cases that I have seen the services have been there in the community. Whether it was through the home, church, school, social services or working with the police, the services have been there in the community to help these young children get their lives back together again.

I almost sit and marvel at the naiveté of some members who say they have never heard bad language like that. The society our children have grown up in is dramatically different from our own. Times were fairly simple for those of us who grew up in the 50s and 60s compared to what these young children go through today.

Today everything is instantaneous. There is instant gratification. They watch the news at night or play video games and they see the violence. These are realities. Are we supposed to put our young people in cocoons and say that they will never be exposed to any of these kinds of problems? Are we supposed to dwell on the fact, as one member opposite did, that somehow it was different in our day? Of course it was different in our day. That is why we need to change the bill.

If young offenders get charged with serious violent crimes, should we name them? Should we put their picture on the front page? I think not. The bill would not allow that to happen. However, if they are convicted of a crime and they in turn receive an adult sentence, to be served in a youth facility, because there is absolutely no sense in putting young convicted criminals together with adult criminals as we would simply turn out an adult criminal, or if they have escaped and are considered dangerous, then their names could be publicized. Simply throwing their names out, destroying their lives, and then finding out that they are innocent is not something that is based on justice at any age, and surely it is not based on justice in terms of Canada's youth.

There are many very positive points in the bill. I wish we could talk about the positive stories of our young people instead of

scaremongering and dwelling on the problems that are there. The bill will help fix many of these problems to ensure that young people who do run afoul of the law have an opportunity to get their lives back together again.

• (1755)

Mr. Rob Anders (Calgary West, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, I could not help but notice from the lobby the member's speech. He was saying that he did not want to restrict hunting and that he did not want to cause problems for hunters.

I do not know if the hon. member owns firearms himself. I will let him know that his government has spent in excess of \$600 million so far of taxpayer money. If I divide that by 30 million people, that is \$20 for every man, woman and child. Not every man, woman and child owns a firearm. Looking at the number of firearm owners, we could be looking at \$100 per firearm owner.

Looking at what firearm owners are spending independently; looking at trigger locks the government is telling them they have to use; looking at a firearm's acquisition certificate, which is something I have applied for; and looking at the hunter education courses the government asks people to take, that is all money as well. A person is looking at several hundred dollars for owning of one firearm.

For the hon. member to stand in the House and say that even though he wants to impose a restriction of several hundred dollars for any firearm owned, that somehow that is not a restriction is ludicrous.

By the same token, I will lay the blame at his feet for some of the criminal problems in the country. His government dabbles around with criminal justice instead of coming up with a sex offender registry. It does not go ahead and get rid of early parole for rapists and other types of offenders. It does not change the law. His own members in the House want to come up with consecutive sentences so that people who commit multiple crimes do not serve one single sentence but instead serve multiple criminal convictions one on top of the other for their offences. When it will not act on some of the various criminal provisions, it in a sense creates a hothouse environment for criminals to breed in, to be attracted to. Hence we see those types of people abusing those laws.

His government will not go ahead and crack down on child pornography and pedophilia. It allows people to possess these things and to profit from keeping the avails of these types of activities. It only encourages these types of activities.

How could he say that several hundred dollars for owning one firearm is not a restriction? How could he claim that he is doing a

good job on criminal justice when all these other provisions for getting at the real problem of crime are let go by his government?

Mr. Steve Mahoney: Mr. Speaker, it is almost incredulous and astounding. I thought we were dealing with the young offenders situation, the new bill for Canadian youth justice.

My hon. friend's party's official name is the Canadian Conservative Reform Alliance Party or something like that. I did not know we were dealing with their views on gun control. How could a party with any credibility whatsoever stand up, speaker after speaker, to talk about all these issues as if they somehow cause youth crime?

How could members in the House stand by statements made by a member that kids did not shoot up schools before gun control? We are supposed to extrapolate from that twisted logic that somehow the minute we brought in gun control and Charlton Heston was busy writing their policy manuals, kids ran out and obtained guns because of gun control and started shooting their peers in class. That is just bizarre.

It demonstrates the major difference between the government and the opposition. If they want to lay the blame for gun control at my feet, they can lay it at my feet. They can put it on my shoulders and I will stand truly tall and proud. I will say that Canadians want and believe in gun control. They do not believe in the American style system as espoused by Charlton Heston and other people like some members opposite.

• (1800)

I heard nothing about youth justice in that question and I think the bill addresses many of the deficiencies in youth justice.

Mr. Gurmant Grewal (Surrey Central, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, I rise on behalf of the people of Surrey Central to participate in the debate on Bill C-7, the Liberal government's latest attempt to replace the Young Offenders Act with new youth criminal justice legislation.

All my colleagues in the Canadian Alliance have tried hard to improve the youth criminal justice legislation. In particular, I would commend my neighbour, the hon. member for Surrey North, for his contribution in this area.

The bill provides principles, procedures and protections for the prosecution of young persons under criminal and other federal laws. It is the third attempt by the government to bring forth young offenders legislation. The bill, with very few changes, is the same as what has been introduced previously. This version of the bill has been updated just to include over 160 technical amendments from the last government.

Here are some specifics. The list of offences for which adult sentences may be imposed is severely limited. The goal of sentencing is solely to contribute to the protection of society by having

Government Orders

meaningful consequences for young persons which promote rehabilitation and reintegration, so the goal of protection of society is hardly a concern.

Even for offences that could be treated in adult court, the judge must first consider the least restrictive sentence and only impose adult sentencing as a last resort. Maximum sentencing has not changed for youth sentencing purposes. It is still ten years for murder, with six years in custody and four years under supervision in the community; seven years for second degree murder, with four years in custody and three years under supervision; three years for any offence having an adult sentence of life imprisonment, with two years in custody and one year under supervision for all others.

The deterrent that society demands and needs to cause resistance to commit a crime is effectively not there. Rather, the lack of serious consequences, commonly called the slap on the wrist, acts as a motivation for the youth to commit a crime or for the youth to be used to commit a crime.

I will read from the Canadian Alliance policy book, which of course is dictated by our grassroots membership, unlike the policies of any other political party in the House. Sections 28 and 30 state:

We will make providing safety and security for Canadians, their families and their property the overriding objective of the criminal justice system. We will support rehabilitation programs designed to safely restore offenders to society.

We will introduce measures to hold young lawbreakers accountable to their victims and the larger community. We recognize that custody is not always the most effective way of dealing with young offenders. Detention facilities for youth will be separate and emphasize skills training, responsibility, and community service. Violent or serious repeat offenders 14 and over will be tried as adults, as will all offenders 16 and over.

In various ways this legislation seems to place the safety and security of Canadians behind the interest in rehabilitating and reintegrating the offenders back into society.

We have attempted to encourage the government to amend the bill to make it clear that protection of the public is to be the paramount principle behind this legislation, but the minister refuses.

• (1805)

The legislation does not ensure that violent or serious repeat offenders will be tried as adults. We have proposed amendments to previous portions of the bill to limit extrajudicial measures to first time non-violent offenders. This means no court, no criminal record and community designed informal types of sanctions or punishment. Again the minister refuses to accede to this request. Repeat and violent offenders may never have to see court, be convicted and receive a criminal record.

It was the justice committee and the Canadian Alliance through its former version, the Reform Party, that first endorsed alternative

Government Orders

measures for first time non-violent offenders. The minister claims credit, but she once again fails to restrict this form of conditional sentencing. It is open to repeat offenders and it is open to violent offenders.

The list of presumptive offences for which an adult sentence may be imposed is severely restricted. The list includes murder, attempted murder, manslaughter and aggravated sexual assault. It does not include sexual assault with a weapon, hostage taking, aggravated assault, kidnapping and a host of other serious violent offences.

In Bill C-7 the minister has further weakened the legislation by limiting presumptive offence procedure even more. Through clause 61, any province may decide that only 15 year old or even 16 year old offenders who commit offences such as murder could be transferred to adult court, while 10 year olds and 11 year olds would still not be held criminally responsible for their crimes.

The legislation will create a patchwork or checkerboard system of youth justice, as many of its provisions permit the provinces undue discretion in whether to seek adult sentencing, in publication of names and in access to records, to name just a few.

The legislation provides some movement toward victims' rights, but even they are not ensured and are still woefully inadequate.

The government has not been open to change for any aspect of the legislation except for some technical amendments. All of the opposition parties except the Bloc presented substantive amendments to the former bill, Bill C-3. Those amendments did not receive debate in parliament and do not appear to have been considered by the government. In fact, the government is not serious about discussion, so the Liberals are ignoring those amendments.

The provinces would be tasked to administer this legal nightmare, but the federal government does not seem to care. The Liberals have promised \$206 million over the first three years for the implementation of the bill, but this would not even come close to meeting the responsibility of providing 50% of the funding for the youth justice system. The Liberals have allowed federal funding to slip to about 20%. The provinces have to carry the can financially for these proposals, costs of which are going to dramatically rise through legal argument and procedure.

An initial review of Bill C-7 indicates that the government has made it even weaker, likely to appease the Quebec government and the Bloc Quebecois. For instance, the presumptive offence provision that moves youths 14 years of age and older automatically to adult court for murder, et cetera, now permits the provinces, Quebec in this case, to raise the age to restrict the transfer to only 15 year old or 16 year old offenders.

Restrictions on naming of violent offenders are still not taken into consideration. The bill still has an emphasis on attempting to

understand the circumstances underlying the criminal behaviour and rehabilitation and reintegration. Protection of the public takes second fiddle. Denunciation and deterrence seem to be foreign words for the government.

• (1810)

If the legislation passes, its complexity and its loopholes will cause horrendous delays. The costs to our youth criminal justice process in legal bills will be phenomenal.

In conclusion I would like to say that the official opposition carries on with its job of holding the flashlight and showing the Liberals their darkness. We gave the Liberal members a chance to improve on the legislation. They should look at our amendments through the lens of issues, not political stripes.

Mr. Rick Casson (Lethbridge, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, I would like the member who spoke to perhaps expand a little on one of the recommendations the Canadian Alliance was bringing forward, and I certainly want to congratulate my seatmate, the member for Surrey North, for all the work he has done on the issue and for the expertise he brings to the table when we are discussing this matter.

One of the things we in our party want implemented is that we want to let Canadians know who the repeat violent offenders are who get charged under the new act. We feel that Canadians and society in general have a right to know that. We are saying that if it is a serious crime or if it is a repeat crime, we should be publishing the name of the offender.

I would just like the member to expand a bit on that and to perhaps let the House know of some of the instances he is familiar with in his own riding where publishing the names has been something that Canadians have been asking for.

Mr. Gurmant Grewal: Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for his excellent question. We all hear some horrendous stories in our communities. Unfortunately, youth are involved in many of them. Not all youth are bad. Many youth are very good and very well behaved and they understand what is good, what is bad, what is wrong and what is right. However, some youth who are involved in those activities may be well known to the police or at least the community understands those instances.

In Surrey Central some time ago an old man who was a war veteran was beaten to death. He had 104 stitches on his face and body and died of his injuries. The police force did its job. They got hold of the people responsible for the incident. To my dismay, and to the dismay of many other members in the community, some youths were involved in the incident, youths who had already had dealings with the police.

If the Young Offenders Act had been improved as suggested by my colleague and by us on this side of the House—we are trying our best to make improvements and to suggest amendments—then probably those offenders would have been known. Those offenders would have had some sort of repercussions from or consequences of what they had done in the past.

This is a very important issue. We would like to see the government look through the lens of issues, as I said, and make those amendments and improvements to the bill and really make it an effective bill to protect society and our communities.

[*Translation*]

The Deputy Speaker: It being 6.15 p.m., pursuant to order made earlier today, it is my duty to interrupt the proceedings and put forthwith every question necessary to dispose of the second reading stage of the bill now before the House.

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the amendment?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Deputy Speaker: All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Deputy Speaker: All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Deputy Speaker: In my opinion the yeas have it.

And more than five members having risen:

The Deputy Speaker: Call in the members.

● (1840)

(The House divided on the motion, which was agreed to on the following division:)

(*Division No. 37*)

YEAS

Members

Adams
Allard
Assadourian
Bagnell
Barnes
Bélangier
Bennett
Bevilacqua
Blondin-Andrew
Bonwick
Brown
Bulte
Calder
Carroll
Catterall
Chamberlain
Coderre
Cotler
DeVillers

Alcock
Anderson (Victoria)
Augustine
Baker
Beaumier
Bellemare
Bertrand
Binet
Bonin
Boudria
Bryden
Caccia
Carignan
Castonguay
Cauchon
Charbonneau
Collenette
Cullen
Dion

Dromisky
Duhamel
Easter
Eyking
Fontana
Godfrey
Graham
Harb
Harvey
Jackson
Jordan
Karygiannis
Kilgour (Edmonton Southeast)
Kraft Sloan
Lee
Longfield
Macklin
Malhi
Manley
Martin (LaSalle—Émard)
McCormick
McKay (Scarborough East)
Mills (Toronto—Danforth)
Mitchell
Myers
Normand
O'Reilly
Pagtakhan
Parrish
Peric
Phinney
Pillitteri
Price
Redman
Regan
Saada
Scherrer
Serré
Shepherd
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Gagliano
Goodale
Grose
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Hubbard
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Keyes
Knutson
Lastewka
Lincoln
MacAulay
Mahoney
Maloney
Marleau
McCallum
McGuire
McLellan
Minna
Murphy
Nault
O'Brien (London—Fanshawe)
Owen
Paradis
Patri
Pettigrew
Pickard (Chatham—Kent Essex)
Pratt
Proulx
Reed (Halton)
Robillard
Savoy
Scott
Sgro
Speller
St-Jacques
Steckle
Szabo
Thibeault (Saint-Lambert)
Tobin
Torsney
Vanclief
Wappel
Wilfert

NAYS

Members

Abbott
Anders
Bachand (Richmond—Arthabaska)
Bellehumeur
Bigras
Burton
Casey
Chatters
Cummins
Desrochers
Duceppe
Epp
Gagnon (Québec)
Gauthier
Goldring
Grewal
Guimond
Harris
Herron
Hilstrom
Johnston
Laframboise
Lebel
Lunney (Nanaimo—Alberni)

Ablonczy
Anderson (Cypress Hills—Grasslands)
Bachand (Saint-Jean)
Bergeron
Breitkreuz
Cadman
Casson
Clark
Day
Dubé
Duncan
Fournier
Gallant
Godin
Gouk
Grey (Edmonton North)
Hanger
Hearn
Hill (MacLeod)
Jaffer
Kenney (Calgary Southeast)
Lancôt
Lunn (Saanich—Gulf Islands)
Manning

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Marceau	Mark
Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)	Martin (Winnipeg Centre)
McNally	Ménard
Merrifield	Moore
Obhrai	Penson
Picard (Drummond)	Proctor
Rajotte	Reid (Lanark—Carleton)
Reynolds	Ritz
Sauvageau	Skelton
Solberg	Sorenson
Spencer	Stinson
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PAIRED MEMBERS

Asselin	Bourgeois
Bradshaw	Caplan
Cardin	Crête
Dalphond-Guiral	Discepola
Farrar	Gagnon (Champlain)
Girard-Bujold	Guay
Ianno	Laliberte
Lalonde	Lavigne
LeBlanc	Loubier
Marcil	Matthews
McTeague	Ménard
Neville	O'Brien (Labrador)
Paquette	Perron
Peterson	Provenzano
Rocheleau	Rock
Roy	St-Hilaire
Telegdi	Tremblay (Lac-Saint-Jean—Saguenay)

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried. Accordingly, the bill is referred to the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights.

(Bill read the second time and referred to a committee)

* * *

[English]

JUDGES ACT

The House resumed from March 23 consideration of the motion that Bill C-12, an act to amend the Judges Act and to amend another act in consequence, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

The Speaker: The House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion at second reading of Bill C-12.

Ms. Marlene Catterall: Mr. Speaker, I believe if you seek it you would find unanimous consent that the members who voted on the previous motion be recorded as voting on the motion now before the House, with Liberal members voting yes.

[Translation]

The Speaker: Is there unanimous consent to proceed this way?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

[English]

Mr. John Reynolds: Mr. Speaker, Alliance members present vote no.

[Translation]

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: Mr. Speaker, the Bloc Québécois members are in favour of the motion.

Mr. Yvon Godin: Mr. Speaker, the NDP members present in the House will vote against the motion.

Mr. André Bachand: Mr. Speaker, the Conservative members support the motion.

(The House divided on the motion, which was agreed to on the following division:)

(Division No. 38)

YEAS

Members

Adams	Alcock
Allard	Anderson (Victoria)
Assadourian	Augustine
Bachand (Richmond—Arthabaska)	Bachand (Saint-Jean)
Bagnell	Baker
Barnes	Beaumier
Bélanger	Bellehumeur
Bellemare	Bennett
Bergeron	Bertrand
Bevilacqua	Bigras
Binet	Blondin-Andrew
Bonin	Bonwick
Boudria	Brown
Bryden	Bulte
Caccia	Calder
Carignan	Carroll
Casey	Castonguay
Catterall	Cauchon
Chamberlain	Charbonneau
Clark	Coderre
Collenette	Cotler
Cullen	Desrochers
DeVillers	Dion
Dromisky	Drouin
Dubé	Duceppe
Duhamel	Duplain
Easter	Eggleton
Eyking	Finlay
Fontana	Fournier
Gagliano	Gagnon (Québec)
Gauthier	Godfrey
Goodale	Graham
Grose	Guimond
Harb	Harvard
Harvey	Hearn
Herron	Hubbard
Jackson	Jennings
Jordan	Karetak-Lindell
Karygiannis	Keyes
Kilgour (Edmonton Southeast)	Knutson
Kraft Sloan	Laframboise
Lancôt	Lastewka
Lebel	Lee
Lincoln	Longfield
MacAulay	Macklin
Mahoney	Malhi
Maloney	Manley
Marceau	Marleau
Martin (LaSalle—Émard)	McCallum
McCormick	McGuire
McKay (Scarborough East)	McLellan
Ménard	Mills (Toronto—Danforth)
Minna	Mitchell
Murphy	Myers
Nault	Normand
O'Brien (London—Fanshawe)	O'Reilly
Owen	Pagtakhan

Adjournment Debate

Paradis
 Patry
 Pettigrew
 Picard (Drummond)
 Pillitteri
 Price
 Redman
 Regan
 Saada
 Savoy
 Scott
 Sgro
 Speller
 St-Jacques
 Steckle
 Szabo
 Thibeault (Saint-Lambert)
 Tirabassi
 Tonks
 Valeri
 Venne
 Wappel
 Willfert

Parrish
 Peric
 Pinney
 Pickard (Chatham—Kent Essex)
 Pratt
 Proulx
 Reed (Halton)
 Robillard
 Sauvageau
 Scherrer
 Serré
 Shepherd
 St. Denis
 St-Julien
 Stewart
 Thibault (West Nova)
 Thompson (New Brunswick Southwest)
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The Speaker: I declare the motion carried. Accordingly, the bill is referred to the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights.

(Bill read the second time and referred to a committee)

ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

[English]

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 38 deemed to have been moved.

NAYS

HEALTH

Members

Abbott
 Anders
 Breitzkreuz
 Cadman
 Chatters
 Day
 Epp
 Godin
 Gouk
 Grey (Edmonton North)
 Harris
 Hilstrom
 Johnston
 Lunn (Saanich—Gulf Islands)
 Manning
 Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)
 McNally
 Moore
 Penson
 Rajotte
 Reynolds
 Skelton
 Sorenson
 Stinson
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Ablonczy
 Anderson (Cypress Hills—Grasslands)
 Burton
 Casson
 Cummins
 Duncan
 Gallant
 Goldring
 Grewal
 Hanger
 Hill (Macleod)
 Jaffer
 Kenney (Calgary Southeast)
 Lunney (Nanaimo—Alberni)
 Mark
 Martin (Winnipeg Centre)
 Merrifield
 Obhrai
 Proctor
 Reid (Lanark—Carleton)
 Ritz
 Solberg
 Spencer
 Stoffer
 Toews
 White (Langley—Abbotsford)

PAIRED MEMBERS

Asselin
 Bradshaw
 Cardin
 Dalphond-Guiral
 Farrah
 Girard-Bujold
 Ianno
 Lalonde
 LeBlanc
 Marcil
 McTeague
 Neville
 Paquette
 Peterson
 Rocheleau
 Roy
 Telegdi

Bourgeois
 Caplan
 Crête
 Discepola
 Gagnon (Champlain)
 Guay
 Laliberté
 Lavigne
 Loubier
 Matthews
 Ménard
 O'Brien (Labrador)
 Perron
 Provenzano
 Rock
 St-Hilaire
 Tremblay (Lac-Saint-Jean—Saguenay)

Mr. Keith Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, on February 2, I asked the Minister of Health a question about the critical shortage of MRI scanners in Canada today.

I referred to the example of Ontario where the wait lists have increased to 12,000 people per year. In Ottawa hospitals alone the waiting list is 7,000 individuals. This is but one example of the critical shortage of essential medical services available to Canadians today. It is merely the tip of the iceberg of a much larger problem of the lack of access to health care.

It is a profound tragedy that today there is an expanding gap between the resources and the demand. The situation is only getting worse. For example, in my province of British Columbia between 1998 and 1999, the waiting lists for a knee replacement increased by 69% and for hip replacements by 90%.

Across the board Canadians are not getting access to health care. The reason is we have more expensive technologies and an aging population. The population over the age of 65 will double in the next 20 years. The outcome of this will be that the government will be forced to ration. As a result of that, the poor and middle class will pay the heavy price of the lack of access to essential health care services.

• (1845)

It may be fine for us to stick our heads in the sand and believe that we only have a small problem or to throw money at the situation and believe it will be resolved. The absolute inaction of the government and its failure to work with the provinces is hurting the poor and middle class.

In the hospital where I work, the waiting time to see an orthopaedic surgeon is three and a half years. Imagine if we were the patients who needed a total knee replacement. Imagine if we had twisted a knee or tore a ligament in our knee which required a

Adjournment Debate

scope. Imagine having to wait three and a half years just to see the orthopaedic surgeon.

We have to make some changes. I am proposing that the government do the following. For heaven's sake, act. The government is not acting on this or having a rational debate on the most important issue affecting Canadians.

I beg the government to do the following. Call together the public health care professionals, intellectuals and academics to build a plan to save our health care system, dealing not only with the issue of how we fund health care but also with the medical manpower crisis. With respect to surgeons, 42% of them are over the age of 55. With respect to gynaecologists and neurosurgeons, 40% of them are over the age of 55.

We have a critical lack of medical manpower in all medical specialities. We will have a lack of 110,000 nurses in the next ten years. This would be almost palatable if we saw action on resolving this issue. but unfortunately we do not see it.

Again, I plead with the government to pull together its provincial counterparts and sort these problems out now. It could develop a plan of action to deal with the funding crisis. It could develop the best practices from around the world. Prevention could be looked at.

The government could implement the national headstart program which the House passed in 1998. It is a pragmatic solution that will save people's lives and a great deal of money. It focuses on making sure the children have their basic needs met in the first six to eight years of life. As a result there will be a massive decrease in the demands that we place on our health care system.

In closing, I would ask for the help of the Government of Canada to act on this issue.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Yvon Charbonneau (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to tell our colleague the member for Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca that the government is fully aware that in some regions of the country access to medical equipment is a problem.

This is why the government created a \$1 billion medical equipment fund last September, in order to enable the provinces and territories to buy and install diagnostic and treatment equipment.

[*English*]

These funds, which were allocated on an equal per capita basis, have been made available through a trust arrangement since October 23, 2000. As of last week Ontario, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Prince Edward Island, Manitoba and British Columbia have already withdrawn their full allocation, but not the other provinces.

[*Translation*]

Judging by recent announcements made in Quebec, British Columbia and Ontario, it is quite clear that diagnostic equipment, including magnetic resonance imaging equipment, is a high priority for many provinces.

[*English*]

As part of the first minister's agreement in September 2000, governments committed to providing appropriate and timely access to diagnostic treatment services. This \$1 billion infusion of funds, specifically for medical equipment, is in addition to the substantial increase in cash transfers to the provinces and territories by more than \$21 billion over the next five years.

[*Translation*]

Since the administration and delivery of health care services is clearly the responsibility of the provinces and territories, each government will determine its priorities with regard to investments in medical equipment. In keeping with the accountability provisions of the first ministers' agreement and of the trust fund, provinces will report publicly on the use of these funds.

[*English*]

The Government of Canada views timely access to needed diagnostic and treatment services as a high priority.

• (1850)

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. John Duncan (Vancouver Island North, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, on Friday, March 2 I asked the Minister of the Environment an important question. The minister was not here and neither was his junior minister which is unacceptable. Here is the background to my original question, and I still want an answer.

On February 17 the minister unfairly compared the gas fired cogeneration plant in Campbell River on Vancouver Island with the proposed Sumas 2 plant in Washington state. The minister incorrectly stated that the Vancouver Island plant was ten times as polluting per unit of power and that the province of B.C. should do better.

The minister criticized the province as if he did not know that as part of a thorough environmental review, his own officials were part of the project approval. I have the approval letter right here. It is from Environment Canada, dated February 25, 1998 and is addressed to the provincial environment office. It says that:

—we would not disagree with . . . recommending they issue a project approval certificate for this project.

I would say that is a pretty strong endorsement.

Adjournment Debate

The \$220 million Campbell River plant was approved in 1998 and construction is now complete. It is scheduled to go operational next month, and now the minister is criticizing it.

The real facts are as follows. The polluter label does not apply because this project will, in combination with boiler shut downs at the pulp mill, reduce overall nitrous oxides, sulphur dioxide and carbon monoxide from current levels.

The new steam source means that Elk Falls can shut down two wood-oil fired burners and reduce the use of a gas fired boiler. This reduces the mill energy requirements and total emissions. In addition, sulphur emissions were originally projected based on a much higher sulphur content in the natural gas supply locally than has been demonstrated to be the actual case. The Vancouver Island plant compares very favourably for sulphur dioxide emissions once this correct sulphur content is taken into account.

The minister is apparently totally unaware of this fact. The \$240 million project is environmentally sound, creates jobs and helps the economics of the pulp mill. It is no wonder that it received great endorsements from all sectors, until these unfortunate statements by the minister which have outraged the mayor of Campbell River, baffled me and the provincial MLA.

The mayor wrote to the minister on February 19 consequent to the unwarranted criticisms the minister made a couple of days earlier. It is now five weeks later and the minister has still not responded to this letter in any way. The minister has done Vancouver Island a great disservice and particularly my community.

When will the minister retract his unsubstantiated, incorrect and irresponsible criticisms of an enlightened energy project known as the island cogeneration project?

Mr. Denis Paradis (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Environment Canada has no statutory decision making role for the island cogeneration project.

This project was reviewed, assessed and approved in 1997-98 under the provincial environmental assessment act. Under that assessment process, Environment Canada officials provided review

comments in relation to a number of issues in which the federal government has an interest, such as greenhouse gases that result in climate change. Environment Canada was satisfied with the greenhouse gas aspects of the environmental review.

The Sumas 2 power plant proposed for Whatcom county, just south of the international border in the Fraser Valley, is a controversial project notwithstanding the proposed use of some of the cleanest air emission control technologies available.

Many Canadians have expressed their opposition to that proposed power plant, as has the Minister of the Environment, because of concerns about the effect of air pollution on human health.

The island cogeneration project will have higher emissions of air pollutants that affect human health per unit of electrical production than the proposed Sumas 2 project.

• (1855)

Given this, U.S. businessmen, legislators and the media have begun to allege that Canadian opposition to the Sumas power plant project is hypocritical. If we wish Canadian criticism of U.S. energy proposals such as Sumas 2 to be credible, the clean technologies available, such as those proposed for Sumas 2, will have to be adopted and used at Canadian facilities such as Island Cogeneration.

This is the challenge the Minister of Environment has already put to the province of British Columbia and to the greater Vancouver regional district.

Look around outside. The air pollution is clearly visible. The health effects are insidious and hidden but real nonetheless.

The pollution affects not only our major urban cities but many smaller communities, particularly those in the valleys—

[*Translation*]

The Speaker: Order, please. The motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly this House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a.m. pursuant to Standing Order 24.

(The House adjourned at 6.56 p.m.)

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