

country. But history has shown that to be complete nonsense. Hunting is still a sport.

I am not a hunter and I am not attracted to it. There is still a lot of hunting in the country, especially in the rural and northern areas where there is a long tradition and it is in the culture of these people to hunt. They have not really been interfered with. As I pointed out, we have had gun control legislation since 1892. It has been consistently toughened and tightened and has been done in a way to allow our legitimate hunters and sport shooters to carry on with their sport. As a matter of fact, many Canadians have won Olympic medals in shooting because they have been able to do that.

Madam Speaker, my time is up. I simply want to say this. We would have supported this legislation. Here we are in the opposition giving more support to a government bill than it is itself. It is backing off it. It is sending the matter to study. We hope the study is a success. But we will push hard for legislation to deal with the matter. We do not want to let down those families in Montreal whose daughters were killed and massacred a year ago.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Denis Pronovost (Saint-Maurice): Madam Speaker, I listened very carefully to the speech we heard just now by the hon. member for Notre-Dame-de-Grâce, the former Solicitor General, who is celebrating his 25th year in Parliament this year. Congratulations are indeed in order, because it is quite an achievement nowadays to have been part of this august assembly for 25 years.

However, I also took this opportunity to rise in the House because there are at least two aspects of the speech made by the hon. member for Notre-Dame-de-Grâce on which I would like to expand because I do not agree with the implications.

First of all, I would say that like my colleague from Port Moody—Coquitlam, the hon. member for Notre-Dame-de-Grâce was somewhat contradictory in what he said. When the government makes decisions, it is accused of failing to consult the people. When we want to form a special committee to study a question, the hon. member for Notre-Dame-de-Grâce says: The committee is unnecessary. It is just a waste of time.

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If the hon. member is so concerned about the efficiency of the operations of this House, perhaps he could speak to the Liberal senators in the other place who have been holding up several bills and obstructing the parliamentary process for nearly a year now.

I am getting to the second point. Hon. members opposite, both the Liberals and the NDP, often complain that rural residents are overlooked by the government, and they make all kinds of grand speeches and give us a lot of rhetoric on the subject. We now have a wonderful and, in fact, extraordinary opportunity, Madam Speaker, to consult rural residents, whose specific concerns differ from those of city dwellers. Why not take advantage of this opportunity?

My third point and, in fact, the gist of my question is: The hon. member for Notre-Dame-de-Grâce referred to Canadian statistics and these will be my concluding remarks that prove that Canada has fewer murders and less violent crime per capita than the United States. However, we must remember that Canada and the United States are two entirely different countries. We cannot compare Los Angeles with Quebec City or New York with Montreal. The bigger the city and the bigger the population, the higher the crime rate, whether or not firearms are allowed. So it is unfair to compare the two.

Whether or not we have legislation—and this is my question—doesn't the hon. member for Notre-Dame-de-Grâce think we will never be able to prevent people like Marc Lépine from committing this kind of crime, despite the legislation tabled by the hon. member for Notre-Dame-de-Grâce when he was Solicitor General of Canada?

[*English*]

Mr. Allmand: Madam Speaker, I am pleased to deal with the three points raised by my hon. colleague. I thank him for his remarks with respect to my 25 years in Parliament.

His first point suggests that we are against consultation because we would prefer to proceed by way of the bill than with this motion. We are not against consultation. I thought I pointed out very clearly in my remarks that we could have debated the bill at second reading, voted on