

Oral Questions

move. In that case, the minister will be glad to know that the little group which he deems to be fanatics—those opposed to metric—now includes not only the governments of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island, but will shortly also include the new Progressive Conservative government of Saskatchewan.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Domm: How can the minister possibly reconcile the costly and needless federal program which is so much at odds with a steadily increasing number of provincial governments, not to mention the dozens of firms and industries which oppose it, and the hundreds of thousands of ordinary Canadians whose appeals so far have apparently fallen on deaf ears, at least on the other side of this House?

Mr. Nielsen: Deaf ears and fat heads.

[Translation]

Hon. André Ouellet (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Madam Speaker, from the hon. member's words it is clear that even he is qualifying people who are against metrication as conservatives. The hon. member obviously prefers to live in the past instead of looking ahead. He refuses to acknowledge that metrication is in the best interests of Canada and that the decision to go metric was made not only at the request of Canadian companies but also following a federal-provincial conference where the Government of Canada and the ten provincial governments supported metric conversion. It was a unanimous decision by the 11 governments.

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[English]

CRIMINAL CODE

REQUEST THAT SUBJECT OF PROSTITUTION BE REFERRED TO COMMITTEE

Miss Pat Carney (Vancouver Centre): Madam Speaker, my question is addressed to the Minister of Justice. I would like to point out to him that we may now have a Constitution and we may now have a Charter of Rights and Freedoms, but in many major Canadian cities, residents cannot go to the corner store or go to church, or take their children to daycare centres, without being hassled by hookers and their customers.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Miss Carney: The minister has given me a written commitment that he has referred this issue to the Standing Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs. The steering committee has instructed the minister's parliamentary secretary to discuss this issue with him. Since the minister agreed to refer the matter to the justice committee, and since the justice committee is prepared to discuss it as soon as possible, when will the minister present a reference to the House which gives the justice committee the authority to examine this matter and

suggest amendments to the Criminal Code to deal with this problem?

Hon. Jean Chrétien (Minister of Justice and Minister of State for Social Development): Madam Speaker, a long time ago I said that I wanted the committee to study the problem at the same time it studies Bill C-53. I do think that we are making our best effort to refer it to the committee and authorize the committee to make some suggestions while studying that bill. However, it is the hon. member in the other party who does not want to make that compromise, who insists on having a—

Mr. Paproski: Svend Robinson.

Mr. Chrétien: No, no. It is the hon. member in your party, Sir and Madam, who is insisting that there be a formal reference. If hon. members do not want to do it in the normal way in the committee while discussing a bill related to that type of problem, I will certainly try to get a formal reference to the committee. However, I thought that the hon. members opposite would offer themselves the opportunity while studying Bill C-53. However, the hon. members of your own party, Madam, are the ones who have become too sticky on procedure and have not wanted to deal with the substance of the matter.

Mr. Paproski: I thought it was Svend Robinson.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

REQUEST THAT MINISTER INTRODUCE AMENDMENTS

Miss Pat Carney (Vancouver Centre): Madam Speaker, my supplementary question is directed to the Minister of Justice, who has made allegations against hon. members of our party who are unfortunately not in the House today. However, I know that it was our justice critic who moved the motion in committee to set up a sub-committee on prostitution. Therefore, since it was our party which moved the motion to ask the committee to deal with this subject, we are hardly in the position of obstructing it.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Miss Carney: The very simple fact is that in spite of two years of waffling on this matter by the Minister of Justice, he made a commitment to the residents of the West End in Vancouver and to two B.C. cabinet ministers that he would bring in the necessary amendments by the fall of 1980. This is the spring of 1982. Therefore I would ask the minister if he is prepared to deal with this matter in the justice committee. His answer certainly confuses me. It is not at all clear whether he will discuss it in the justice committee. If he is not prepared to deal with it in the House of Commons, will he honour his commitment to bring in amendments to the Criminal Code?

Hon. Jean Chrétien (Minister of Justice and Minister of State for Social Development): Madam Speaker, I think that if the hon. member feels so strongly about the matter, she