

There is one point I should like to make with regard to this. Over a year ago the United States got their agreement and put their legislation in shape, since when they have been operating along the lines of the bill before us. I would hope that before this measure is passed the minister will clarify the situation in every respect.

As I have said over and over again—and I have heard many of my hon. friends on this side say it, not only in this Chamber but in caucus—none of us, and I am sure this applies to members on both sides of the House, condones Canadian citizens going to a foreign country and breaking the law of that country, particularly when it involves, as it does in many of these cases, the use of drugs or trafficking in drugs.

One of the most difficult things to control today is the international trade in drugs, particularly hard drugs. Unfortunately, many of our young people who go down to Mexico because of the attraction of a climate which we all enjoy—I think of Acapulco and other places—find, as is reported in our news media and elsewhere, that marijuana is grown in Mexico as a crop and they cannot believe a little simple possession may put them behind bars, waiting for months and sometimes years to be charged for what they consider to be a very minor crime in their own country.

I want to deal with some of these problems because in 1963, I believe it was, I was chosen by my party, then forming the Government of Canada, along with Chief Justice Tremblay of the province of Quebec, to lecture at a special seminar on civil rights in Mexico City where members of the United Nations from all over the world were attending. I cannot forget the statements which were made then by Mexican officials, Mexican professors and others on the question of civil rights.

But it was while I was in Mexico City that the Chief Justice and myself received a telephone call from two people who had been incarcerated in one of the Mexico City jails and held there for two years without charges being laid following an argument about the price of a motel. I did the leg work to dig up the facts, as was only proper since Chief Justice Tremblay, because of his position could not become directly involved. As a Canadian and as a member of parliament I did the work. I went down to see them. They had run short of money in Mexico and had wired their parents in the City of Montreal. They had sent them a cable transferring some money. The fact that the money came from such a source tipped off the motel people who tripled the price of the accommodation and, when the girls refused to pay, they were thrown behind bars and held, without a charge being laid, under conditions to which I shall refer in a few moments.

One of the big problems in Mexico is this: if you have any money at all the state does not feed you while you are in jail. You have to pay for your own meals, and so on. I was told by these girls—and they struck me as being honest people—that the older prisoners, the male prisoners, governed the food supply and that if they, the girls, did not perform certain sexual acts, they did not eat. It is under such abominable conditions as these, Mr. Speaker, that Canadians are being

incarcerated. This is what started me on a crusade to get people out of jails of that kind.

I want to put another case on record. I rose in the House of Commons some time ago, about two years ago, I believe, to move a motion under Standing Order 43. It read:

Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 43 I rise on a matter of urgent and pressing necessity. In view of the fact that Miss Bethune, daughter of longshoreman Ray Bethune, of Vancouver has been incarcerated since February in a Mexican jail whereby her father has spent some \$18,000 to obtain a hearing or a release, I move that the Department of External Affairs after discussions with the Department of Justice and through the Minister of Secretary of State of External Affairs protest in the strongest terms that Miss Bethune be given an immediate hearing and, if innocent, be released from the deplorable jail conditions in which she is incarcerated and subjected to indignities and conditions similar to those inflicted on other Canadians now and in the past in that nation.

I am glad to see there is some remedy provided in the bill with respect to the second point I wish to make. There are weaknesses in the legislation, but I shall deal with them in due course. This is the kind of situation which arises. When young people are detained, for whatever reason, cables are sent to their parents informing them that the services of a solicitor are required. Money is required to buy food for their children while they are in prison. This is used as a system of blackmail so as to get money out of parents in Canada. There is never any accounting for this money. Much of it disappears, and nobody knows what happens to it. It is about time we came to grips with this situation.

I should like to quote, now, from the Toronto *Star*, an article written on December 7, 1976 under a Mexico City dateline. It starts:

There might be something dumber than having dope in Mexico City, but I don't know what it could be. Norman Piché, a 25 year-old Montrealer, knows what he is talking about. He and 11 other Canadians are languishing in vermin-infested Mexican prisons because most of them tried to make a quick buck by smuggling drugs.

● (1242)

We do not endorse what they did, but I am complaining about the conditions under which these people have been held.

To make matters worse, the Canadians feel that Ottawa is doing little to help them.

Without the pressure which was exerted by myself and other members of parliament, we would not have received any answers from the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Jamieson). We were not getting relief. I do not want to read this whole article, but for those who are interested, it shows the kinds of conditions under which these people were incarcerated.

That brings me to another point which is of concern to me. I know our procedures do not allow hon. members to quote bills. At this stage we are supposed to be discussing the principle of the bill, but with the leave of the House I would like to quote from one part of the bill at page two. Clause 4 of the bill states:

Where a Canadian offender is transferred to Canada, his finding of guilt and sentence, if any, by a court of the foreign state from which he is transferred is deemed to be a finding of guilt and a sentence imposed by a court of competent jurisdiction . . .