

Private Members' Business

When it comes to the issue of post-sentence detention this government decided to avoid the issue by making it a subject for provincial health authorities to deal with. I know from an incident that happened in our province of B.C. not too long ago that the provincial health authorities do not have the ability to keep dangerous offenders off the street.

We saw a dangerous offender walk away from a provincial hospital because the two guards did not have the authority to stop him. I do not think that is what Canadians are looking for.

I think there is a better way and that is to enable the National Parole Board to apply to the courts for a dangerous offender designation. That is what my private member's bill, C-240, tried to do. I disagree with my hon. colleague. I feel that Bill C-240 does allow some flexibility and would address the problem of pedophiles.

It allows the correction and parole board members to apply to the appropriate provincial attorney general and to initiate a dangerous offender application for those inmates who they believe will reoffend, not necessarily just pedophiles but also adult sexual offenders, but it does include pedophiles who they feel will reoffend.

Like Bill C-45 it also removes the need to prove the likelihood of causing serious harm in the case of pedophiles. This is exactly the type of legislation the member for Brampton is looking for in her motion.

• (1400)

Unfortunately, the two members of the Liberal caucus who spoke to Bill C-240 during its first hour of debate did not speak in favour of it. I know the member is sincere in her efforts to motivate the government to take action on this matter. Perhaps she can speak to her colleagues and reconsider her own belief that by passing C-240 it would allow these changes to be made possible. I believe that Bill C-240 would accomplish that which she is seeking.

Over the summer months I had the opportunity to tour a number of penitentiaries in British Columbia. One of them, Mountain Institution in Agassiz, has an inmate population that is largely sex offenders. I had an opportunity to discuss one of the ongoing treatment plans. The five month program is extensive but only works on the outside if the released inmate is under community supervision.

The therapist advised me there was one situation where the parole officer observed that one of the parolees was falling back into his crime cycle. It was only because he was a parolee and under community supervision that they were able to revoke his parole and reincarcerate him. This action probably prevented another sexual assault from occurring.

On the other hand we have a case like Larry Fisher who ironically was released from the same prison earlier this year.

He was convicted of raping seven women. He was deemed to be so dangerous that he spent his entire sentence behind bars. He served 23 years before he walked out free because he had fulfilled his full sentence.

Larry Fisher is currently out there with absolutely no community supervision. One day he is an inmate whom the experts consider too dangerous to be released and the next day he is a completely free man. There is something wrong with a system that prevents society from protecting itself from the worst type of sexual behaviour.

I agree completely with the member for Brampton that the National Parole Board has to have the ability to keep dangerous pedophiles off the streets of Canada. Experts on pedophilia agree that the chances of ever completely curing a pedophile are remote. Convicted pedophiles and other dangerous offenders should be kept incarcerated as long as they pose a threat to reoffend. If this turns out to be an indefinite sentence, so be it. We should feel no obligation to release any dangerous offender who is likely to reoffend.

Even when we reach the point at which the experts believe that the chances to reoffend are low, there must be community supervision. This way if a parole officer believes there is a likelihood of an offender committing another sex crime his parole can be revoked. For those offenders who have shown that they have adapted well and are of little risk, the reporting conditions of their parole could be minimal.

What we need is a bill that would keep pedophiles and other dangerous offenders incarcerated as long as they are likely to reoffend and a bill that would provide for lengthy post-incarceration community supervision to ensure that once these individuals are released their activities on the outside are closely monitored. This combination will provide society with the greatest amount of protection.

I repeat that this legislation can be found in Bill C-240, my private member's bill. I respectfully ask the member for Brampton and all those who support her motion to likewise support my private member's bill which could bring this motion to fruition.

Mr. Janko Peric (Cambridge): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to speak to Motion No. 305 proposed by the member for Brampton.

There is no doubt our criminal justice system is flawed when it comes to dealing with high risk offenders, in particular sex offenders who prey on young children.

There have been several tragic cases in the past few years which have exposed terrible problems of how the justice system deals with sexual predators, but perhaps the most tragic is the case of Christopher Stephenson.

• (1405)

The criminal justice system failed 11-year old Christopher Stephenson of Brampton in 1988 when it released Joseph