

● (1430)

Historically our approach to law and order has been a punitive one, followed more recently by the protection of society and, even more recently, the talk of rehabilitation. In terms of the old law and order system, the punitive approach was to draw and quarter. Punishing people for the sole purpose of punishment should have no place in any system of law and order.

With respect to the protection of society and rehabilitation, I believe when a criminal has affronted society that the first objective ought to be the protection of society. But I would change my belief in that regard and say that the first objective with young offenders ought to be rehabilitation. Also I believe rehabilitation ought to be a part of adult programs, but in that case the protection of society ought to be the dominant objective. Rehabilitation ought to be the dominant objective when dealing with young people. We must be able to get them started, reward them for their capabilities and recognize that people, whether they be young or old, male or female, or however they are classified or stratified by society, can end up in criminal situations for reasons which do not necessarily demonstrate a calculated mental process in terms of their decision to commit a crime.

If that sounds like a lot of mush, let me repeat it by indicating that there are associated factors in our daily living patterns which have been linked to criminal activities. For example, the diets and eating patterns of North Americans is one of them. I know my following comments will not be part of the bill or an amendment to the legislation, but I encourage members of Parliament to use their influence in an attempt to rid school cafeterias of junk foods. I know we will not legislate it, but at the present time there is an overwhelming amount of information in that regard.

I hear some chuckles from the other side. Perhaps they have not read this well-researched information. Some examples are the overuse of sugar, pop and junk foods, the tensions and stresses inherent in people, the lack of appropriate vitamins and minerals in diets. I know it is difficult to excuse people's behaviour because they did not eat correctly, but it is our obligation in our role of giving leadership to talk whenever possible about the importance of these factors and their effect upon the behaviour of individuals, be they youths or adults.

As I indicated earlier, another factor is the area of jobs. With the advance of electronics, silicon chips and expensive computerization, it is incumbent upon us to remember that it is not good enough for people to be provided with goods, services and an adequate standard of living in terms of food, clothing and housing. Every human being thirsts to become a meaningful participant in society. He wants to "feel like a somebody", that he can do something; he wants a feeling of some personal worth and that he matters or counts. The removal of jobs from large sectors of society will increase the crime rate. If one does not feel meaningful and have some sense of self-respect, one will seek attention by practising disrespect. People by their nature must be noticed. If vast numbers of jobs are to be removed by electronics, they must be

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replaced with opportunities for people to feel that they are achievers in some other dimension.

I think I have covered all my points. I am sure further discussions will take place at committee stage. We require a tightening up of the language and words in the bill before us. There must be a reflection of the philosophy we want with respect to law and order. I do not believe there is a great disagreement among party members as to the principal objectives of this bill. Hopefully some minor alterations can be made in committee, so that in 1981 we will have a piece of legislation which is more contemporary than that with which we are living at present. Essentially it is the original 1908 legislation. Very few amendments have taken place in the interim, but obviously there has been an enormous change in our social behaviour in that same interim. I hope this legislation will receive the benefit of some good amendments before it comes before the House for third reading.

Mr. Peter Elzinga (Pembina): Mr. Speaker, let me begin by sharing with the hon. member for Crowfoot (Mr. Malone) what a delight it is to follow him in the House. Many times I have had the occasion to hear him speak in the chamber. He has not only made good sense, but his speeches make good reading.

During the course of my remarks dealing with the proposed Young Offenders Act, I plan to refer to a number of letters I have received from students throughout my constituency. Most of us on occasion have opportunities to speak with school groups and the students of our constituencies. Prior to this legislation being introduced, I had an opportunity to speak to a number of classes. I asked them for the benefit of their input. I have approximately a dozen letters. I will not read them all, but I would like to point out some of their highlights.

It is important to instil, in not only our students but in the entire population, the fact that views and concerns of individuals who are not members of Parliament are brought forward in the chamber. It is important to practise participatory democracy.

● (1440)

This bill is very similar to the one which we introduced in the short period of time when our party formed the government. Our party supports the legislation which is before us. We have moved an amendment to it which, if passed, would provide some consistency to the maximum age, which is something I will deal with later. I find it most appropriate that I am able to refer to specific correspondence I have received, since far too often as far as our student population is concerned, our young adult population, the publicity they receive is negative. Most of our young people are individuals of whom we can be truly proud.

I am able to illustrate this by reading into the record a number of letters I have received. I would like to do this so that the individuals who have sent me these letters will be aware that their thoughts are being considered in this chamber. The first letter I wish to refer to is from Jeff Plantje. He