

Government Orders

section are denunciation and specific or general deterrence, with rehabilitation of the offender, in all cases, being subordinate to these paramount principles”.

The Bloc Quebecois could never support such principles. The Bloc members on the committee did not support them, and today, I wish to reiterate our position on the use of these archaic principles to deal with crime.

On the whole, Bill C-45 formulates principles and objectives for sentencing that are supported by the Bloc. Nowhere in the bill does it say that society's denunciation and deterrents are the paramount principles which are to guide our courts. On the contrary, Bill C-45 tries to strike a balance between rehabilitation of the offender and protecting society.

If new section 741.2 remains in its present form, Bill C-45 will no longer be consistent. On the one hand, the legislator asks the judge to consider the rehabilitation of the offender, while on the other hand, he tells him to ignore it.

If this House sends ambiguous signals to the courts, we should not be surprised to see a number of absurd decisions that will become part of our jurisprudence. Therefore, subsection (2) of section 741.2 should be repealed, and I ask this House to support motions 24, 25 and 26.

Mr. Patrick Gagnon (Parliamentary Secretary to Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.): Madam Speaker, the motion proposed by the hon. member would delete from the provision an amendment adopted by the Standing Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs.

The provision to the effect that deterrence and society's denunciation are principles and, in my opinion, fundamental principles, guiding the courts and that rehabilitation of the offender is subordinate to them was added to clarify Parliament's intent in the matter of the courts' application of section 741.2 of the Criminal Code.

As the hon. member for Saint-Hubert so rightly pointed out, the thrust of Bill C-45 is to ensure that these individuals' return to society is done in a balanced manner, and of course the aim of the bill is to ensure greater public safety. However, I must unfortunately advise you that the government cannot support Motions Nos. 24, 25 and 26 as presented by the hon. member.

[English]

Mr. Myron Thompson (Wild Rose, Ref.): Madam Speaker, once again we are seeing some proposals we cannot support.

Bill C-45 is an attempt by the government to try to show Canadians that it is going to look at deterrence and punishment as kind of paramount to rehabilitation. It was a feeble attempt I might add, but at least it was an attempt.

• (1140)

Then along come the separatists and their ideas. Believe me, if we think the Liberals are left wing or bleeding hearts or whatever else we want to call them, the Bloc far exceeds that. This is another example of these kinds of motions. How dare us in Canada make such a scene over heinous criminals and crime. Deterrence and punishment is not how we operate in Canada; it is rehabilitation and prevention. Agreed, but let us make them paramount.

When one crosses that line of breaking the law, it is time to punish. I hope the punishment will cause a deterrent, because a deterrent is one of the best methods of prevention.

I congratulate the government members a bit. The reason I congratulate them a bit, only a bit, is because that is all they have attempted to do, only a bit. Tinker around, make the people think we are really going to do something about this, that we are going to get tough, and then along comes the Bloc saying: “No, no, no, we cannot be so cruel and harsh to our criminals”.

I am at a loss for words for people with that attitude. I sure would like them to come to my riding of Wild Rose and stand before crowds there, anywhere they want to go, and announce these wonderful new ideas. They will not sell.

Mr. Gagnon (Bonaventure—Îles-de-la-Madeleine): I will go.

Mr. Thompson: I will welcome the parliamentary secretary. I welcome him to come out. It is an invitation. Does he want to sell my people in Wild Rose all his wonderful solutions to crime? He is, welcome and good luck. If he thinks I am loud, wait until he gets out there.

The whole point is we have to get the message out to criminals that they will be punished severely if they commit these kinds of heinous, violent, dangerous crimes. We have to get that message out. That is what Canadians are asking for when we see capital punishment polls all across the country, all in favour, everywhere we go, 70 per cent to 75 per cent everywhere. But no, we cannot get the message. Besides, we are Parliament, we know better. We are smarter than the rest of Canadians. Hogwash and baloney. They do not know what they are talking about.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu): Is the House ready for the question?

Some hon. members: Question.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu): The question is on Motion No. 24, which will include Motions Nos. 25 and 26.

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.