

Government Orders

I appreciate that, but I recognize that this is already happening now and we do not need to codify it so there is more debate as to whether or not another group should belong to that list, that enumeration. And that will happen.

We had a case in Vancouver, which she is very much aware of, where it was the profession of an individual that caused him to be the victim of a shooting. He may or may not fall into this list. We will have lawyers debating back and forth and wasting court time when right now the courts would take that into consideration because there is not an exclusionary list.

I would suggest to the hon. member that already the courts take it into consideration, the judges take it into consideration. There is absolutely no need to put a law together to specify a list. I repeat that it is only one part of this legislation.

In case the hon. members in this House missed the point, this is also about alternative measures that are not defined, that are not specified as to who makes decisions, that are not specified on what crimes or what offenders qualify or whether they get alternative measures one, two, three, ten, or fifteen times. I think those things have to be addressed. We cannot pass a law for one clause; we have to look at the entirety. If the entirety of it is bad, we as legislators have a moral obligation to see it does not become law.

Mr. Jesse Flis (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have a brief comment.

The hon. member for Surrey—White Rock—South Langley complained in her opening remarks about time allocation, saying that it is not her party that is stalling and delaying.

I believe the hon. member was here yesterday when Canadians saw the Reform Party members wasting time deliberately with the way they were voting in slow motion and making a mockery of this Parliament. I call that a contempt of this Parliament. This is why we have to bring in time allocation. We have not brought in closure. They can complain about closure.

When we are dealing with members like this, I call time allocation good time management.

Ms. Meredith: Mr. Speaker, in response to the allegations from across the floor, it is interesting that an individual on the government side could comment about needing time allocation when this particular legislation has been at report stage since March 22. If the government moves so slowly that it takes it over three months to get something from report stage to dealing with it, from introduction to dealing with it, I do not take any responsibility for that.

What we went through last night was giving every single individual in this House the opportunity to make their recorded

vote, which is the parliamentary right of every member in this House. I will not apologize to the House or to anybody else for forcing the situation last night so that every member had the ability to be registered as voting for or against the amendments on this important legislation.

Mr. Gordon Kirkby (Prince Albert—Churchill River, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I wanted to point out that in the statement of the hon. member she did point out that right now the criminal law is composed of the Criminal Code and the common law. All that is sought to be done by this amendment is to simply codify the existing common law—it is not changing the law—so the judges and lawyers will all be aware of exactly what the law is in a very succinct form so that—

The Deputy Speaker: The member has the same amount of time to reply.

• (2005)

Ms. Meredith: Mr. Speaker, I will be very quick.

They already have the flexibility, not looking just at a list but looking at all factors, whether they fall under a list of enumeration or not. The list of six or seven items is not just bias, hate, and prejudice. There are far more areas. This is an exclusionary list that is being put into law that will give lawyers more and more opportunities to suck money out of the economy.

Mr. Stan Dromisky (Thunder Bay—Atikokan, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to rise today to speak to Bill C-41. In particular, I would like to address the proposed change to section 718.2 of the revised Criminal Code, which deals with crimes that are motivated by hate, hate being deemed an aggravating factor for the purpose of sentencing.

More specifically, this section of the Criminal Code looks to criminalize those who commit an offence that was motivated by bias, prejudice, or hate based on race, national or ethnic origin, language, colour, religion, sex, age, mental or physical disability, or sexual orientation.

This section takes into consideration that there are crimes against individuals and then there are crimes against a group. The latter crimes have the potential to hurt and hurt deeply and injure a collective group of people. Hate crimes put a group at psychological unease, deteriorating their psychological quality of life and inducing mental injury. As we all know, mental injuries and traumas can lead to physical illnesses, commonly referred to as psychosomatic illnesses. However, everyone within the designated group will be affected to some degree, some more than others. Above all, practically every single one will feel a deterioration of self-concept and eventually feel themselves second class citizens.