

*Government Orders*

and a real lack of intestinal fortitude when it comes to saying that we will take the bull by the horns and make our streets and our communities safer.

It is unfortunate the solicitor general alluded in his speech to all the wonderful things the Liberal government has done through Bills C-45, C-41, C-37 and C-68, to name a few. That just is not so. The House knows and all the people across Canada know that a number of things were attempted with the particular bills to make them better, to put the victim first. We also know that in every instance when there was a motion put forward in Bill C-45, which was simply geared to making things better for the victims of our country, the government turned them down and did not vote for one of them, not one.

It is silly for the minister to stand in his place to try to convince Canadians that he is doing a wonderful job when he turns down such things as mandatory restitution and then says that mandatory restitution is taken care of in Bill C-41. That is just not so.

The government is saying that it is up to a judge: if the judge wants to order it then he can do so and then things will take place and the restitution will happen. That just is not the case. We know that judges today can tell people that they will have to make restitution, but it does not mean anything. There is no enforcement. We cannot get blood out of a rock.

When we suggest that we will take part of the money we will pay them when they are in the penitentiary to put to the use of victims it is turned down. I guess it makes too much sense. It is something Canadians want.

Governments in the past 30 years are used to passing all kinds of legislation: if the people want it, do not do it, and if the people do not want it then make sure we do it. GST and all these other things apply to that.

It is unfortunate that during his speech the solicitor general alluded to the fact that these other bills were contributing to the safety of Canadians. He mentioned Bill C-37, the improvements to the Young Offenders Act. If Bill C-37 was such a wonderful improvement, I wonder if someone on the other side of the House could tell me why the Minister of Justice asked the members of the justice committee to put on their parachutes and fly around the country. They are flying all over Canada and are asking people once again what they would like to do with young offenders. They are spending lots of money going through a process that is totally unnecessary.

If we put each member on the justice committee on a street corner in any city to talk to the grassroots, the people who are closest to these crimes, about what should be done with the Young Offenders Act, I am quite certain they would get an answer. For a fact thousands and thousands of letters have been received from across the country telling the minister and others what to do with the Young Offenders Act. We have had petitions galore, with millions of signatures suggesting that we get rid of the Young Offenders Act or fix it. It has been ignored. Bill C-37 did not address that.

The government went through the process of getting Bill C-37 passed and then it turned around and sent the justice committee across the country to ask people what to do about young offenders.

To stand in the House and say "we did it, we got Bill C-37, aren't we wonderful" is just a bunch of baloney. I am really tired of hearing people in the House saying what a wonderful job the government is doing in fighting crime and keeping its red book commitment. That is not so. There is so much more the government could do but it does not dare.

•(1100)

I will admit that Bill C-78 makes total sense. It is something Canadians want. I congratulate the government for at least bringing forward one bill that will protect the right individuals, potential victims and witnesses rather than criminals.

The rights of criminals have always been up front, first and foremost. That has been the biggest worry for the government over the past 30 years, particularly in the last few years since the charter of rights has come into being. It must protect the criminal. There seems to be such a terrible amount of emphasis on that. It becomes really sickening. With Bill C-78 I say that at last we have something concrete and will protect the right people.

I should like to put a proposal to the government. When it is doing legislation in the future, the first thing to be written down in the legislation should be the word victim, the law-abiding people, the ones we need to look after. They are the most important people and criminals should be put somewhere else. Yes, nobody denies that we should look after the basic rights of the criminal. But, for crying out loud, we must remember the victims and do what can be done in all legislation to protect them.

Liberals stand in the House to tell us about the wonderful gun legislation. Somebody tell me what kind of balance is 17 pages which address the criminal versus 160 pages which go after law-abiding people. The document is so thick we cannot carry more than three or four. It is so expensive that we cannot order very many for our constituents to look at because of the cost. That document is full of regulations and all kinds of things law-abiding people are expected to do.