

*Criminal Code*

follow up and charge people in cases where they should be charged. Residents feel unprotected.

Juvenile prostitution and activities of pimps are largely ignored in this community. They are tolerated. This should not be happening under our existing laws. I am proud to say that residents in the Mount Pleasant community, and I am sure it is an example of other communities, have dealt with the situation in a positive way. People are concerned about the need for alternate jobs and adequate income so that women particularly have an alternative to prostitution, even though we know many are caught in chronic situations. People are demanding stronger police enforcement.

I helped to convene a meeting during the summer. Block representatives were established and a positive program was set up. Many proposals were made, including police task forces, community policing, neighbourhood block programs. Meetings with city hall people were set up to press for more community services. In Ottawa, Mayor Dewar has been successful in curtailing the effects of prostitution in residential neighbourhoods. Montreal has a special by-law which our provincial Government refused to allow in Vancouver. We believe enforcement has been lax. Much more emphasis should be given to this. If the present sections of the Criminal Code that deal with nuisance are inadequate, they should be changed. I hope the committee will take a good look at some of the proposals of the Fraser Commission.

I want to speak as the NDP critic for the status of women and for social policy. Prostitution has always exploited and degraded women, particularly poor women, disadvantaged women and native women, women who are unprotected and who have inadequate income. These are the ones who we find on the streets. Many prostitutes have a history of childhood abuse. Most would have few employment skills to cope in other jobs. It is most important we recognize the root of prostitution, and from that the very many social problems that exist in prostitution-related activities.

We need social and economic approaches as well as a legal approach to deal with problems. There must be an alternative way of life. Young people must be made to realize that this is a dangerous and not a glamorous occupation. To accomplish this, we have to be able to reach them. They are street kids, many of whom are foster children and do not have any home base. They must be reached through Outreach programs. They must have alternative job opportunities. They must have places in which to live with role models. They must have training and community support. I am pleased that our community recognizes these facts and is working on community programs, as well as ridding itself of street prostitution.

● (1600)

Government politicians at all levels have a responsibility. However, I particularly appeal to the federal Government—and I see that the Minister of Employment and Immigration (Miss MacDonald) is with us this afternoon—that it is not enough to have criminal sanctions. We do not agree with the particular approach of the Government. It is not enough just

to do that and ignore employment opportunities or ways of ensuring adequate incomes and alternative lifestyles. The New Democratic Party wants stronger enforcements of nuisance laws, both local and federal, to protect citizens and to deal with community problems. Primarily, we feel that they should be directed at customers. Bill C-49, in its application, will be directed more to punitive measures against prostitutes, most of whom are women. I am not convinced that it has a strong method of dealing with customers. Customers provide the demand. If the customers are not there, the prostitutes and the pimps will not be there because they will not have any business. We would like to see the enforcement of nuisance measures strengthened in order to deal with and discourage customers. We also want social and economic solutions so that young people and women will not have to earn their living on the streets. Unfortunately we do not feel that these methods of dealing with a very complex social and economic problem will be met under Bill C-49.

**Hon. Pat Carney (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources):** Mr. Speaker, it is with great satisfaction that I am able to participate today in the debate on Bill C-49, an Act to amend the Criminal Code dealing with prostitution. As many Members of the House will know, I am very pleased with the action taken by the Conservative Government and by the Minister of Justice (Mr. Crosbie) to deal with an issue which affects families and neighbourhoods right across the country. It deals with the blight of street soliciting which has invaded residential neighbourhoods, which is helping to destroy juveniles in particular, and which has led to a deterioration of some of the most historic neighbourhoods of Canada.

While I agree with the Hon. Member for Vancouver East (Ms. Mitchell), that there are other issues in the whole field of prostitution which must be addressed, I think this Bill which deals with street soliciting certainly is a major step forward in dealing with the problem. It is particularly a victory for citizens across Canada, because it was the pressure brought by citizens from Vancouver to Halifax who wanted to preserve their neighbourhood which led to the introduction of the Bill by the Conservative Government. It was one of our campaign promises. It is very satisfying to know that we have been able to meet this campaign promise within the first year of our mandate. It is also gratifying to know that it has the support, if only the qualified support, of the Hon. Member for Vancouver East.

I want to point out that the problems which the Hon. Member for Vancouver East now has in her riding are very similar to the ones which I had in my riding when this issue was first raised. I should like to refer to *Hansard* of December 17, 1981, and to quote, with Your Honour's permission, some sentences from the speech I made at that time. I was describing what street soliciting was doing to my riding and to my neighbourhood, and I said:

It is one of the most historic neighbourhoods in our city. For the last couple of years it has been invaded by prostitutes and pimps who are found on every corner. It is a business well organized by pimps with walkie-talkies— It is organized in relation to territories— It is dangerous for residents. They are not only accosted every time they leave their apartment or home to get a loaf of