

Criminal Law Amendments

Mr. Nicholson (Niagara Falls): Mr. Speaker, I was very pleased to hear the Hon. Member say that he was very serious about the subject of impaired driving and the introduction of legislation to deal with that. If he is so worried about this subject and about Parliament proceeding on this Bill as expeditiously as possible, why was he wasting the time of the House this morning and why did he comment again on the speech made by the Minister of Justice (Mr. Crosbie)? He was wasting the time of the House this morning by continuously interrupting the Minister of Justice. He referred to it again this afternoon. I would suggest to him that he is wasting the time of the House, and I want to know why he is doing that if he is so worried about getting this legislation through?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The Chair would have to rule out of order only the part about the Hon. Member's comments about what the Hon. Member for York South-Weston (Mr. Nunziata) did this morning. However, I will allow the part about the speech of the Hon. Member for York South-Weston.

Mr. Nunziata: Mr. Speaker, I make no apologies whatsoever for representing my constituents in the House of Commons. I take particular exception to the Hon. Member's suggestion that I am wasting the time of the House by exercising my right in law to speak for my constituents who elected me to represent them here. It is quite surprising that the Member should indicate his concern in this respect.

Mr. Speyer: Mr. Speaker, I only have a brief comment. This morning, the Member for Vancouver-Kingsway (Mr. Waddell) and the official critic for the Liberal Party made speeches that were very thoughtful, thought-provoking and of substance. I believe that the intervention by the Hon. Member has introduced a number of new things in the House other than his new black leather pants. I have never heard such a low level calibre of speech from a Member who is allegedly trained at the Bar in Ontario. That is surprising. The Member, coming from Queen's Park, has delusions of adequacy.

Mr. Nunziata: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I want to indicate to the Hon. Parliamentary Secretary that he should get his facts straight. I was not a Member of the Ontario Legislature and have never been a Member of the Ontario Legislature.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I regret to interrupt the Hon. Member. That is not a point of order. I would also ask the other Hon. Member to refrain from speaking about one's clothing in the House. If we could end the matter there I think it would be in the best interest of the House with regard to the particular personal comments. However, it is the Hon. Member's right to reply.

Mr. Nunziata: Mr. Speaker, the arrogance of the Hon. Member—he may have had the opportunity to be a Crown attorney for some time and he certainly has the experience in the House because I understand he has been here for a number of years.

As I indicated at the beginning of my comments, this is the first opportunity I have had to speak. I take personal offence—

Mr. Speyer: Good. It was intended.

Mr. Nunziata: —that the Parliamentary Secretary should stoop so low as to comment about an Hon. Member's clothing and comment about the quality of an Hon. Member's speech.

Mr. Speyer: It was dreadful.

Mr. Nunziata: I would simply indicate to the Hon. Member that if you cannot stand the heat, get out of the kitchen.

● (1620)

Mr. Malone: Mr. Speaker, my first comment that I would like to make to the Hon. Member for York South-Weston (Mr. Nunziata) is that this is his first speech on a legislative issue in the House. I welcome him to the House of Commons. We are pleased to have his participation.

With respect to the content of the Hon. Member's speech, obviously, Mr. Speaker, I am at variance with what he has said. I want him to understand that the relationship of alcohol and accidents is a national tragedy. It is a non-partisan issue. It is not an issue on which Liberals, New Democrats or we as Conservatives can stand any higher than anyone else. As to his comments that in February the Liberals introduced the Bill and the Conservatives somehow filibustered it, I dare him to give us quotes to show where one Conservative filibustered the Bill on drinking and driving.

With respect to the question as to whether the Liberals were the first to introduce the Bill, let me give the Hon. Member the facts. I as a Member of Parliament introduced a Private Member's Bill on drinking and driving long before the Government did. I was the only Conservative to speak. The NDP put up one speaker and hoped my Bill would pass. But the good Liberals, who, as the Hon. Member says, supported the Bill, stood up one by one and talked it out. I dare the Member to claim that the Liberals are the ones who were trying to protect Canada from the dangers of drinking and driving.

This is not an issue for partisan debate. It is a national tragedy. People are dying as a result of drinking and driving. All Members of this House have sent the signal that on that aspect of the legislation this Bill should be passed. The country wants the Bill as law. It is not for any one of us to stand here as this Member did and try to say that somehow shrouded in his Party is this great belief. It simply does not stand the test of facts. I now challenge the Hon. Member for York South-Weston to give us those facts and to read out for us those excerpts which he said demonstrated filibustering last February. The truth is the Liberal Party could not get its legislation through from February to the end of June and the country said, "Let's get rid of them". That is the reason the Liberal Party forms the rump today.

Mr. Nunziata: Mr. Speaker, I agree with the Hon. Member that the Bill should be non-partisan. These very serious and important amendments to the Criminal Code of Canada