

• (1520)

When criminals are arrested, the police read them their rights. Victims are never informed that they have rights. They are treated just like another piece of evidence. If a criminal has rights then so must the victim and if the victims have rights, should they not also be entitled to know what those rights are?

I have been working on a list of victims rights since the day I arrived on the Hill. Here is what I have come up with so far. I do not know if I will be able to finish the list, but this will give an idea.

Victims have the right to be informed of their rights, to be informed of services available, to be informed about the investigation, to be informed about the court proceedings. They have the right to receive notice of any hearing and have a right to receive notice of the release of an offender.

Victims have the right to legal counsel, the right to be heard by the crown before the trial, a right to be heard in the judicial process, a right to have their case prosecuted and a right to prompt disposition of prosecution. They have the right to restitution from the offender, and a right to prompt return of private property. Victims have a right to privacy, a right to protection from intimidation and a right to defend themselves, family and property. Victims have a right to exercise all of these rights.

Now that we have an idea what victims rights are, it is time for the federal government to start codifying these rights and working with the provinces to build legislative guarantees and administrative mechanisms to ensure that victims can properly exercise these rights.

There is a cruel irony that we are having this debate this week, for November 19 to 26, 1995 has been proclaimed by the Liberal government to be prisoners week. The Liberal prisoners week clearly demonstrates where this government's priorities are.

Do members know that there is no week of the year, not even a single day of the year dedicated to the victims of crime? We have a week dedicated to prisoners, but not one for their victims.

The federal government has proclaimed a week for brotherhood and sisterhood, a week for waste reduction, a week for international archives, a week for dental hygiene, a week for disarmament and on on the list goes. There is a week for earth and a week for professional secretaries but there is no week for victims of crime. It is time to correct this colossal oversight. I urge members of the House to support our motion to declare this week victims rights week.

**Mr. Randy White (Fraser Valley West, Ref.):** Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure to speak to this issue today.

### Supply

We are making every attempt to reflect exactly what happens in the Liberal government's agenda concerning victims. We want to reflect that the government's failure is in effect a failure to address the rights of victims.

I am going to demonstrate that with a small story. When I raise these stories in the House of Commons, I am accused at times, in fact a number of times by the minister of immigration as picking out and isolating certain cases which are not really reflective of what happens in Canadian society. That is a lot of hogwash. The fact is that the kind of case I am going to talk about this afternoon happens virtually every day in Canada.

I was in a hospital about 11 weeks ago and I met a lady who was quite despondent. She was crying because her 19-year old son Allen had been hit by a car at an intersection. He is in Royal Columbian Hospital. He had broken legs, a broken arm and his pelvis was broken in seven places, I believe. His head was basically crushed. He has a 20 to 25 per cent chance of living. Allen's mother Debbie does not believe that the system looks after her as a victim. Her husband Allen senior, feels the same way. I asked her to explain what happened.

A young offender stole a four by four truck. He drove it through the streets of Surrey, British Columbia, and toppled the four by four truck over Allen's Fiesta.

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Right away, the young offender was read his rights and I will read those in a moment. He was whisked away. The other young fellow who was with the young offender was let off. He was only an accomplice sitting in the same vehicle they stole.

Mr. and Mrs. Wayne asked the crown prosecutor to make sure the guy who was charged with eight counts was sent to adult court, just like the Liberals said would happen. They also asked to be informed of any plea bargaining that took place. Guess what? Plea bargaining took place and they did not know it. I found out about it.

Of the eight charges, five were dropped in the plea. Three of the minors were presented and brought forward. Why the minors? That is obvious. Why was it so fast? It took about five or six weeks to run this young offender through from the time of the accident to sentencing. Five weeks is almost unheard of. The reason in all likelihood is that the young offender would have been charged with manslaughter had young Allen Wayne died. That is why they rushed him through, which is another protection for the victim. Now what happens?

Let us go to the sentencing. What does the judge give him? This is where victims and parents do not understand what is wrong with this Liberal government. This guy gets 15 months open custody, go home. He gets three years prohibition from driving. However he is already on prohibition from driving and gets charged with that count. Prohibition from driving means nothing to this fellow. What does he get for prohibition from driving? He gets one day concurrent open custody. One day. What is being told to young offenders here? He just about killed