

Adjournment Debate

raised on March 26, 1987, he stated that, if rates do not come down, as I have stated before, we will consider the best ways to proceed.

Madam Speaker, I am asking the question again. What are the best ways? I am asking, when will he proceed? When will he follow up the commitment made and implied in this question?

[Translation]

Mr. Pierre H. Vincent (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance): Madam Speaker, in March 1987, as indicated by my friend the Hon. Member for Scarborough West (Mr. Stackhouse), the Finance Committee tabled a report on the credit card issue. I think it was a major and even fundamental step toward understanding the cost involved in the use of credit card, especially at the financial level.

Madam Speaker, the Committee did not recommend that the Government should set credit card rates. On the other hand, it did recommend that the Canadian people should be made more aware of the cost associated with using credit cards.

As you know, Madam Speaker, the Federal Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs (Mr. Andre) published in December 1987 an information booklet on credit cards, users costs, interest rates, etc., all the costs involved in the use of credit cards.

I suggest that the Hon. Member for Scarborough West should be praised for his contribution and the results he has obtained with this special information booklet on credit cards.

As you certainly know also, in June 1987, the Federal, Provincial and Territorial Ministers responsible for Consumer and Corporate Affairs got together and agreed to set up a special task force to look into the issue of costs and problems resulting from the use of credit cards. The report from that task force should be available shortly.

Since then, and thanks in part to the excellent work which the Hon. Member has done, a number of financial institutions have been offering Canadian consumers products which are definitely more competitive and interesting. Madam Speaker, I feel that the Hon. Member should continue his good work and keep on informing Canadian consumers about the costs involved in using credit cards. I suggest it is in this direction that the Government and the Hon. Members of the House should continue to work.

Madam Speaker, I can assure you that this is in this direction we will continue to move.

• (1815)

[English]

ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE—CONVICTED MURDERER-RAPIST
CHARGED WITH TRIPLE MURDERS WHILE ON PAROLE

Mr. Ross Belsher (Fraser Valley East): Madam Speaker, on December 13 last, a 34-year old Chilliwack woman, her 12 year old daughter, and her daughter's best friend, also 12, were murdered by the mother's common-law husband. These

murders shocked the small, closely knit community and tragically affected the lives of family and friends of the three victims.

The murderer, Allen George Foster, of Chilliwack was a convicted murderer and rapist who had already spent seven years in jail in the early seventies for murdering an 18 year old girl, Gwen Ann Lingor. When he killed Joan Pilling, her daughter Linda Brewer, and Megan McCleary just 12 days before Christmas, he was out on full parole.

The perversity of the situation is obvious. By the very weakness of our parole system this murderer was given the freedom to murder again, not just once but three times. Had he not taken his own life on December 27 in the washroom area of the Forensic Psychiatric Institute in Port Coquitlam, he very well may have murdered yet another time. It is no wonder that my constituents in Fraser Valley East and countless other Canadians recoiled in shock and disgust at this crime but, even more so, at the system which allowed Foster to be out on our streets.

On January 18, I asked the Solicitor General of Canada (Mr. Kelleher) in the House why this convicted deviant sexual offender, who had committed a heinous murder and rape in 1971 and who was subsequently convicted of indecent exposure in 1986, was let out on full parole.

The Minister's response indicated that there would be a full inquest conducted by the coroner of B.C. at the end of February or March. This is welcome news to the people of B.C.

Many Members in the House of Commons voted against the motion addressing the reinstatement of capital punishment when it came up for a vote in June of last year. At the time and despite the disappointment that I felt personally, I hoped that this would force us to move in a different direction and would lead us to tightening our parole laws. We did not move fast enough for Joan Pilling, Linda Brewer, or Megan McCleary.

I realize that we have made advances in this regard with Bill C-67 from the first session, but unfortunately and obviously they were not enough. The amendments to the Parole Act and the Penitentiary Act, which received Royal Assent in July, 1986 have given us the power for the first time to keep inmates who meet the criteria under the Bill in prison for the full length of their term. I was pleased to hear that since the introduction of the Bill some 25 per cent of all people who have come before the special parole board are now being detained until the full length of their term has expired.

We have been told that the parole board followed the proper procedure before granting full parole to Foster, and I have no doubt that it did. However, human nature being what it is, is there any doubt that even if every rule was followed Foster could have stepped out of line anyway? Who can predict what a convicted murderer will do next? It is time we examined the rules.