

could not support it. Maybe I have clarified it. Maybe they will support the legislation this afternoon.

On committee referral, I know most members of the Reform Party with the exception of their House leader are new here. Most members of the Bloc Quebecois are new here. However, the reality is that committees basically are masters of their own destiny in this place. We do not have the legislative committees the Tories did. We want to make sure we are building up expertise in certain areas on committees by all members of the House.

There is some agreement in this place that we have tried to do what we said we would during the campaign about making Parliament work better. We said we wanted the role of individual members to be heightened. We wanted to make sure they could provide input into the system.

I am the committee chair on fisheries and oceans. The way I run my committee is with the co-operation of members opposite and my own side. That is different from what the Tories did. We actually try to drop our partisanship at the door and come up with better legislation, if that is what we are dealing with. When we did the cod adjustment package, the Atlantic groundfish adjustment, everybody on my side was happy with the report. We showed that this government is putting its money where its mouth is in allowing committees to have as broad a latitude as they think they need from maximum input by members.

The second Reform Party red herring is that we have to get this over to the justice and legal affairs committee. Nonsense. If the Reform Party members in that committee are interested in trying to bring forward better legislation then they can ask the chair. When this legislation goes before that committee it can be put to a vote to have officials from the Department of Justice if that is who they want, or the janitor, appear before the committee. They can do whatever they want.

• (1310)

I want to strip away some of the nonsense that is being put here and to appeal particularly to the Reform Party. Start reading your own campaign material. You ran on law and order. You ran on trying to make sure this place ran better. You ran on trying to strip partisanship and gamesmanship from the House.

On an issue that deals with law and order which cleaned up the streets in my area, you are doing everything that you criticized past members and parties of this place of doing. Wake up. Read the polling numbers. I want to tell you, some of the problems you guys have over there, Mr. Speaker, those individuals—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger): I guess I rose a little too quickly. I see the member recognized the Chair. I just did not want to be forgotten in this debate. If we get too personal with the “you this” or “you that” we could allow our debate and discussions in this Chamber to degenerate. Of course we are all

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committed to the most vibrant, animated and forthright discussions possible but please do not forget the Speaker.

Mr. MacDonald: Mr. Speaker, thank you for reminding me. I slipped. What I meant was “they”.

Let me put it this way, Mr. Speaker. Perhaps what those individuals on the other side should do is go back and read their campaign literature. They have slipped a few times. They have come to this place having raised themselves on a high holy pedestal. They have found it is a long fall when knocked off.

Indeed their leader found that out a few days ago. I hope they recover. I hope they do find a way to contribute, and I mean this sincerely, to the debates in this House.

They may laugh. I happen to have a great deal of respect for every member of this House no matter what their political affiliation, even if they are separatists. They have a right to have a say in this place. I am trying my best in this new Parliament to show we can work differently. I have dulled my tongue of its partisanship. However on an issue like this I am not prepared to because the public has to know what goes on here.

I have a problem in my community up on Hester Street in the north end of Dartmouth. The prostitution problem is driving this neighbourhood into decline. It is an old residential neighbourhood. It is not downtown in an industrial or commercial area.

The reality is the problem for the residents up in the north end on Hester Street and Albro Lake Road is not just prostitution but is drug related. In and around that area there were a number of known crack houses. These prostitutes are victims of the most despicable types of individuals when dealing with the pimps. Many or most of these young girls in the situation of prostitution have a drug problem. The pimps get them addicted to drugs.

Drugs are far too easily available in every community, every junior and senior high school, even elementary schools, in this country. The reason we have the problem on Hester Street in the north end is because there were two crack houses nearby. The prostitutes who were addicted to crack were plying their trade primarily because they could make some money and get a hit of crack. The police have found the laws would not allow them to take the type of action necessary to clean up the streets. That is a problem.

I will support any initiative this government or the opposition puts forward that would move in that direction. I know Bill C-7, which should not be a controversial bill, does all of those things. It moves in the right direction.

It will not be the last time this government comes forward with amendments to the Criminal Code, to health and welfare legislation, the Food and Drug Act, or other acts. We will respond as necessary. We will take the steps we believe will lead to safer communities and will allow law enforcement officials and the judicial system to deal effectively with those seeking to