

*Government Orders*

in our community are afraid to walk alone at night and in fact are afraid to walk in groups.

There is a fear out there, a concern that the criminal justice system is not working. Whether it is justifiable or not, whether the evidence supports the perception that there is an increase in crime and a lack of feeling of security, whether it is justified or not, the reality is that people are afraid. The people are looking to governments, whether it is municipal, provincial or federal governments, to take action immediately in order to at least show them that legislators care about what is happening.

• (1250)

Yet we in this Chamber seem to be preoccupied with the Constitution, Meech Lake here and Meech Lake there, Constitution here and Constitution there. The reality is most people just do not care about the Constitution. They just do not care about constitutional reform.

What they would rather see is this Chamber and members of Parliament talking about the real issues that are of concern to people. They want to see a preoccupation in this House with economic concerns. People want to get back to work. That is one of the key issues that people are concerned about.

The other key issue is crime, law and order. They want to see this government, they want to see legislators, parliamentarians, politicians standing up and talking about issues of real concern to people, rather than simply taking crime prevention week as an opportunity to highlight a problem and then come Friday afternoon all the MPs will board their planes, buses and leave this place and the issue again will be buried on the Order Paper.

Criminal justice reform should be on the agenda every day in this House as long as people are concerned about what is happening on the streets in urban centres and even in rural areas right across the country. Toronto this year will set a record in terms of the number of homicides. As of today there have been 74 homicides in Toronto compared to 46 last year. We are breaking records in metro Toronto. The previous record for murders in metropolitan Toronto was 60 for all of 1987. We are already at 74 murders and we still have two months to go in metro Toronto.

The police estimate that there will be anywhere from 75 to 100 murders this year. We are looking at 25 more people who are living and breathing today who will be murdered, who will be killed over the next two months in metropolitan Toronto alone.

Toronto is number three in per capita violent crimes in Canada. Violent crimes are up 22 per cent so far this year. Some blame the rise in crime on drugs and the proliferation of guns in metropolitan Toronto. I spoke a little earlier about how people feel about walking in the evening. According to a recent poll 56 per cent of women are afraid to walk the streets at night alone. We are talking about streets in their own community and 75 per cent feel that the courts are far too lenient with criminals.

The point is that the public does not have confidence in the criminal justice system, that there is a concern out there and the concern is that the government is not doing what is necessary in order to deal with the problem.

I indicated that the government was not taking a comprehensive approach to criminal law reform and in fact was tinkering with the system. For example, the government by introducing this legislation has accepted that parole should remain a feature of our criminal justice system in Canada. It has not addressed the question of whether or not we should abolish parole all together, as has been done in jurisdictions outside of this country, in particular south of the border in the United States. Should we carry on with parole as we know it today?

I do not believe that we should carry on with the parole system that we have. This government has already accepted that rather than abolishing parole all together, it wants to retain it, tinker with it a bit to change the time periods. This government has not addressed the whole concept of mandatory supervision.

If I can just take a moment to talk about mandatory supervision, I support the complete abolition of mandatory supervision, and let me explain why.

Right now in Canada, if an individual is sentenced to a period of incarceration, they become eligible for day parole after serving a sixth of their sentence. They become eligible for full parole subject to certain exceptions after serving a third of their sentence, and they are automatically released subject to certain exceptions