

across the land. Every time it topples it changes its position, and every time it changes its position it sows different seeds. This symbolizes the government's policy in the last eight years. One can truly categorize this policy as the tumbling weed program of the Liberal party. We now demand, on behalf of parliament and the country, a full airing of this legislation in the committee; and we demand, above all, that the term of the bill be separated.

● (1640)

When I started my introductory remarks I said I proposed to amend the motion now before the House. I shall do so because this bill, in each of its several parts, confronts us with the keystone question of political science. That question is: Where does the lawmaker strike the balance of convenience between the rights of society and the rights of the private citizen? These state rights and private rights are as the two sides of one coin. No man is free under the law of the jungle. That being so, society exists to ensure that the private citizen, in surrendering the minimum of his freedoms, is free to enjoy the maximum remainder of his freedoms. It is equally true that no man is free in a society that requires of him no more than the minimum surrender of his freedoms; he can lose his freedoms when the lawmakers forget that society exists for man, not man for society.

For example, we lawmakers may be forgetful of this principle when the administrators of the laws we pass are inefficient, when they protest that they are inefficient only because they need more power over the private citizen for his own good. The private citizen is therefore required by us to surrender more of his freedom to these administrators. This leads full circle to a bureaucratic society where the freedoms of the private citizen are trapped fast in a jungle of red tape and autocratic decisions. Again, and briefly, Mr. Speaker, the freedoms of the private citizen can be unduly sacrificed to political expediency or over-reaction to the so-called "public demand". Too often, public demand is the demand of minority pressure groups.

With particular reference to Bill C-83, it has been said that some of the tougher law and order provisions, which the government now calls peace and security provisions, have been inserted by the government to seduce unwilling converts among its backbenchers to vote freely on the side of the government for the abolition of capital punishment. Others would have it that these law and order provisions are an overkill reaction by the government to so-called public demand.

I have heard a third explanation, Mr. Speaker. Last Thursday, March 4, the government, on the motion of its leader there, referred the subject matter of this bill to the Senate Standing Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs. Such a reference to the other place has been generally reserved for the subject matter of bills dealing with income tax, corporation laws, and banks. In fact, the practice is known as the "Hayden gambit", after its innovator, the honourable chairman of the Senate banking, trade and commerce committee. The present reference appears to be a departure from banking to criminal law. I am assured, however, that the departure from practice is more apparent than real.

Adjournment Motion

Last year, it is pointed out, was the most recessive year in Canada in the last 20 years. In that most recessive of years, bank profits rose 50 per cent. In that most bank profitable year, bank robberies rose accordingly. Therefore, this bill and the Senate reference are explained on the basis that the government foresees that so long as this government is in power the recession will increase, bank profits will increase and bank robberies will increase. The government has decided that something must be done about it. Bank robberies must be stopped, so the government has brought in gun control.

I do not necessarily subscribe to all these views, Mr. Speaker. After all, it must appear to the public that there have been a few breaches of law and order centred in these parliament buildings in recent times. But, seriously, I do endorse the method used by the other place. We should be permitted to have this bill go back to committee now, before second reading is completed, to enable the committee solely to study and report on the manner in which the bill itself has been drawn, a bill that puts 39 pages of new gun controls in our law, together with a patchwork of other amendments. With that in mind, Mr. Speaker, I move the following motion in all seriousness, and I believe I am in order:

That all the words after "that" be deleted and the following substituted therefor:

"Bill C-83 be not now read a second time but that the subject matter thereof be referred to the Standing Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs, for the purpose of considering a more proper legislative division thereof."

The motion is seconded by the hon. member for Prince Edward-Hastings (Mr. Hees). I appreciate that Your Honour may want to hear some comments on the motion I have moved.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Turner): The Chair will take the amendment under advisement and allow the debate to continue.

PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT MOTION

[*English*]

SUBJECT MATTER OF QUESTIONS TO BE DEBATED

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Turner): Order, please. It is my duty, pursuant to Standing Order 40, to inform the House that the questions to be raised at the time of adjournment this evening are as follows: the hon. member for Medicine Hat (Mr. Hargrave)—Regional Economic Expansion; the hon. member for York-Simcoe (Mr. Stevens)—The Canadian Economy; the hon. member for Kingston and the Islands (Miss MacDonald)—External Affairs.