

(Mr. Young), said, the hon. member has perhaps raised a much broader issue than he realizes. It might be a good idea, in concert with other hon. members who have bills of a similar nature, such as those dealing with pornography, to combine them and bring forward more broad legislation that the government can discuss and take to the justice committee.

The hon. member for Wetaskiwin is concerned, particularly for young people. It is obvious there are more than just hockey players in his area. The legislation he proposes, although well intentioned, is clearly insufficient to cover all aspects of this problem. If there is a need to prohibit games such as this, careful consideration must be given to drafting a more comprehensive piece of legislation.

Schedule "C" of the Customs Tariff can be effectively used to prohibit the importation of goods into Canada. As indicated in the explanatory note to the bill, section 14 of the Customs Tariff provided that goods enumerated in Schedule "C" are prohibited importation.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Turner): Order, please. The hour provided for the consideration of private members' business having expired, I do now leave the chair until 8 p.m.

At six o'clock the House took recess.

● (2002)

AFTER RECESS

The House resumed at 8 p.m.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[Translation]

CRIMINAL CODE

AMENDMENTS TO GIVE CERTAIN RIGHTS TO POLICE

The House resumed consideration of the motion of Mr. Blais that Bill C-26, to amend the Criminal Code, the Crown Liability Act and the Post Office Act, be read the second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs.

Hon. J.-J. Blais (Solicitor General): Mr. Speaker, I am happy to open the debate on second reading of Bill C-26. This bill contains important provisions which, when the legislation is enacted, will help Canada and the services responsible for security to better solve the serious problems they now face. I recognize, Mr. Speaker, that the provisions of this bill have been and still are the subject of many comments. I would first like to note that this bill is temporary since it provides for the bill itself and its effect to expire one year after the McDonald Commission submits its report and recommendations.

Criminal Code

Mr. Speaker, in my comments tonight I would like to emphasize two major points, that is the need for this legislation and the powers it gives to the police and security service. In this regard, I hope hon. members will clearly understand that there is a real need for this legislation and that the additional help it will give to the police and security service is not excessive. Moreover, Mr. Speaker, my colleague, the Postmaster General (Mr. Lamontagne), will be able to support directly this bill and I await impatiently his comments.

[English]

Mr. Speaker, in proposing the legislation in special circumstances of the interception of first class mail, Bill C-26 addresses itself to two serious problems affecting Canadians today. The first is the use of the mails for the transmission of narcotics. The second is the use of the mails to support activities which are detrimental to national security. I wish to speak to each of these areas since the requirements they demand for government action establish the need for this legislation.

[Translation]

Mr. Speaker, drug addiction in Canada continues to be a subject of national concern and a serious problem. When it studied this problem in 1969, the LeDain Commission estimated that there were about 50,000 drug users in Canada as well as 15,000 regular addicts. The figures that I have been given show that in 1975, which is the last year for which we have precise figures, 13,927 heroin addicts were known to the Bureau of Dangerous Drugs. Moreover, 6,517 of them lived in British Columbia. Mr. Speaker, the number of these drug addicts is increasing. From 1969 to 1974, the number of known heroin addicts increased for the whole country from 2,714 to 16,000 or 20,000, and in British Columbia alone, from 1,874 to 6,517, according to present estimates.

[English]

The cost reflected in these statistics across the spectrum of victims, from society as a whole to the addicts themselves, is enormous. In the lower mainland of British Columbia where the most detailed analysis has been made it is estimated that between 50 per cent and 70 per cent of property conversion crimes such as robbery, burglary and shoplifting are heroin-related. In 1975, for example, heroin users committed at least 53 per cent of all serious robbery offences. Since 1965, crimes against property have risen by 190 per cent, crimes against persons by 108 per cent and the over-all crime rate by 186 per cent. Prostitution is also often heroin-related in that there is a direct correlation between prices charged by prostitutes and the price of a cap of heroin. Not surprisingly, heroin has precipitated an increase in the extent of underworld violence, including the possession of firearms and homicide. In this latter regard there were some 443 narcotic-related deaths in Canada between 1969 and 1974.

These figures mirror only one facet of the total cost. Federal and provincial governments are obliged to spend great amounts of time and money on treatment, law enforcement