

Adjournment Debate

Mr. Speaker, here is my question to the Solicitor General. Is it the Government's intention to introduce a stricter policy to fight against this insidious threat to our collective well-being by implementing strong measures to thwart drug dealers and users whose ranks have tripled over the past two years? All the more so because of the fact that, since President Bush unveiled his new antidrug program last September 5, drug dealers have been using Canada as a back door to gain access to the American market.

Considering that our media regularly report drug-related incidents, we have to come to the conclusion that we are before a fait accompli, an everyday occurrence.

In light of such deep concern, does the Government expect to increase border surveillance in an all-out antidrug war?

[English]

Mr. Benno Friesen (Parliamentary Secretary to Solicitor General of Canada and Minister of State (Agriculture)): Mr. Speaker, first of all I want to compliment the Member for Drummond for his consistent and his persistent interest and concern about the plague that has hit Canada and western countries, indeed around the world, and that is the drug abuse that is going on that is killing, injuring and maiming children all around the world.

I think the member will recall that a few years ago our Prime Minister spoke in Vancouver about the epidemic proportion of the drug problem in Canada. He was criticized and lampooned by editorial boards across Canada for his alarmist statements regarding this problem. I think Canadians now realize that he was right and that the hon. member for Drummond is correct. I listened carefully to the remarks he made in his statement just now. He has done careful research on this subject. It is indeed a war that we are engaged in. The member has shown concerns in various levels about the welfare of children.

I have a letter from a very articulate mother regarding the plight of her 14-year old child whom she had cared for carefully. But she did not realize that in a matter of four months the child had moved from the use of marijuana, unknown to the parents, to the use of hard

drugs. Not even her best friends knew that the child was using this drug. This is the kind of a war that we are into.

The government is concerned that we attack it from every area we can. That is why the Department of Health and Welfare has initiated the national drug strategy and invested \$210 million to educate young people and to attack this problem. That is why we have passed legislation, I think it is Bill C-61, whereby the government is now entitled to confiscate the profits from crime and in the first six months that that bill has been invoked, law enforcement officers have been able to confiscate \$20 million across Canada from the profits of this crime.

• (1810)

That is just the beginning. I am sure that that is just the tip of the iceberg. The federal government is working with the provincial governments, through the RCMP, through the various agencies all across Canada, to educate, to apprehend and to confiscate. Those are the areas that we have to deal with and make sure that all levels of the government are co-operating in this war.

Again, I compliment the member for his intense pursuit of this subject because it is only if we in this House and people across the country take this same kind of intense interest in this subject that we will beat this war on drugs.

HOUSING—PERSONAL HOUSING COSTS—MINISTER'S POSITION

Mr. Jim Karpoff (Surrey North): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to expand on my question to the minister responsible for housing that I asked last April, and that was why he abandoned his position of principle and why he was no longer holding out the 30 per cent ratio of personal income as a realistic figure for housing. I think over the last number of years we have seen an increase in housing problems in this country, particularly in affordability.

I want to make it very clear when I express concern about the 30 per cent guideline that has been in place by CMHC as a maximum amount that a family should be spending on shelter, I am not in the least bit worried about the family that has an income of \$6,000 a month and is spending \$3,000 of it on a quarter of a million dollar home. My concern is for the woman who is looking after two children on an income of \$1,000 a month and is