

and indeed, to the contrary, all sentencing texts or digests dealing with current practice recognize such motivation as an aggravating factor.

In short this controversial section is completely unnecessary. It has always been my observation that while unnecessary legislation is generally unwise, it is especially so when dealing in criminal law—I would ask that you keep in mind that both our association and the chiefs of police (and, by the way, every crown attorney I've spoken with) opposed the passage of this bill.

Bill C-41 is a badly drafted, inconsistent, self-contradictory bill which is truly the creation of a bureaucracy which unlike elected representatives has no constituency or ultimate accountability.

• (1625)

This letter was written by the executive director of the Canadian Police Association and those are his comments and opinions about the bill.

Also within the letter he indicates this viewpoint is shared by the chiefs of police and the crown attorneys he knows and has talked to and also the peace officers. I find it very strange the justice minister embraces the opinion of the chiefs of police and the Canadian Police Association with regard to Bill C-68, the gun control bill.

The minister has regularly and repeatedly used them as support for pushing through the gun control legislation. However, when it comes to Bill C-41 their opinion is no good. Why is their opinion fine and sound and wise on support of Bill C-68 or portions of it and unwise and unacceptable on Bill C-41? There is an inconsistency here that escapes me. It simply escapes me that the justice minister would use these organizations, their opinions and their support to justify one bill but would completely ignore their scathing denunciation of Bill C-41. I would like to place that on the record.

• (1630)

This bill also relates to section 745 of the Criminal Code. Section 745 of the Criminal Code allows first degree murderers or those who have been sentenced to over 15 years imprisonment the opportunity for early parole or at least to apply for a reduction of their parole ineligibility after serving 15 years. Of course it applies mostly to first degree murderers.

I ask: What is a human life worth? What is a fair and just penalty for someone who has premeditated and deliberately taken the life of an innocent person? What is a fair and just penalty for that?

When the government removed the death penalty from the Criminal Code we received the assurance that society would be protected by a term of life imprisonment for those convicted of first degree murder and that they would have no eligibility for parole for 25 years. However, at the time I suggest 99 per cent of Canadians were unaware that section 745 was created and placed in the Criminal Code.

Yes, hon. members can say that it was debated here in the House but it was debated before the proceedings were televised. I suggest that very few people were aware that section 745 was placed in the

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Criminal Code and what it meant. I suggest it was a betrayal if not a deception on the part of the government of the day against the people of this country. My office has received calls and letters from people indicating clearly they were not aware of what the government intended when it introduced section 745 into the Criminal Code.

We introduced an amendment to this bill that would strike section 745 from the Criminal Code entirely so that a life sentence would mean a life sentence. At least that would place a greater sense of worth on a human life and when someone deliberately with premeditation and intent took a human life there would be a penalty to pay. Regardless of whether there is rehabilitation, regardless of whether there is remorse of any sort, the penalty must be paid. We are saying it ought to be exactly what the government promised in the seventies when this change was being considered. We moved to strike that. I oppose Bill C-41 on that basis as well.

In summing up I would like to go back to the business of violence in society which has led to a categorizing of individuals. This bill would have the courts impose a greater penalty for certain crimes. If I am assaulted because someone hates me and if I fit within the categorization in this bill, my attacker will receive a greater penalty. If I do not fit within that category, then my attacker may not receive a greater penalty. That is the crux of this whole concern as far as I am concerned. It is creating status by categorizing groups of people. I think it is wrong.

• (1635)

As I said before, what will create bias and prejudice quicker than anything else is for example by my telling you, Mr. Speaker, that because you have brown eyes you are not as good as I am because I have blue eyes and I do have blue eyes. We must avoid that at all cost. This bill does not avoid that. We are moving to the edge of a slippery slope when we begin by statute to create special rights for groups of people.

If we want to reduce the degree of hate crimes within our country, this bill does not contain the power to do it. How do we eliminate those emotions that give rise to hate and to hate crimes? In all of my lifetime the only way I have found to do that is by understanding and love. Only one thing will replace hate in the mind and heart of an individual from my experience.

I grew up in my family of seven brothers, my mother and my father. I have raised a family of four with my wife. We have gone through the gamut of feelings and emotions, including frustration, anger, bitterness, all of those negative feelings every human being is subjected to. I know that if I do not sit by a warm heater when I am cold I am not going to get warm. If I do not open my mind and heart to the feelings of love from my family, my neighbours and my colleagues, the bitterness even of this place that comes to me from time to time will get the better of me. I see traces of this.