

Measures Against Crime

When the hon. member for Calgary North (Mr. Williams) congratulated the Quebec crime commission because its work resulted in charges and convictions after bad meat had been sold in Quebec, I realized how our police are hampered by present investigative methods. Why should the police need to go on a witch hunt before they can lay charges in cases where offenders sell bad meat? This shows what has happened in Quebec with regard to the detection of crime. We must strengthen preventive measures and measures leading to the detection of crime. Frankly, I do not think we will accomplish much by appointing special crime commissions.

My party generally supports the legislation, although we do not think it should pass lightly. We do not appreciate the approach of the Minister of Justice to electronic surveillance, and we do not entirely agree with the approach of the Solicitor General to parole. Nevertheless, we recognize the necessity for preventive measures, for better detection and for the treatment of certain individuals.

I end by referring to the speech which the Minister of Justice made a week ago to the Second Commonwealth Caribbean-Canadian Law Conference. As he said the Galilean carpenter said we should never hide our light under a bushel: we should let our light shine so that all men can see our good works. The great Galilean carpenter also said that he came not to abolish the law but to bring perfection. When I consider the actions of the government, including the actions of the Minister of Justice and of the Solicitor General, when I consider what has been done about poverty, housing, employment and our other problems, I realize that the light of the Minister of Justice and of the Solicitor General is dim: they are far from attaining perfection.

Mr. Allmand: Perhaps the hon. member is suggesting I will go to Hull!

Mr. Art Lee (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I rise to enter this debate regarding Bill C-83 because of its importance to me as an urban representative of the city of Vancouver. I am very well aware that the peace and security package will not solve all the problems or the causes of crime. Other hon. members, like the hon. member for Broadview (Mr. Gilbert), have dealt very ably and adequately with the sociological causes of crime and the role of the criminal legal system as an institution in the pluralistic, democratic system that we have in Canada. Suffice it to say that the solution to crime will not be answered by simplistic answers or slogans.

As a representative from the city of Vancouver, I am very familiar with the complaints levelled at the criminal judicial system. To a large extent, these complaints are reactions to spectacular crimes which have occurred in my city and elsewhere in Canada. I am informed by Inspector Cummings of the Vancouver city police that the east end of the city has a higher rate of violent crime than other areas. For the year 1974, violent crime in the federal riding of Vancouver East disclosed the following statistics: homicide, murders and attempts, 15. With regard to sexual assaults, male or female there were, 49, and rape and attempts, 26. That totals 75. Assaults on the police were 50; bodily harm and wounding, 352, for a total of 402. Robber-

[Mr. Gilbert.]

ies, strong-arming, 404; armed hold-up, 103, for a total of 507. The total in this category is 999.

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For the first six months of 1975 violent crime for the federal riding of Vancouver East disclosed the following statistics: homicide, murders and attempts, 9; sexual assault, male or female, 23; rape and attempts, 13; total 36. Assault, police, 27; bodily harm and wounding, 162; total 189. Robberies, strong-arming, 243; armed hold-up, 44; total 287. The total in this category is 521. By reading the total statistics for the city of Vancouver, hon. members will see that the east end of the city is subjected to a high rate of violent crime. For the year 1974, violent crime for the city of Vancouver disclosed the following statistics: homicide, murders and attempts, 52; sexual assault, male or female, 251; rape and attempts, 136; total 387. Assault, police, 100; bodily harm and wounding, 937; total 1,037. Robberies, strong arming, 919; armed hold-up, 510; total 1,429. The total in this category is 2,905. During the first six months of 1975, violent crime for the city of Vancouver disclosed the following statistics: homicide, murders and attempts, total 24; sexual assault, male or female, 129; rape and attempts, 56; total 185. Assault on police, 59; bodily harm and wounding, 476; total 535. Robberies, strong-arming, 436; armed holdups, 276; total 712. The total in this category is 1,456.

What these statistics mean, Mr. Speaker, is that women in my riding are afraid to walk the streets or to park their automobiles in underground parking lots. What these statistics mean is that in my riding, my city and other areas of Canada, there is an aura of insecurity for one's property and one's life and a sense of frustration by many law-abiding citizens that our criminal legal system cares too little about the victim and coddles the criminal. These statistics also represent the unnecessary waste of human life.

Recently, in Vancouver, there was a shooting. The scenario was like a story that could be taken from the plethora of police television programs that we are being inundated with day after day. A man troubled by his inability to participate in our economic system threatens action against his former employer. Threats not being enough, he visits his former employer with a .30-06 rifle. Doreen Garbutt happens to be in his way, and she is "wasted." She becomes a statistic, one of those who will be a number under the category of "homicide and attempts" for the city of Vancouver for 1976. Although I and my colleagues in this House did not know Doreen personally, I feel that we would share with her parents and her friend, Jeffrey, in asking, "Why Doreen?" Another friend of Doreen's, Jack Wasserman, a columnist for the Vancouver *Sun*, expressed it better than I could. I quote:

Up until shortly before noon on Friday, I'd planned to get back to the regular column grind by explaining an absence of two days, and saying how I loved my mother, who died on Wednesday. She'd been out of it for nearly five years, and death was merciful. And then a guy with a .30-06 walked into an office on Fourth Avenue and wasted a friend of mine.

Death comes close to home twice in one week. And you accept it in the way it comes, once with a sigh of relief, because it is an end to suffering, and once with a deep feeling of loss because the victim is young and vital and just happened to be in the way of a bullet that exploded inside her and snuffed out the life of someone who had never done anything to anyone, except give love.