

*Criminal Code*

feels ought not to be amended or that ought to be voted upon separately, without offending the principle of the bill. I think that would give the hon. member and other hon. members an opportunity that they should enjoy, to put their position on the record, which I think ought to be known, and also to require others in the House to vote in respect of that position.

This is again without prejudice to the specific arguments as they may arise, because I think hon. members will realize it might be foolish to speculate what the specific motions might be and what might be the arguments against them in terms of contravention of the principle of the bill. As a general proposition it seems to me that if we could accept it in a situation such as the capital punishment bill until it is further resolved, where the connection was the criminal law and where there were several sections or crimes for which abolition was sought and members were entitled to say, "I am in favour of abolition for some of those sections but not others; therefore when do I get my chance to require the House to side with me or against me?"—if that could be accepted as subject to further clarification by the standing committee on Procedure and Organization, surely it can be accepted in this situation where the hon. member seeks to say, "I may be in favour, for example, of amendments to wiretapping but not to gun control, or to gun control, but not to other offences and provisions with regard to dangerous offenders, for example, that are in the bill."

So, guarding it for the specific arguments that may arise, I wish to stress again that it seems to me the hon. member ought to have the opportunity he seeks through this point of order, which I have set aside, and that that opportunity ought to arise generally without offending the principle of the bill through the use of Standing Order 75(5).

**Hon. Ron Basford (Minister of Justice)** moved that Bill C-51, to amend the Criminal Code, the Customs Tariff, the Parole Act, the Penitentiary Act and the Prisons and Reformatories Act be read the second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs.

He said: Mr. Speaker, with regard to the ruling that has just been made, as Your Honour knows I was unable to participate in the debate on the point of order on Monday night. I want to say that I appreciate the fact that the hon. member for New Westminster (Mr. Leggatt) raised the point of order on Monday so that it could be debated by the House and disposed of by Your Honour before the bill was called. I appreciate that it was done that way rather than raising his point of order today, as that would have thrown the business of the House into some confusion.

The theme of this bill is, of course, familiar to the House and was dealt with extensively in the last session. The theme is obviously the greater protection of the Canadian public through improved measures concerning the prevention of crime and the treatment of criminals. One of the essential features of criminal law in the system of administration of justice that we have in this country is that the Minister of Justice—as I pointed out in a speech on a similar bill last session—is responsible for seeking this protection and ensuring that the law provides such protection involving as it does the

[Mr. Speaker.]

well-being, the safety, and ultimately the very lives of Canadians.

This theme has been debated extensively in the past—both in principle and in detail. Bill C-83 of the last session contained the same four elements—firearms control, electronic surveillance, dangerous offenders, and custody and release of inmates. Sixty-three different speakers were heard at second reading stage of that bill. The Standing Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs studied it for some 9½ weeks, and received in total 38 briefs.

During that time, Mr. Speaker, those briefs instigated amendments made in committee, and the bill was then reported back to the House with a large number of these amendments. Furthermore, in the course of report stage, a number of letters and statements were sent to me, and these have been carefully considered by myself and members of the government. Indeed this new bill's whole existence is predicated on the contributions made during and following the debate on Bill C-83.

On this side of the House I would note the valuable work done in this regard—and it is always dangerous to name some—but I would refer to the valuable work done by the hon. member for Peel-Dufferin-Simcoe (Mr. Milne) and also those who had reservations about the bill and were helpful in making changes in it. In the latter regard, I note the contributions of my colleague from British Columbia, the hon. member for Coast Chilcotin (Mr. Pearsall), the hon. member for Gatineau (Mr. Clermont), the hon. member for Assiniboia (Mr. Goodale), and the hon. member for South Western Nova (Miss Campbell). This only represents a small number of those who were actively involved in the discussions and decisions made on Bill C-83 and the redrafting of the proposals such as are now contained in Bill C-51.

I should like to put on record as well recognition of the considerable work done in this regard by hon. members opposite, especially those who are members of the Standing Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs under the able chairmanship of the hon. member for Windsor-Walkerville (Mr. MacGuigan). The spokesman for the official opposition at the committee was the hon. member for Calgary North (Mr. Woolliams). I should also like to mention the hon. member for New Westminster and the hon. member for Richmond (Mr. Beaudoin). I repeat that it was the contributions of these hon. members along with those of many other members of the House and of the many and varied interest groups and provincial governments that led to the development of the bill now before the House. I hope that hon. members recognize the extent and the value of this effort.

The fact that this amount of work has been done in the House, in committee, and in the various caucuses of the House, combined with the pressing need for legislation of this type will, I trust, cause all hon. members to give these measures the quickest and most deliberate consideration. To that end, I will devote myself on this occasion to touching only briefly on some of the major provisions of the bill.