

responsibility to reflect the ideas and issues which they receive from their constituents.

I think that the problem of drinking and driving is well recognized by most Members of the House. However, the problem does not only occur during the festive season. I think the Bill is being brought in under the guise that it is a short-term problem. If it was a short-term problem the Government should at least have the responsibility to give it the importance it merits by putting forward a separate piece of legislation to address the very serious problem of drinking and driving. Therefore, I do not think it is completely responsible for the Government to come before Parliament with a 50 page Bill, which it wants us to pass in several hours, on the day before we break for the Christmas recess. The Government is asking Members not to use up time by rising to express their views on this matter. That is not responsible government, it is not communication, nor is it consultation. If the Government were serious about having a Bill which would effectively address the question of drinking and driving, it could have introduced the Bill much earlier. It should not have introduced the Bill at the eleventh hour. The Government could have introduced a separate Bill to focus debate on this particular item. There is not enough time to address the various elements which this legislation contains.

I agree that there should be minimum standards on the drinking and driving problem. I differ somewhat from the Hon. Member of the NDP who indicated that we require a perfect Bill and, therefore, the legislation must go to committee. It would be ideal to have perfect legislation on every matter, but perhaps the ideal is not always attainable. We must at least begin to address the problem. However, when the Government does not look at the process, then I think the Government is not completely serious. I would have preferred it if the Government had provided several days in which to debate this Bill. I would have preferred it if the legislation had dealt with one item, rather than the sophisticated and far-encompassing type of Bill which is before the House today.

When we talk about drinking and driving, we are talking about public education which goes far beyond the Christmas holidays. That public education should continue 365 days of the year. We must educate people about the serious effects of drinking and driving. Some Members have already pointed out that 25 per cent of the drivers on Canadian roads drink and that 6 per cent are legally impaired. That suggests that we have some distance to go in our public education efforts. We have some distance to go in telling Canadians that drinking and driving do not go hand in hand. But, on the other side of the equation, we have a Government that removed \$700,000 from public programming and public education.

I would submit that the Government cannot have it both ways. It cannot be serious about drinking and driving legislation, and communicating and consulting with the public, and at the same time remove \$700,000 from public education efforts. The Government cannot do both at the same time.

There is a lot of emphasis being placed on the whole question of greater and stiffer penalties. That is a start, but

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research suggests that the commission of an impaired driving offence is often an early indication of alcohol abuse and dependency. Therefore, we must place a greater emphasis on the question of treatment, as opposed to something which happens after the fact. Perhaps we should be initiating rather than reacting. It is fine and dandy to discuss stiffer fines and penalties after the tragic accident has occurred. However, that would suggest that there is trouble with some government mechanisms. It suggests that Government is merely a reactionary body. "Why didn't you act before?" is a criticism which is often levelled. Perhaps, the Government is introducing stiffer fines and penalties because of the percentage of accidents. Certainly that is a deterrent. Perhaps it is a deterrent to those who abuse the laws, who abuse drink and who abuse the privilege of driving an automobile. But we should look at the problem from a forward-looking policy perspective, and not simply focus on the penalties and fines which will be charged after the accidents have taken place. We must have the sense to go further than that. We must learn from those accidents. We should not simply increase the fines from \$100 to \$200 today, and from \$300 to \$400 tomorrow. We should nip the disease in the bud.

I notice that my time is becoming somewhat limited—

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Marchi: I hear some Hon. Members laughing. In his speech this morning, the Minister of Justice (Mr. Crosbie) placed great emphasis on the fact that we on this side of the House were not taking this Bill seriously. Yet Members on the government side are laughing. They say one thing when the TV cameras are on them, but they certainly act differently when the cameras are off them.

Mr. McKnight: It is the content of your speech which we find strange, not the Bill.

Mr. Marchi: It is also interesting that while the Government managed to amalgamate a number of different elements in this legislation rather than concentrating on one particular aspect, it also managed to leave some things out of the legislation. As critic for the Ministry of Multiculturalism, I find it strange that there was nothing said respecting the hate propaganda literature which infests this country from coast to coast. In the Liberal Government's introduction last February—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The House will now proceed to the consideration of Private Member's Business.

Mr. Speyer: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I would like some clarification, because it was my understanding that this matter would be referred to committee today. Is there unanimous consent of the House to refer this matter to committee today?

● (1700)

An Hon. Member: No.

Some Hon. Members: The Liberals say no.