

Government Orders

As a consequential amendment to the Customs Tariff Act the definition of child pornography will be incorporated in schedule VII to the tariff. This will provide customs officials with the necessary authority to ban the importation of these materials into Canada. This, of course, will be bad news for those individuals who would love to try to import this sort of material into the country. We have seen to it that they will continue to be blocked.

In summary, Bill C-128 will amend the Criminal Code to include a specific definition of child pornography and offences for the possession, production, distribution and sale of such materials as defined. It would subject those accused of these offences to greater penalties upon conviction than those currently associated with the obscenity sections of the Criminal Code.

• (1515)

We need to reinforce the message that children are in need of protection, that they are not appropriate sexual partners. Conduct which fosters and exploits the harm and humiliation to which children are exposed must be punished.

Bill C-128 supports the government's commitment to the well-being of children as outlined in the protection component of the Brighter Futures initiative which was announced by the Minister of National Health and Welfare in April of last year.

This bill is yet another step in ensuring a brighter future for all of Canada's children. I urge the members of this House to deal with this legislation expeditiously. If and when this becomes the law of Canada, and I believe it will, hon. members can take the satisfaction of going home this summer knowing that this country is a better place in which to live because we have criminalized the possession of child pornography.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Langlois: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): The hon. parliamentary secretary on a point of order.

Mr. Langlois: Mr. Speaker, if there is any time left when we have completed second reading of Bill C-128 today, I would like to request the unanimous consent of the House to proceed with third reading of Bill C-123 later today.

[*English*]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Does the hon. member have unanimous consent?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Mr. George S. Rideout (Moncton): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise on Bill C-128. I guess we could say that it is about time. There has been a flood of justice legislation over the last number of weeks. We are always faced with time constraints in trying to get legislation passed before Parliament is through for good and we are into an election.

We on this side are faced with the conundrum of not wanting to pass legislation in haste but at the same time wanting to do something that is good. We faced that dilemma with Bill C-126, the stalking bill. The committee met until last night at 10 o'clock to try to get a good bill before Parliament and finished before the session is over.

This is another example of a piece of good legislation that probably needs some fine-tuning by committee. I only hope the government will allow enough study of this particular bill while it is in committee. I hope it will not adopt the jackboot tactics it has used with other legislation, particularly Bill C-90, of trying to force legislation that needs to be studied through in a matter of hours or minutes.

That being said, we are supportive of this bill going to committee and receiving the necessary study. I do not think anyone would question that pornography has been with us almost since the beginning of history, from the time we learned how to draw.

We have seen the pornography industry grow from a \$5 million industry in the seventies to a \$10 billion business today. That is reprehensible when one considers that kind of money is generated from that kind of trade.

What is really even more reprehensible is the growth in child pornography. For that we say to the government: Good for you, that you are bringing this legislation forward. One thing that is a little irksome is that in the minister's own background documentation it says that the government has been urged to bring this legislation forward since 1984. Here we are in 1993, in the dying days of this Parliament, and now we are presented with the bill.