

not there, but it voted against those positive recommendations that came from this party.

The member tells me that it is not true. We will let the *Minutes and Proceedings* of the committee verify what the situation is. All that I want to say from this side is that we are very, very supportive of legislation which keeps the victims as part of the process in a sense that they can feel the necessary protections of the law and that they have some input into the process. As my colleague opposite has said, the victim becomes a victim of the system as the process unfolds. We did not want to see that happen.

We heard very emotional testimony from the victims of Larry Takahashi. My colleague is more than correct when he says that the system failed those victims and failed them badly. We proposed a strengthening of the law so that the system would be more responsive.

We looked at temporary absences, and the government was very quick to point out to us that temporary absences have a very high success ratio. We drove home the point during the debates in committee on Legere and Gingras that when there is a failure, in most cases it is a tragic failure.

The government prepared a report, the Pepino report, and we on this side co-operated in seeing that those changes and amendments which would strengthen and protect society in the temporary absence situation were, in fact, adopted.

I would say that, as I think back over all of the evidence that we heard and the ways that we approached the problems of parole and temporary absences and all of those problems, we have been most supportive in many of the areas that the government has embarked upon. But I think that as you go through Bill C-311 that it does not really deal with some of the real root problems. Mr. Speaker, I know that you would be concerned about this. We were advised by the Canadian Bar Association that Bill C-36, and therefore this bill, is putting the cart before the horse. It is dealing with parole and with temporary absences before we have dealt with sentencing.

**An hon. member:** There are some sentencing provisions within the legislation.

**Mr. Rideout:** My colleague tells me that there are some sentencing provisions within this legislation. I say to him that the Canadian Bar Association asked the

### *Private Members' Business*

Minister of Justice to bring forward legislation on sentencing and not to proceed with all these other aspects of parole such as temporary absences.

Logic dictates. It does not take a whole lot of logic to realize the first thing that happens is not that the system deals with how we are going to let the person out of prison. It deals first with how long the person is going to be in prison.

Therefore, we should be dealing with sentencing so that we will know what is going to transpire, the length of sentence and then the type of system we have to put in to allow people to be re-established and reintroduced into society.

Instead it is the cart before the horse and that is wrong. When the Minister of Justice appeared before the committee, I asked her the following question: "When will we have sentencing legislation?" Her response to me was: "Soon". Soon is in the eyes of the beholder.

We were told months ago that the sentencing legislation would be brought in. We know we have a summer break and some time in the fall and all other things that are ongoing. Therefore, the chances of sentencing legislation coming before this House and ultimately being dealt with and enacted are very remote. We probably will not see sentencing legislation until after the next election. That is wrong.

We on this side are saying: "Let us not play politics with victims. Let us not play politics with inmates. Let us not play politics with this attitude of law and order that the government has come forward with over the last number of months".

We hear all the business of law and order. They are going to keep society safe. They indicate how things are going to happen and tell the citizens of the country not to worry. Then, when we look at the legislation, at what it says and at what members do when they deal with that legislation, we find they were idle words and nothing really happens.

We on this side of the House say: "Look at the record of the positive things we have tried to put in as far as victims are concerned, the rights of inmates, the corrections to the sentencing system, and weigh them against what has been done by the party opposite and see that the government is very wanting".