

*Adjournment Debate*

Just a few years ago this Government spent thousands of dollars providing staff from the Ministry of Justice to help one man in Manitoba defend himself against a traffic ticket. Yet there is not one penny allocated from the Minister of Justice or the Solicitor General to protect the families of those victims who have been murdered or who have been raped. The Government has not set aside money for that. If this Solicitor General wants to be the friend of the defenceless, it is time to set his values in order and to start providing a defence for the defenceless, not for those who would rape and plunder our society.

**Hon. Bob Kaplan (Solicitor General of Canada):** Mr. Speaker, in spite of the criticism which I have received from the Hon. Member, I welcome very much his recognition of a very important fact which he has denied until tonight. Tonight in his opening remarks, and throughout his remarks, he finally admitted that this Government, and this Solicitor General, are getting tougher with dangerous offenders. In the past he suggested we were getting softer on them. Tonight, he finally recognizes we are getting tougher on them. He asks why it has taken so long? I cannot and do not propose to explain why it has taken many years to do these things. I will only say that they are being done. I am responsible for doing them and I am very pleased they are being done. I would like to deal with a few of them.

• (2210)

The Hon. Member asked why, in the case of the dangerous offender provisions, I was relying on provincial Attorneys General to do the job, and why I was not taking responsibility myself for having more Crown Attorneys seek dangerous offender classification of accused persons who are considered dangerous. There is a simple reason for this, Mr. Speaker. It is that the Crown Attorneys work for the provincial Governments. Those who prosecute these cases against dangerous offenders under the Criminal Code are always, 100 per cent of the time, in the employ of provincial Governments and report to provincial Attorneys General. That is why I directed my remarks to the Ministers responsible for them, namely, the provincial Attorneys General. I should like to do it myself and I should like to see it done, but legally the authority for those provincial Crown Attorneys is that of the provincial Attorneys General.

I do not think the Hon. Member knows the law very well but when he reflects on this I think he will understand why I chose to write to the provincial Attorneys General instead of writing to the people who are responsible to them.

The Hon. Member referred to the toughening of the mandatory supervision rules. One of those policies is totally within the responsibility of the Parole Board. I am very happy with the step it has taken and I support it. I would like to have seen that done years ago, but it is being done now and it is being challenged in the court. I look forward to the result of that challenge.

I have also taken a bill to the Senate to toughen mandatory supervision, and I know that the Hon. Member will support it.

In all, I am glad to see that he finally recognizes that the Government and I, as Solicitor General, are getting tough on the dangerous offender.

ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE—REQUEST FOR FEDERAL-  
PROVINCIAL CO-OPERATION ON ISSUE. (B) REQUEST THAT  
MINISTER TAKE ACTION

**Mr. Pat Nowlan (Annapolis Valley-Hants):** Mr. Speaker, I must say it is rather ironic that tonight during the adjournment debate we have the Solicitor General (Mr. Kaplan) in a sort of three-hit tango on the different issues before the House. I listened to the eloquent plea of my colleague for Surrey-White Rock-North Delta (Mr. Friesen) about mandatory leave and other problems in the administration of Justice. I want to speak on something that is perhaps appropriate because of the season, and that is the blood money that could flow to the murderer who tries to profit from his books.

In the restricted time allotted to me I extend the olive branch of fellowship and/or goodwill of the season to the very harassed Solicitor General. I believe he feels the same compassion as I and other Members of the House and, indeed, all Canadians do for the tremendous problem regarding the civil liberties of the individual as opposed to the collective decency of the community, when a confessed murderer comes on national television and speaks of his crime. When someone says, as I heard and saw "Oh yes, I killed but I killed sincerely because of a political cause".

I do not try to ignore the problems involved in resolving this issue. The reason I take the time of the House on this adjournment debate tonight to bring this subject up is that no matter how much the Solicitor General and others share my compassion and believe that there is something to be said for the defenceless community and the victims of the murderer, I believe it is wrong to have this confessed murderer come on the screen and say, "Yes, it is the Christmas season and we have to profit from the book sales and therefore we have a book to publish." I felt sick, seeing the reporters at that press conference go up and ask for an autographed copy of the book.

That is why I got myself very directly involved in the first question that was asked about the specific case of Simard, the confessed FLQ killer, coming on the screens of the land less than two or three weeks ago at a press conference in Montreal. Those paragons of virtue, the press gallery, the fourth estate, exhibited no morals whatsoever, going up for their autographed copy. That part is not within the purview of the Solicitor General.

• (2215)

I am trying to bring to the attention of the Solicitor General tonight, in as calm a way as I can, what frankly is a new phenomenon, certainly in the western world and perhaps in Canada. We no longer have capital punishment. Therefore a lot of people, a lot of killers, walk the streets who would not have walked the streets had capital punishment been in place. We have the phenomenon of television through which one can