

*Private Members' Business*

reinforcing the ideas of the right, ideas that our young people really need measures to control them better.

I cannot get over this. Before coming out with such things, did anyone think about the message we are giving to our young people at the present time? Ten to twelve year olds are still just children, or adolescents at most.

The hon. member is suggesting a change in the definition of a child and an adolescent by lowering the age. At 10 they would be recognized as adolescents.

• (1355)

True, our children are bigger than they used to be because they are healthier and better fed. It was recently reported that their IQs might be 10 per cent higher as well, for a variety of reasons, than what they were 20 years ago. I am willing to agree that these conditions are improving, but I still feel ten years is too young.

I am sure that this has not succeeded in influencing the Minister of Justice and therefore is not likely to be implemented. I trust that this debate will not influence others. One never knows if, after Quebec becomes sovereign, another party, the Reform Party for instance, were to come to power in Canada, well then it would be—

**Mr. Gagnon:** It would be dreadful.

**Mr. Dubé:** Although I did not put words in the mouth of the hon. member for Bonaventure—Îles-de-la-Madeleine, for once I agree with him. It would be dreadful to see such measures made more stringent.

We in Quebec have a tradition. Although we apply the Canadian Criminal Code to those under the age of 18 years, there is a provision for rehabilitation. When a crime has been committed by a young person, it must be interpreted as a sign to the parents and to society that something must be done for this young person.

I recall the words of a member of this House, whom I shall not name as he is not present. You would have cautioned me, Mr. Speaker, that we must not speak of the absent, but once warned, twice shy.

Who among us can boast that we did nothing bad as children. It is true that there are some extremely isolated cases, for instance the two young boys aged between 10 and 12 who committed a murder in England. This is unacceptable, but these are isolated cases. Let us have a look at the statistics.

What is the real state of affairs? According to statistics issued by the Conseil permanent de la jeunesse du Québec, in 1992–1993, 35 per cent of violent crimes in Canada were committed by individuals aged 25 to 34. On the other hand, the

12 to 17 year old group was responsible for less than 15 per cent of these crimes. I repeat, less than 15 per cent.

Excluding the elderly, the very old—I am sorry to say the very old, but I will soon be joining them, since in 12 years I will be 60—statistics issued by Statistics Canada show that young people are less violent than any other age group in terms of serious violent crimes. Let us keep this in mind.

I do not want to impute motives to the member, but he is jumping on the bandwagon in favour of harsher measures to better control our young people. Was increased funding for prevention and better education ever considered? Were increased resources in these areas ever considered?

I did not see anything to that effect coming from this government. Unfortunately, some provincial governments want to cut this sort of services. A case in point is what is going on in Ontario. I have not closely checked it out but I understand that Alberta has made drastic cuts in these areas. This is a dangerous trend.

We all have kids and we know how firm we have to be with them. We cannot be naive. We have to be firm with them, and, as adults, give them good advice. We must not always think in terms of punishment. We must give ourselves better means to help those who tell us that society leaves to be desired, that they have problems and need our help. I think we should debate those things.

One last point. Time flies and I have only one minute left.

I have kids living at home and friends in the same situation and I am always amazed to see how easy it is for them to view violent movies. Why can we not take adequate measures in that area?

• (1400)

I cannot give you specific statistics today, but I am sure that the many murders and attempts at violent acts that a young person can see depicted on film in one evening have a negative influence on our youth.

Why are we not conducting serious studies to limit the influence of such programs on our youth? I would be an interesting approach. We could at least try.

After all, we did bring these kids into the world. There is a song which says: "We gave them birth, maybe we could listen to them". So maybe we could listen to what they have to say and try to find out why these violent individuals act the way they do, even though they are only a minority.

We must, as a community, be it Quebec or Canada, take the necessary steps to help these young people. If I am still here later on—which is doubtful, but if not here perhaps elsewhere—