

Royal Assent

Criminal acts can be differentiated as one type of criminal act or another in terms of their anti-social consequences. This bill is telling our judges that is what they should look to. In that sense, I support it. It is intelligent and it is needed in the country at this time. The police in my riding are telling us that these types of crimes are on the rise and that this bill is needed.

Mr. Thompson: The police are telling you this bill is no good.

Mr. Graham: Believe me, the police in Toronto are telling us it is needed. The member is fooling himself if he does not understand that.

[Translation]

Mr. Réal Ménard (Hochelaga—Maisonneuve, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I understand that, because of what is yet to come, I will not be able to talk for 20 minutes consecutively and that you are going to interrupt me to allow those who so desire to go to the Senate for Royal Assent.

• (1720)

Allow me to begin by saying that no party line or differences in parties could prevent me from thanking the minister in all sincerity today for his show of courage, firstly for having persevered, because we all know that if any bill raised controversy or stirred up heated debate, the bill that is now before us did.

I am very aware that the minister showed great courage, great compassion. Allow me to thank him, despite the fact that we belong to different parties. I thank him on three levels. First, as a parliamentarian, second, as a citizen, and third, as a homosexual.

I believe, and I hope that all of the terms I will use are parliamentary, yes, I believe that one would really have to be obtuse, stubborn or live on another planet to not realize that some people in our society are the victims of violence. Some people in our society are the victims of violence because they are homosexuals.

Some people may turn a blind eye to this fact, but that does not take away from our duty as parliamentarians not to do as they do. Therefore, I simply reiterate my thanks to the Minister of Justice. My sincere thanks for his courage. Obviously, I will not make a habit of it, but this is a case where sincere thanks are due.

I would also like to say, for the benefit of our Reform friends, that—we all must admit that they are actually quite clumsy in their efforts to understand this reality—it would be interesting for them to come spend a day with the gay community. I would also be tempted to say, if it is parliamentary, that they have actually been rather abrasive in their attempts to remodel Quebec's and Canada's democratic institutions.

It would be quite informative for our Reform colleagues to come and spend a day in the company of a number of spokespersons of the gay community, to cross their white picket fences and come to the gay part of town. I am giving them an open invitation.

I am the hon. member for Hochelaga—Maisonneuve, but just beside it, there is the riding of our Bloc Québécois whip, a nice guy. His riding includes Montreal's gay neighbourhood. I invite them to drop in, if any of them wish to do the utterly logical thing, which is to try to really understand what it is all about.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger): We will continue this debate after our visit to the Senate.

THE ROYAL ASSENT

[English]

A message was delivered by the Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod as follows:

Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Deputy to the Governor General desires the immediate attendance of this honourable House in the chamber of the honourable the Senate.

Accordingly, the Speaker with the House went up to the Senate chamber.

And being returned:

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger): I have the honour to inform the House that when the House did attend His Honour the Deputy to his Excellency the Governor General in the Senate chamber, His Honour was pleased to give, in Her Majesty's name, the royal assent to certain bills:

Bill C-43, an act to amend the Lobbyists Registration Act and to make related amendments to other acts—Chapter No. 12.

Bill C-44, an act to amend the Immigration Act and the Citizenship Act and to make a consequential amendment to the Customs Act—Chapter No. 15.

Bill C-53, an act to establish the Department of Canadian Heritage and to amend and repeal certain other acts—Chapter No. 11.

Bill C-75, an act to amend the Farm Improvement and Marketing Co-Operatives Loans Act—Chapter No. 13.

Bill C-81, an act to amend an act respecting the Buffalo and Fort Erie Public Bridge Company—Chapter No. 14.

Bill C-97, an act for granting to Her Majesty certain sums of money for the public service of Canada for the financial year ending March 31, 1996—Chapter No. 16.

[Translation]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger): It being 5.30 p.m., the House will now proceed to the consideration of Private Members' Business as listed in today's Order Paper.