

*Criminal Code*

issue of procurement and without dealing with the issue of customers in a very direct way is in and of itself flying in the face of all of the recommendations of the Fraser Report.

Even if the Government is insistent upon adopting a one-tier approach to the problem, and if it refuses to look at the comprehensive recommendations made in the Fraser Commission Report, then, at best, it should introduce amendments to this piece of legislation which would ensure equal treatment of the pimps, the customers and the prostitutes. As long as there is a single piece of legislation which will light out simply on the issue of solicitation against the prostitutes, then we will not reach the root of the problem of prostitution, nor will we deal with the difficulties intrinsic in street solicitation. I would ask the Hon. Member for Vancouver Centre, who has walked the streets of Vancouver, to tell us how many prostitutes are operating out there without a pimp in the background, without a purveyor or without customers. It takes a trio to operate in this particular situation in dealing with street solicitation. Unfortunately, the Bill before us makes a feeble attempt to deal with only one third of the group involved in this activity.

Again, the task force, in a report which was unanimously endorsed on the weekend by the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, expressed some concerns with respect to the decision of this Government to target legislation toward prostitutes without looking at the entire question. They make certain recommendations. The first is that they have an opportunity to meet directly with the Minister of Justice to address some of the specific concerns related to amendments to this Bill. They do not particularly want Bill C-49 to proceed at this time. However, if it is to proceed, then they are encouraging the Government to at least include recommendations 59 and 60 of the Fraser Commission Report which cover the areas of the purveyors as well as the customers of prostitution. The task force recommends that the effectiveness of Bill C-49 be reviewed in a period of two years following the introduction of the legislation. However, before that happens, the Federation would like to have a chance to meet directly with the Minister of Justice with the intent of developing a more comprehensive approach to the problem of prostitution.

It is clear that prostitution, whether it be street solicitation or other forms of prostitution, is not a unique problem to Vancouver, Halifax, or nice neighbourhoods. If looked at historically, the issue of street solicitation only became an issue when the prostitutes started to move into "nice" neighbourhoods. In many neighbourhoods where the political clout of the residents has not been as strong or as effective over the years, prostitutes have carried on their business for a number of years. Prostitution was not discovered in 1978, 1979 or in the decades previous to that. Recently in my own community in Hamilton a concern was expressed in a neighbourhood which certainly could not be described as an historic neighbourhood. It is a neighbourhood of working people who expressed the same kinds of concerns about the intrusion into their private lives as has occurred in Vancouver and Halifax.

• (1630)

The Hon. Member for Trinity (Miss Nicholson) has often spoken to me about some of the difficulties faced in the Kensington market neighbourhood in Toronto and how she and others would like to find a way of solving the problem in the short and long term. I think it is clear, Mr. Speaker, that this rather piecemeal and in fact discriminatory piece of legislation which deals specifically with prostitution without including in its legislative target the customers, the purveyors and the procurers of sex, does not deal with the problem. I would suggest to the Hon. Member for Vancouver Centre, as well as other Hon. Members who have been involved in this dossier for a number of years, that when we have the kind of strong objection raised by organizations like the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, which has been in the front line of the fight from the moment it became apparent that it was a public problem, there is something intrinsically wrong with this legislation which must be corrected before we can expect to see all-Party support.

I believe it would be wrong and unfair of the Government to suggest that Members of the Liberal and New Democratic Parties were not interested in trying to find meaningful solutions to the problem of prostitution. Organizations like the Federation of Canadian Municipalities unanimously suggested that this particular piece of legislation will not do the job. People like the Mayor of Vancouver who were at that meeting and endorsed this task force recommendation are calling upon the Government not to introduce Bill C-49 without some very specific amendments and have expressed concern that even with amendments, Bill C-49 will not address the basic problem of juvenile prostitution, delinquency and all the other inherent social problems we saw very fully explored in the Fraser commission report. In a sense, the Government is throwing up a smoke screen. It is trying to address a problem through legislation which does not do the job. Across Canada that appears to be an emerging consensus, not only from women's groups and from groups representing, for example, the question of civil liberties for Canadians, but also from the Federation of Canadian Municipalities which has been elected to speak for the major communities across this country which are specifically facing the problem.

I would like to read for the record some of the names of people who were on that task force so we know we are not just speaking about partisan Liberal opposition: Baryl Gaffney from the City of Nepean who was the chairman of the task force; Harold Macdonald from the City of Winnipeg; Donna MacArthur from Prince Edward Island; Jack Layton from the City of Toronto; Larry Gilchrist from the City of Calgary and a staff member from the Federation of Canadian Municipalities. These people are dealing on a daily basis with the direct complaints in their communities, and who are dealing on a very specific basis with the kind of problems which were outlined by the Hon. Member for Niagara Falls (Mr. Nicholson). When they express serious concerns and reservations about Bill C-49, they are echoing the sum and substance of the statements which have been made in this House and outside