

Proceedings on Adjournment Motion

• (10:00 p.m.)

**PROCEEDINGS ON
ADJOURNMENT MOTION**

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Béchard): Order. In accordance with Standing Order 40 a motion to adjourn the house is deemed to have been made and seconded at this time. Therefore, the question is: "That this house do now adjourn."

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Mr. Howard (Skeena): Mr. Speaker, I wonder if I might rise on a matter of order to ask, through you, for the consent of the house and the government, considering the indicated business for this evening included the vitally important matter of housing, to the house sitting on for a length of time for the minister to make his opening remarks with respect to the bill or bills with which it is his intention to proceed. I see him shaking his head, indicating he is not interested in housing.

Some hon. Members: Shame.

Mr. Howard (Skeena): I am only putting forward this proposition so that the country and the members of the house will have an opportunity to study his views overnight and be in a position to comment on them tomorrow.

Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale): Mr. Speaker, a more sensible proposition than that advanced by the hon. member for Skeena (Mr. Howard) would be that we give second reading to the bill amending the Patent Act, so that the minister in charge of housing and other hon. members might have a full day tomorrow to speak on the amendments to the National Housing Act. If the house would give that agreement we might continue until the second reading of the bill with respect to the Patent Act has been completed.

Mr. Howard (Skeena): If the house leader would tie in with that suggestion the assurance the opening statement of the minister in charge of housing would be given tonight we would be agreeable. Housing is a lot more important than the silly bill we have before us now.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Béchard): Order. The hon. member for Papineau (Mr. Ouellet).

A motion to adjourn the house under Standing Order 40 deemed to have been moved.

[Translation]

ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE—COMPENSATION FOR INNOCENT VICTIMS OF CRIMINAL ACTS

Mr. André Ouellet (Papineau): Mr. Speaker, every year, in Canada, and for a certain number of years, about 40,000 crimes with violence are reported to the police. In the majority of cases, the offenders are arrested, tried and imprisoned. Thus, they pay their so-called debt to society.

Our police corps, our government officers devote a great deal of time, effort and money to prevent crime, to capture the offender and then to rehabilitate him. Unfortunately, we have paid so far very little attention to the victims of criminal acts in Canada.

If the offender must pay his debt to society, it would be proper, I think, for society, in return, to compensate in some way that person or those who are victims of the criminal act of this offender. I think that the Canadian government should study carefully the report prepared on this subject by the Faculty of Law of Osgoode Hall.

Several countries, including New Zealand and Great Britain, several American States, namely California, New York and Massachusetts, have adopted laws providing for the payment of a compensation to the victims of criminal acts.

I feel that Canada should follow suit. Besides, several Canadian provinces guarantee a certain sum of money to the widow of a man killed by a non-insured driver. The legislators were right to provide for the payment of a compensation in such a case. They should now do the same for the victims of the most dreadful crimes afflicting our society.

Of course, financial compensation will not redress all the wrong suffered. I have precisely in mind the case of a personal friend who was the victim of a criminal act. In his case the wrong is immeasurable and irreparable. His widow will probably receive a certain financial compensation but this is little in relation to the loss suffered. Still, it would have been shocking if she had received nothing in such a case, since she has four young children.