

Weeks later, Statistics Canada released the results of its first national survey on male violence against women, the first survey of its kind anywhere in the world, and one which lifted the veil of secrecy surrounding criminal offences against women.

Late last year, with Health Canada's support, the London Family Court Clinic launched ASAP nationwide, a school-based anti-violence program. Manuals and videos are now in the hands of thousands of school boards, principals and teachers to help them put in place violence prevention programs.

Elsewhere, the Royal Newfoundland Constabulary began training sessions for its officers; the Canadians Teachers Federation distributed booklets; the Ontario Medical Association began to educate its doctors; federal and provincial governments funded a series of conferences for judges. At the first conference in 1992, the judges ate lunch in a shelter for battered women.

• (1410)

Last week, the government moved to establish stricter gun controls — a sensible legislative initiative which merits our congratulations and support.

Five years ago many, if not most, Canadians were tempted to view the stunning display of violence in Montreal as the random act of a madman. We now see that it was a dramatic end-point on a continuum of acts of violence that have been experienced by one in every two Canadian women. The slaughter at L'École Polytechnique has awakened many Canadians from deep denial. We now see that violence against women in Canadian society is a pernicious epidemic and societally rooted. Although measures have been introduced to curb violence since that day, an impact has not yet been felt, as the families of the Montreal victims have pointed out.

The Canadian panel proposed a national action plan based on zero tolerance of violence, and called on government to respond within three months of its final report. There is still no formal response, although it has been promised.

The Justice Minister has also listened to the legitimate outrage when our high court and, subsequently, lower courts, heard cases of unconscionable violence against women and allowed the defence of extreme drunkenness. No action has yet been taken, although it is promised.

In this morning's *Globe and Mail*, Michael Valpy quotes Dr. Paul Steinhauer, a psychiatrist at Toronto's Hospital for Sick Children, in his testimony before the parliamentary committee examining the reform of social programs. Dr. Steinhauer testified to widespread developmental failure in Canada, school drop-out rates, psychiatric disorders, suicide, rates of youth crime and violence, and the effects of child poverty. He made the crucial connection that the quality of caring that children receive in the first few years of life is the most important single factor contributing to their subsequent cognitive, emotional and social development. He posed the question as to whether Canadians should create institutions to enhance conditions that would allow

children to get a good start in life, or whether we should continue to pay later for the consequences of developmental failure.

Marc Lépine was the product of a mother-battered and child-battered family. On the anniversary of the Montreal massacre that he committed, we cannot lose sight of the need to support social institutions that can prevent the type of conditions that produce the Marc Lépinés.

THE HONOURABLE LUCIEN BOUCHARD

MEDIA HANDLING OF NEWS OF ILLNESS OF THE HONOURABLE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION

Hon. H.A. Olson: Honourable senators, I should like to make a few comments about the way in which some members of the media handled the news of Lucien Bouchard's illness last weekend.

At the outset, I wish to say that I do not pretend to speak for anyone. This is my opinion, assisted by a few dozen phone calls that I received from Alberta as a result of what was happening.

I am told that several commentators and interviewers had a few things to say about Mr. Bouchard's political future. I did not see them all. However, I did see the CBC's *Prime Time News Magazine* last Friday night, hosted by Pamela Wallin. Quite frankly, I was appalled. I was ashamed and embarrassed. Mostly, I was disgusted by the insensitivity and lack of human decency that was displayed while Mr. Bouchard was lying in hospital, fighting for his life. There were persistent comments made about his political future and the future of sovereignty.

I do not know what the political ramifications of this business may be. I know that when Mr. Parizeau went to the hospital, he did not get in to see Mr. Bouchard. He was asked about the future of sovereignty and all that. He said, "While Mr. Bouchard is fighting for his life, I will not make any comment. There will come a time to make a comment, but it is not now when his family, his wife and children are listening."

I hold no brief for Mr. Bouchard's political objectives. However, it is a fact that he and I are both members of the human race. In my view, he and his family have the right to be treated with dignity and respect.

The CBC paid for this program out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund, from which it receives \$1.2 billion annually. I am disgusted. What can we do? I do not know what we can do. I know that, in the past, when a politician disagreed with their programming, they would say, "The public has a right to know, and it is our obligation to find out and let them know." That argument cannot be made in this case.

I do not know what we can do. What I do know is that a lot of people in my part of Canada were just as disgusted as I was while watching this program. If I had some control over the CBC, I would cut its budget by a couple of hundred million dollars. Frankly, I do not want the federal treasury to be paying for this kind of programming.