

tion we believe Canadians deserve and to make it consistent with the Charter of Rights.

There is support for this proposal all across the country. Petitions have been introduced in Parliament from all parts of the country; there have been thousands of signatures. I am very happy to report that the people who supported this Private Member's Bill include women and men of all ages, church groups, unions, voluntary associations, large organizations, small organizations, all kinds of people. I am very pleased to be able to report that there is a great deal of support for this Bill among men. I have had many men in my own constituency say that they are very glad to see that I am taking up the issue of pornography and taking it up very vigorously. Male constituents of mine have told me that they are horrified and ashamed by pornography.

It is women who are the prime victims of pornography, it is women who are the physical victims of abuse, as well as a growing number of children. But it is still largely women who are the victims. However, the role for men in pornography is as the "pornographer", as the aggressor. Decent men do not like to be identified with this role. Men too are demeaned by pornography. Pornography is demeaning to men. It is also an insult to their dignity. To women it is an insult not only to their dignity but also to their security and sometimes to their lives. The wielder of the whip is demeaned but the receiver of the blows bears the scars.

Let us be very clear about what is the problem. I am talking about pornography, especially violent pornographic abuse with real victims. The issue is not sexual explicitness; it is coercive relationships, it is about abuse. Pornography is growing in quantity and it is getting worse in quality. We also have growing evidence of the harmful effects of pornography. There are psychological studies which show that men who are exposed to pornography, to pornographic films, video cassettes and so forth, are more likely to injure, to hurt a woman or a child. It has been shown that men who are exposed to pornographic films are more likely to accept the rape myth that rape does not really happen, that the women really liked it after all, that aggression is all right because the woman comes around in the end.

Indeed, this has been found to be the most dangerous kind of pornography because it is the one that excuses actual sexual assaults, at least in the mind of the person who commits them. It is false, it is a lie. Pornography does lie. We must face that lie and denounce that lie.

I want to relate the issue of pornography to the broader issue of sex role stereotyping. I was a member of the CRTC task force on sex role stereotyping in the media. It was set up in response to a large number of complaints which women had been raising with regard to their portrayal generally in the media. These were complaints about under-representation in serious programming, under-representation in the news and public affairs, not treating women's issues seriously as real news issues and of course over-representation and ridiculous representation of women in advertising. These were the issues which prompted the task force on sex stereotyping. It was only

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at the end of a three-year study that the pornography issue really became clear, that it emerged. Thus, public members of that task force came up with the following statement about pornography:

● (1530)

Male dominance and female submissiveness are at the very heart of the stereotypes of men and women. Pornography is the extreme portrayal of dominance and exploitation of women's sexuality. Pornography, or any portrayal of violence against women, is the ultimate expression of dominance submissiveness, the objectification and the abuse of women. As such, pornography or the portrayal of violence against women has no place in the broadcast media.

Very specifically, the public press members recommended that sex be added to the list in the broadcasting regulations. This, of course, has not been done and that is why we have proceeded to this Bill this afternoon. We worry that all the good that the task force on sexual stereotyping did could be undone by the proliferation of pornography. We are seeing some improvements in the portrayal of women in the media, but all of these good effects could be reversed if late at night we see adult programming that is pornographic and demeans women in a much more serious way.

Mr. Speaker, we could move from ring-around-the-collar on the old television to noose-around-the-neck in the adult programming. Women used to be portrayed as being excessively clean. We worry now about women being portrayed as excessively bloody.

In the old television, women sought to get male approval by being good housewives. Now it goes very fast, women are simply beaten into submission in pornography. In the old days, television showed women as the chatelaines of middle-class domesticity. Shall we give this up now for women as inmates of the torture chamber?

[*Translation*]

There is the matter of freedom of expression. Yesterday, in answer to my question, the representative for the Minister of Communications raised the point of freedom of expression being entrenched in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. We all know there is a limit to freedom of expression. We do not have the right to shout "Fire" in a movie theatre. We are not allowed to make libellous statements about another person. We are not allowed to counsel someone to commit murder, assault or any other crime. The individual's right to life and security is more important.

I think the Minister of Communications has been somewhat hypocritical in his comments. He raised the issue of freedom of expression when women demanded legal protection. The same protection already exists for minorities and religions. Why the double standard? Does the Minister of Communications mean that minority groups and religions deserve to be protected by law and that women do not? And if that is his position, I would ask him to say so clearly to Canadian women, and if it is not, it is up to the Minister of Communications to take a stand and to support this Private Member's Bill today.