

Government Orders

We are talking about threats here. We are talking about a bill where we are trying to eliminate threats to Canadians and situations where Canadians are threatened. We refuse to look at other jurisdictions that already have this bill and have experienced the results and benefits of this kind of bill.

In the United States numerous states have exempted trade unions from this bill and it is not a country that has the kind of respect for the labour movement we have here. We are talking about trade unions going about the legal business of picketing in a legal dispute. We are not giving a blank cheque for people to run amok here. We are talking about legal picketing. It is the right of all workers in this country to withdraw their labour and not have a bill like this hanging over their heads intimidating them so they will abandon their right to strike or picket.

I urge this House to really think about what it is doing. The government is introducing a law in the dying hours of this Parliament, unfortunately without the kind of discussion with Canadians and particularly women we would have liked to have had.

It is a law we need and a law we all believe we need, but by giving rights and protection for the common good of Canadians we are insidiously creating a threat to a very large group of people in this country. One-third of Canadian workers are organized and we are taking away the right for them to go about their legal business as trade unionists and use their legal rights for their own economic benefit and pursue collective agreements.

• (1130)

I urge members opposite to once again consider the amendment put forward by the hon. member for New Westminster—Burnaby and approve this amendment.

Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg Transcona): Mr. Speaker, I would like to make a brief remark on this.

I begin by commending everyone who has been involved in developing this legislation, particularly the member for New Westminster—Burnaby who initiated this process through a private member's bill. Many citizens, some of them in my riding, initiated this process by lobbying me as a member of Parliament and other

members of Parliament and levels of government to do something about the vulnerability of women in particular to stalkers.

We have had a severe problem in Winnipeg in the last little while with this and a number of women have been killed by stalkers. The people of Winnipeg know only too well the urgency of the legislation we have before us.

It is nice to see that sometimes Parliament can act with a certain amount of expediency. I hope the government will see fit to accept the amendment that has been moved in order to make it clear that this bill cannot be used for purposes of intimidation in labour disputes. I think the Criminal Code deals adequately with those possibilities in other ways.

Even if that is not the case, it is still well and good that we should pass this legislation. It is an improvement on what we have. I think particularly of a woman in my riding, Mrs. Jensen, whose daughter was killed by her boyfriend after she had been harassed for quite a while. I know she will be happy today to see that the political process does work and that we are able to pass this kind of legislation. I hope it will prevent those kinds of tragedies in the future.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. DeBlois): Is the House ready for the question?

Some hon. members: Question.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. DeBlois): Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. DeBlois): All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. DeBlois): All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. DeBlois): In my opinion the nays have it.

Some hon. members: On division.

Motion No. 2 negatived.