

Private Members' Business

I recommend, on behalf of my party, that this matter be brought before a legislative committee.

Mr. Svend J. Robinson (Burnaby—Kingsway): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate having an opportunity to participate in the debate on this very important question of the extradition law in Canada.

I want to just pick up on the point that was made by the previous speaker, the member for Cape Breton—The Sydneys, with respect to the real issue here. The real issue here, Mr. Speaker, surely is the fact that the Conservative member for Peterborough has a grievance with his own government and, in particular, with the Minister of Justice.

• (1730)

It was the Minister of Justice who promised many months ago that she would be moving forward on this issue of extradition. The minister was questioned before the Standing Committee on Justice and the Solicitor General when she appeared, and she was asked about possible changes to the law on extradition. Indeed, Mr. Speaker, it was not just representatives from one party who expressed these concerns, there were representatives of all three parties on the Standing Committee on Justice and the Solicitor General.

The Minister of Justice said yes, she was concerned, she would look at it. But, Mr. Speaker, we are now into the latter part of October and there has still been no action taken whatsoever.

If the Conservative government is serious about changes in the law of extradition, why does it not bring forward a bill? Why does the member of Parliament for Peterborough not persuade the Minister of Justice to finally do something in this area of extradition? Why is it, Mr. Speaker, that he is getting up with a bill which was drafted long ago which, in fact, does not reflect the recommendations of the Standing Committee on Justice and the Solicitor General in this important area of extradition?

My colleague from Cape Breton—The Sydneys said: "Let's send this whole thing to the committee and study the bill".

The problem with that, Mr. Speaker, is that we have already done that. We have done exactly that. The Standing Committee on Justice and the Solicitor General did in fact study the whole question of extradition. We

received extensive evidence from a number of witnesses who looked at this issue with great care. We received background studies from the Library of Parliament, an overview of the extradition process. Following that lengthy and thoughtful process of hearings—and the member for Peterborough recalls that, he was a part of the process of hearings around this question of extradition—the Standing Committee on Justice and the Solicitor General unanimously submitted a report to this House.

Why is the Minister of Justice ignoring the unanimous recommendation of the Standing Committee on Justice and the Solicitor General for changes? We have the member for Peterborough coming before the House and pointing out concerns in this area. We have the member for Cape Breton—The Sydneys saying: "Let's study this some more". Well, Mr. Speaker, we do not need any more study.

The member for Peterborough, the Liberal justice critic, a representative of my party, all have studied this issue. The people of Canada want action. They do not want more studies. They do not want more committee meetings. They want a government that is prepared to move.

It is that which causes me concern and which causes my colleagues concern. What the member for Peterborough is doing in fact may very well delay the process of real change in this important area.

I believe that the people of Alberta, the people of other provinces in Canada, want this government to move, and the member for Peterborough is giving the government an excuse for further delay. That may not be his intention, but practically speaking that is exactly what is going to happen. Instead of the Minister of Justice being forced to finally move and to act on the unanimous recommendations of the standing committee, the Minister of Justice can say: "No, no, I can't bring forward legislation now because the bill is being studied by another committee. The member for Peterborough wants us to spend more time".

Mr. Speaker, people in this country are fed up with—

Mr. Domm: Mr. Speaker, because of my very special interest in the subject, I listened very carefully to what the Liberal member said and I know what I said. At no time did I ever ask for any study, nor at any time did the Liberal member ask for any study.