

Private Members' Business

• (1755)

In August 1994 the National Parole Board denied Auger parole, stating he was a high risk to reoffend. Unfortunately, because of the way the Corrections and Conditional Release Act is written, Auger was required to be released a few months later and because of this Melanie Carpenter is no longer with us.

I am confident that had Auger been examined by two psychiatrists for his assaults on the two teenage prostitutes in Toronto, his anti-social personality would have been uncovered at that time. Had he been found to be a dangerous offender, he would have received an indefinite sentence.

Contrary to what some may think, an indefinite sentence does not mean to lock them up and throw away the key. What it does mean, however, is that the offender is kept in custody until the parole board is convinced that the offender does not pose a serious risk to society.

It is mainly up to the offender to determine how long the sentence will be. If the required treatment is taken and shows real progress, it need not be a long incarceration. Parole eligibility is after three years and then every two years thereafter.

The greatest value of the indefinite sentence is twofold. First, for those offenders who show no inclination of rehabilitation, there is no pressure on the correctional system to get them ready for release, whether they are prepared or not.

Second, for those who are released, the justice system can closely monitor their activities in the community. If this had happened in Auger's case, maybe two people would still be alive, Melanie Carpenter and Fernand Auger.

I believe this motion is sound. It satisfies not only the Reform Party's objectives for public safety, but the red book objectives of the Liberals to protect women and children.

Similarly, the justice critic for the Bloc Quebecois has frequently expressed her concern for the safety of women and children. I only hope that she is equally concerned about protecting them from sexual assault, sexual predators, as she is from protecting them from firearms.

This motion targets only a small percentage of the Canadian population, sexual predators. I fully agree with the over half a million individuals who signed the Melanie Carpenter Society petition, who believe that dangerous sex offenders and pedophiles belong behind bars, not on our streets.

Mrs. Jan Brown (Calgary Southeast, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to speak today in support of the motion of my colleague from Surrey—White Rock—South Langley. It is unfortunate, in fact an abysmal comment on Canadian society,

that we require this kind of legislation. However, I am heartened by it and am honoured to second the motion.

Under current law, a sex offender cannot be detained beyond a jail sentence. We may ensure their stay beyond their statutory release date only if a psychiatrist signs a certificate saying that the inmate suffers from a mental disorder that would likely result in serious injury to others.

The motion before us today provides the point of difference that Reform brings to the debate. Rather than attempt analysis at the end of a sentence, an offender should be subject to analysis by a psychiatrist before sentencing and then, if need be, deemed a dangerous offender. This supports reasoned argument to keep incarcerated those who pose a threat to society.

This is exactly the kind of legislation that this country needs. This issue should be non-partisan. I believe all of us in this House want to safeguard the rights of victims and, in this instance, the rights of victims of sex offences.

Let us not forget that the law of the land should not only safeguard those who already have been victimized, but the law should also endeavour to protect us from further victimization by those who demonstrate a dangerous propensity to commit sex offences.

Currently, we sit in the House listening to a great deal, possibly too much debate on national unity, when under our noses other important problems need to be addressed. We can do something positive here. Instead of splitting apart, instead of limiting debate on issues of importance, we can join together today on an issue that concerns us all. I urge all my colleagues in the House to support this important motion.

The motion we are debating today specifically addresses the issue of protecting society from sexual predators, people who are driven to inflict harm on women and children in our society. Sexual predators are people like Clifford Olson, like Paul Bernardo. They prey on the weak and vulnerable and they enjoy it. They have been psychologically profiled as deviants who repeat their crimes and even enjoy them. These are the people who will be affected by this motion.

• (1800)

By passing this motion we will be saying that yes, we believe that we have a moral obligation as parliamentarians to protect society from those who seek to prey on its weak and vulnerable; yes, we believe that for the safety of society certain offenders should be required to undergo psychological evaluation and under certain circumstances should be deemed to be dangerous offenders. This allows us the freedom and opportunity to keep those individuals in prison, those who pose an unacceptable threat to society.