mechanisms seem to be in place but the stakeholders refuse to use them.

I now come back to the June 8 article in *La Presse*, which quotes Normand Bastien from the youth division of Montreal's community legal centre. He said: "The real problems come from the fact that the average waiting periods before sentencing are too long—266 days on average in Valleyfield, 180 days in Montreal, 163 days in Joliette—and that only 29 per cent of problems are resolved". So why this bill, since the current act already has adequate provisions to deal with young offenders?

I repeat, a repressive law without rehabilitation measures and left to the discretion of various stakeholders will not bring the violence phenomenon under control. Current documentation does not support the argument that longer sentences act as a deterrent. As I said before, the American experience demonstrates the ineffectiveness of these coercive measures.

To conclude on the transfer to adult court issue, it seems that the burden of proof will now rest with the young people themselves. Too bad for the presumption of innocence. All this is intended to silence some people who will never be satisfied. It makes light of the balance between deterrence and rehabilitation which has proven itself in Quebec. Above all, it encourages laxity in certain provinces.

In the reading I have done on this bill, how does one explain some particularly troubling statistics concerning cases in youth court that resulted in a guilty verdict? In Quebec and the Maritime provinces, guilty verdicts were rendered in over 80 per cent of cases; in the Western provinces, barely 70 per cent; and in Ontario and Manitoba, 55 and 59 per cent. How come in Alberta, 34,372 people are accused and convicted out of a population of 1.2 million, compared to 16,000 in British Columbia? One province convicts half as many people as its neighbour. Are we not justified in thinking that we should pay more attention to the administration of justice instead of drafting new laws?

[*English*]

Mr. Jim Gouk (Kootenay West—Revelstoke): Mr. Speaker, when the government introduced the Young Offenders Act and said that it intended to make some changes to the act it was very pleasing for me because if ever there was an act that needed modified it is the Young Offenders Act. However, that pleasure quickly faded when I found out that all the changes it really had in mind was just a little bit of tokenism.

One of the major things we are concerned about of course is 16 and 17 year olds and whether they are going to be treated as kids or whether they are going to be treated as adults when they commit crimes.

The government has taken a little portion of this. It has said for 16 and 17 year olds it intends, most of the time at least, to raise them to adult court. The onus will be on them to show cause why they should not be tried in adult court and why in fact they should be tried as young offenders.

This raises two problems. One of the basic problems is if they are tried as adults while still being young offenders they are still treated differently than people who are regular adults being tried in that adult court.

The second problem, and this is the larger one, is that we have a tremendous bureaucracy now. This bureaucracy is part of what drives the deficit and debt as high as it is and climbing continually.

• (1935)

What is going to happen is every time one of these young offenders is proposed to be raised to adult court we are going to have them appealing this and trying to fight it. What we are going to be faced with are trials to determine where the trial is going to be held, whether it is going to be in juvenile court or adult court. That is not doing anything to the legal system. That is not doing anything to resolve the problem of bureaucracy and it is certainly not doing anything to bring justice to this act.

One of the things we think should happen is that the age should be dropped. Sixteen and seventeen–year olds should be tried as adults and should be classed as adults. We think the overall age should be dropped. If you have 10 and 11 year olds committing crimes there has to be some facility to deal with that other than saying that was not very nice and sending them home to their parents, especially when the government is also talking about changing the act so that even once they send them home to their parents the parents are powerless to do anything.

Another thing the government is touching on, but again it is only tokenism, is identifying the criminal activities of young offenders. What we had proposed is that all crimes of 14 and 15 year olds should be readily available through the media and for those 10 to 13 they should be made public if, in the judge's opinion, the need for the public to know and protect itself is greater than the need for confidentiality on the part of the offender.

If you would consider a situation in which one of these young offenders may be exhibiting some form of violent behaviour and is released back to a classroom full of other children, should not the school authorities for one and the parents of the other children there know that there was a potential problem and take the necessary steps to ensure the safety of their own children?

Another area that did not get touched on at all is the need to change the face of the way our correctional facilities work. What we need is a facility that bases its primary actions on education, skills training, community service and one other thing that the government seems loath to introduce, discipline. We do not have a structured type of system that is going to provide some type of education, some kind of knowledge so that they can become useful people instead of sitting in what often are considered country club resorts compared with what many law–abiding