

and to attenuate any prejudice minor offenders may suffer in legal proceedings.

These measures also get the community involved and put greater focus on reconciliation between victim and offender. Alternative measures are already used successfully in certain provinces for young offenders. They may now be used for adults. There are many alternative solutions.

• (1950)

They do not involve just victim compensation, for example, the number of day-fines, compensatory work for non-payment of fines, and so on. There is a whole list of them, if you want to be more specific.

There are many examples of sentences aimed at the social reintegration of offenders. Therefore, first offenders or minor offenders will be taken out of the legal system. These measures will ensure public protection by reducing the negative effects of incarceration. The courts will have more time for more important matters.

It should be pointed out that this diversion process is only for those who admit liability for their acts of commission or omission when it is considered that alternative measures do not interfere with public safety and the interests of the victim, while at the same time meeting the needs of the offender.

Such alternative measures must be part of a program approved by the attorney general, his deputy or a person designated by the lieutenant governor in council. The Crown must be satisfied that there is sufficient evidence to prosecute and the person charged must be informed of his or her right to counsel, on top of having fully agreed to participate in this program.

Imprisonment and detention should only be a last resort, when everything else has failed. Alternative penalties are a good example of a different approach to conflict resolution in that they attempt to minimize the negative impact on individuals, judicial red tape and the economic and human cost to society of many needless incarcerations.

To conclude, I will therefore support this bill, which makes it possible to take a step forward, and I am pleased that by passing these provisions on alternative measures we can show that we are able to be innovative in devising sentences which are more sensible and therefore more in line with what is needed at present in the correctional service.

[English]

**Mr. Myron Thompson (Wild Rose, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, it gives me pleasure to speak to Bill C-41.

Once again we have a piece of legislation that simply does not do anything in terms of justice, punishment or dealing with the problems facing the country. When I look at the last two years, there have not been any bills passed in the House as far as I am

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concerned that do anything in terms of making the country safer, better for those individuals called victims who need the protection of our system. It just is not happening.

I am thinking of certain bills such as the one the member across the way put forth to eliminate section 745 which died and we do not bring it back. I could mention a dozen others. I am really upset that we are not getting good legislation that will give the effect the famous red ink book says it would do.

There is no measure in this legislation that causes me more grief than the government's attempt to deal with violent young offenders. We passed Bill C-37 which says that 16 and 17-year olds will go to adult court. Then we come out with a bill that is going to make the sentencing the same as if they were in youth court. It does not make sense.

• (1955)

Picture the family of a young mother standing by her grave-side hearing words from the minister telling all who gathered how much this woman will be missed. Picture the tears sliding down the many cheeks of Canadians present and listen to their voices repeat over and over again: "Why did this happen?"

This picture is happening far too often to too many Canadians to be passed over by the government's attempt at social engineering which does little to prevent violent youth from believing that to kill someone they will be punished by this government. This government is using crybaby tactics to soothe the intellectuals who continually state that 16 and 17-year old murderers are too young, too poor and too abused to know the difference between right and wrong.

What does this government say the penalty should be for such sadness, hurt and brutality to victims, families and friends? According to the justice minister, if the murderer is a 16 or 17-year old, a slap on the wrist and a promise not to do it again is penalty enough. Remember, this is the same government that publicly stated it was going to get tough with ultraviolent young offenders. Remember, this is the justice minister who told Canadians that his government would not tolerate those youth who carry knives and hold no regard for human life or the feelings of those who care.

What did this minister and the government do to punish and deter 16 and 17-year old hooligans with no regard for others? In Bill C-41 the government proposed to punish 16 and 17-year old murderers by transferring them to adult court with a five year jail sentence. Maybe if the youthful killer was particularly violent and gruesome, he possibly could be removed from society for 10 years.

This sentence is ironically considered just as serious to the justice minister as his original punishment for law-abiding citizens whose only crime is hiding a firearm from the minister's scrutiny. The fact that this minister and this government