

*Measures Against Crime*

and its over-financed Crown corporation, the CBC, emphasizes those policies by producing and importing examples of vulgarity, indecency, anything which is sacrilegious, stressing the illegal use of drugs, of alcohol, and violence, particularly the use of firearms.

When members of this House protest about these shows on behalf of their constituents they receive the stock answer, in a bored and disinterested voice, that the government cannot interfere in the operations of a Crown corporation, or that it is not the corporation's policy to reveal certain facts. Why not be honest and admit to this House and to the people of Canada that the government is neither interested in nor concerned about this nation and its people, or the direction in which Canada is being pushed—on a journey always downgrade?

I cannot understand how the conscientious MPs on the government side of this House, some of whom I know to be men or women of principle and decency, can go along with this type of bill. Have they explained its ramifications and curtailments, its inconvenience and vagueness, to their constituents? Do they listen to and act upon the requests or demands of their electors? Surely there is one cabinet member who knows inside himself that he does not agree with this dictatorial legislation. To be fair, members of the cabinet are expected to support all government bills, but does their exalted position render them immune to reactions of those who put them into parliament in the first place? They could not be ministers of the Crown had they not first been given the confidence and trust of their constituents, the people who pay their salaries and benefits.

The Minister of Justice is following the same pattern of previous legislation by lumping several positive and acceptable measures into Bill C-83 with controversial, unacceptable, and ineffective rules and regulations on gun control. Apparently this is another attempt on the part of the government to convince Canadians that those of us who oppose some of the clauses on gun control are not in favour of those dealing with crime. Mr. Speaker, my constituents are not lead down the garden path so easily; they learned from experience with earlier legislation foisted on them by this government.

I would urge every member of this House to explain to those whom they represent just what this bill will demand. No individual should misunderstand a measure dealt with in this House simply because his MP camouflaged the negative aspects and emphasized the positive and acceptable ones. The government has confused people more than enough with its red tape and bureaucracies.

Before this bill reaches the committee stage—where we all work hard and do our best to protect people—the gun control clauses should be removed and presented separately, and hopefully strengthened in the right areas.

Why make it more difficult for young persons to be taught how to handle and use a firearm safely? Careless handling of these weapons causes many tragedies. Young people today have enough problems without taking away one of their useful pleasures. Can we expect young Canadians, or anyone for that matter, to improve their way of life when those who break the laws are not appropriately punished? The Minister of Justice and his cabinet colleagues have forgotten the word "punishment" and how it

should be applied to law offenders—they prefer to curtail the rights of those who obey the laws.

Recently it has been reported that the Minister of Justice believes some offences under the Criminal Code are outdated, are Victorian, and should be removed—another move to protect criminals and indecent citizens. What that will do is encourage more crimes because there will be even less legal control of delinquents. Just because several years have passed since certain acts were included in the Criminal Code does not mean that society has to lower its standards. That is the obvious aim of the government—to make everything which is indecent and inhuman, behaviour even below the level of animals, legal in our Canada, to remove some necessary offences from the Criminal Code, but initiate new ones to curtail legitimate activities of decent people. What do Canadian voters as a whole think of that?

This parliament should tighten up and enforce the laws we now have, and implement effective legislation aimed at those who need to be controlled under our legal system. Did government members come to the House of Commons to fight for the wrongs of the minority of Canadians, or to fight for the rights of the majority who live within the law? Think about that question—my constituents do.

On the positive side no doubt most Canadians who abide by the laws of our land want penalties for the illegal use of firearms. Weapons such as knives, clubs, tools, and countless other objects can never be registered, licensed or placed under control. Bill C-83 will not curb murderers because anyone intent on killing will use any weapon available.

If the sentence for a crime committed with a firearm were scaled according to the offence; sale of firearms were restricted, one of the sensible clauses of this Bill; and if offenders were punished as they ought to be, the Minister of Justice would have received support in the House of Commons and from the Canadian public. Think how much more logical and reasonable, how much less expensive, how easier to administer Bill C-83 would be if it were directed toward the law-breakers? Mr. Speaker, is this too much to expect; is this too easy for this heavy-handed government to accept?

The government prefers to involve the entire adult population of this country through cumbersome, ineffective, vague, unacceptable, and unnecessary measures, some of which are already in force under provincial legislation. This bill duplicates the laws now on the provincial statutes. Why double up on the licence requirement and the cost? The legislation should not have been formulated at all until negotiated agreements had been entered into with every provincial government and territory.

Rather than face up to its responsibilities by introducing policies and legislation which would adequately bolster our flagging economy and help those on or below the poverty line, the government goes out of its way to create situations which drive a certain segment of our population into crime. Bills with the frightening impact of Bill C-83 perhaps do upset people to the degree that they forget about this country's economic mess temporarily, but let us never forget that Canadians are intelligent and have long memories, perhaps into the year 1978 or 1979.