

any difference whether they were cleared of that charge, or the charges were withdrawn.

I conclude by saying that it is valid to say that the child has to be sufficiently intelligent to understand what he or she is saying because of the dire consequences it can be for an individual charged with the offence. I would be very pleased to deal with these matters more explicitly and in more detail when they reach the committee stage.

[Translation]

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Questions or comments. The Hon. Member for Saint-Denis (Mr. Prud'homme) has the floor.

**Mr. Prud'homme:** Very briefly, Mr. Speaker, because I know my colleague and friend the Hon. Member from Montreal—Mercier (Mrs. Jacques) definitely wants to rise in the debate. So I would say that all speeches in my view have been clear and specific. We all want this legislation to be passed as soon as possible. I support this legislation. I wanted to be here to prove it, but I would like the Minister to listen closely.

[English]

I wish the Minister would listen very attentively. We have passed this resolution in one day. I hope that the Minister and my colleague who spoke before me will agree that in view of its importance and to show that we want to protect our youth as they should be protected, it would be wise to call witnesses. I know that it will be up to the committee to decide, but I hope we will have the Minister's approval to call witnesses. I will look at his face and I will understand if he says yes. Then I will say publicly that the Minister indicates that yes, indeed, he is in favour of us calling some witnesses. You approve of that, I am sure, Mr. Minister. You can look at me and indicate if you do.

**Mr. Hnatyshyn:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I would like to make sure that some progress is made in this matter. There is at least one other Hon. Member who would like to address a few remarks. I hope that she will not be prevented from doing this today. Perhaps she will have an opportunity of speaking tomorrow.

In connection with the whole question, I know that the committee will give this matter serious attention. As far as I am concerned, there is no problem in having a reasonable examination so that the matter may be resolved on a proper basis. I know that the Hon. Member would not want me to intrude as a representative of the Government with my views as to how long the deliberations should take. Knowing that the people involved in the legislative committee, I know that they will give this matter serious attention and will hear appropriate witnesses.

**Mr. Prud'homme:** Good.

[Translation]

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Debate. The Hon. Member for Montreal—Mercier (Mrs. Jacques).

### Adjournment Debate

**Mrs. Carole Jacques (Montreal—Mercier):** Mr. Speaker, over the last two decades we have seen an increase in the incidence of sexual violence against children, especially child prostitution. The concerns raised in that respect and a better understanding of their nature are the reasons for the important amendments to the legislation and to social programs as proposed by this Government. This is why today the Minister of Justice and the Solicitor General of Canada (Mr. Hnatyshyn) tabled in Parliament the amendments to the Criminal Code and to the Canada Evidence Act that are aimed at protecting children against sexual abuse and exploitation. Those amendments were first tabled in June last, following the tabling of the Badgley Committee Report on sexual offences against children. Those measures at the time met with strong support from Parliament and the whole society. The Minister of National Health and Welfare (Mr. Epp) was appointed as the federal minister in charge of co-ordinating the social and educational measures connected with it. Since then, he has confirmed the decision to appoint a special council on the sexual exploitation of children and a regional advisor, and indicated that the Secretariat for children that are victims of sexual violence in Health and Welfare Canada has held consultations with federal and provincial departments and the non-government sector.

In the last Throne Speech, Mr. Speaker, the Government confirmed its intention to re-introduce those amendments as soon as possible, and this is what we have done today. So I urge the House, Mr. Speaker, to pass this legislation as soon as possible in order to protect our young Canadians.

[English]

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Is the House ready for the question?

**Some Hon. Members:** Question.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Mr. Hnatyshyn seconded by Mr. McKnight, moves that Bill C-15, an Act to amend the Criminal Code and the Canada Evidence Act, be read the second time and referred to a legislative committee.

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** Agreed.

Motion agreed to, Bill read the second time and referred to a legislative committee.

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## PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT MOTION

[English]

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 66 deemed to have been moved.

BANKRUPTCIES—SUPPLIERS' RIGHT TO REPOSSESS GOODS

**Mr. Jim Jepson (London East):** Mr. Speaker, on October 15 I directed a question to the Minister of Consumer and