

There was a time when I understood a little bit about the Income Tax Act intricacies, but today I doubt whether I have any knowledge whatsoever.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Blaker): Shall I recognize at one and the same time the Hon. Member for Burin-St. George's (Mr. Simmons) and call it ten o'clock?

Mr. Simmons: Yes, Mr. Speaker.

PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT MOTION

[English]

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 40 deemed to have been moved.

ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE—MANDATORY SUPERVISION PROGRAM—RELEASE OF DANGEROUS SEXUAL OFFENDERS. (B) REQUEST FOR DEFINITION OF "A BAD EVALUATION"

Mr. Benno Friesen (Surrey-White Rock-North Delta): Mr. Speaker, I asked the Solicitor General (Mr. Kaplan), as is my want, questions on the subject of mandatory supervision. The question I am addressing tonight and on which I wish he would elaborate—I am glad he is in his place tonight to respond to my remarks—has to do with remarks he made to a gentleman about a week ago, a gentleman from Mississauga by the name of Mr. Les Crisp. He is quoted as saying to Mr. Crisp that no one with a bad evaluation will be released under mandatory supervision in the future.

This is my question to the Solicitor General. As it is clear the Solicitor General intends in the future to continue to release dangerous criminals to the public, if he is not going to use mandatory supervision in the future, what will he use in releasing these people? Such statements he has made in public raise very important questions.

I notice that the Chairman of the National Parole Board is starting a letter-writing campaign to the newspapers. I have before me a clipping from *The Globe and Mail* dated September 29 in which the Chairman of the National Parole Board is reported as having said, and I quote:

The decision to test the mandatory supervision release mechanisms which by law allow a federal penitentiary inmate to return to society after he has served two-thirds of his sentence was an action which was not taken lightly.

You bet it was not taken lightly. It has been 12 years since mandatory supervision was enacted. That policy has now been in place for 12 years. To my knowledge, it has never been challenged until the last several months. The Chairman of the National Parole Board could not have been more honest when he says he has not taken it very lightly. He has waited long enough to do it. That raises some very important questions.

The same article which quotes Mr. Crisp goes on to say that the Solicitor General has urged the provincial attorneys-general to make more frequent use of habitual criminal laws.

Adjournment Debate

The Solicitor General and the Minister of Justice (Mr. MacGuigan) are the senior law officers of the land. They are the ones who ought to be urging Crown prosecutors to press charges. They are the ones who ought to be implementing the laws of this land in conjunction with the Provinces.

I would like to ask the Solicitor General, as I did the other day, when he wants to assume authority in this area, why is he foisting it on to the provincial attorneys-general? Why is he always copping out on that subject? Why is he seemingly asking the Chairman of the National Parole Board to take action? These are very important questions.

What I would like to know from the Solicitor General is why it has taken so long for the Chairman of the National Parole Board or the Solicitor General or the Minister of Justice to act. Why, when a law was apparently brand new, a law which instituted mandatory supervision, and the Solicitor General had said that there has been an over 50 per cent failure rate in mandatory supervision—

Mr. Kaplan: Forty-one per cent.

Mr. Friesen: Now the Minister says it is 41 per cent. I guess it depends on how he wants to read the statistics. Forty-one per cent is not a very good batting average. If it has been that ineffective, why have we seen dangerous offenders released in society after two-thirds of their sentence for 12 years? Why has it taken 12 years to test the validity of that law? I know the Government is intent on rehabilitation, but certainly it ought not to be the policy of the Government to do that at the expense of the unsuspecting public.

• (2205)

The Chairman of the National Parole Board has been wont to issue two more press releases defending his position to continue to incarcerate some inmates. On December 3 he said this was in order to ensure public safety. I commend the Chairman for that, but why was he not doing that during the past 12 years?

On December 3 he further stated, and I quote:

As in the recent cases of west-coast inmates who were suspended 'at the gate' by the Board, this is a test case. There are few precedents for suspending mandatory supervision when the inmate has not been found responsible for misconduct which occurred subsequent to his release, and the National Parole Board fully expects its action to be challenged in Court.

There was another press release on December 7.

As I said the other day, Mr. Speaker, we need to re-examine the priorities of this Government. What are the values of this Government? As I said in a speech last Friday, "The mark of a civilized country is that it sees the role of a Government to defend and protect the defenceless in our society." If that is taken at face value, surely the defenceless ones are the ones who are living by the law without having to be urged by police officers to do so. But under this Government the defenceless ones are overlooked and ignored and those who are the rapists and the murderers are protected by the law.