

Criminal Code

the House may consider the possibility of maintaining, amending or replacing the legislation.

In my opinion, this legislation is necessary and important. Moreover, I believe most Canadians, if they are well informed on the matter, will themselves also find it important and necessary for the protection of their liberty against every kind of abuses. For all those reasons, Mr. Speaker, I hope this legislation will be adopted by all parties as quickly as possible.

[English]

Mr. Jake Epp (Provencher): Mr. Speaker, before I begin my comments on Bill C-26, I would like to take the opportunity to commend the hon. member for Perth-Wilmot (Mr. Jarvis) on the manner in which he represented our party in opening the debate. The reason I say that is that in the period of time I have been here I have heard many fine presentations and lively debates, but this subject matter goes very deeply into the depth of the Canadian soul, and the hon. member for Perth-Wilmot achieved a fine balance in his presentation. The sincerity with which he presented the case was recognized by every member of the House, and tonight I felt honoured to be a colleague of his.

The opening of mail has been going on for some time. What we are doing in this bill is to make legal that which has been done illegally before. The atmosphere in which this bill is being debated is one of suspicion on the part of many Canadians and members of the opposition of the motives of this government. The reason I say that is that in the decade that the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) has been leader of this government, he has acquired the reputation throughout Canada of being soft on law and order. Regardless of where I go, when I speak to colleagues of mine I find they get the same feedback, that Canadians feel the Prime Minister has been soft on those who break our laws. In fact this is a permissive society, and the Prime Minister has been in the vanguard in the creation of our permissive society. The blame for a great part of the difficulties which our society is experiencing today, the pervading cynicism and the disregard for law and order, must be placed at the doorstep of the Prime Minister. It is in that atmosphere, including the events of the last six months, that this bill is now debated.

May I call it ten o'clock, Mr. Speaker?

**PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT
MOTION**

[English]

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

[Mr. Lamontagne.]

**ENERGY—SMOKE DETECTION DEVICES—EFFECT OF
RADIOACTIVE MATERIAL THEREIN**

Hon. Martin O'Connell (Scarborough East): Mr. Speaker, I want to raise two matters concerning smoke detectors used in homes. The first is an appeal to the Minister of Finance (Mr. Chrétien) to remove the 5 per cent federal sales tax valued at about \$1 for each detector sold. The second is to raise concerns about the adequacy of the information and warnings given to home owners with respect to detectors that use small amounts of radioactive material for their operation.

• (2202)

Smoke detectors should be encouraged for every home. I back the use of smoke detectors. They are not unreasonably priced. They are lifesaving devices. They give early warning of smoke or fire. Indeed, they are mandatory under the national building code for new housing, and some municipal jurisdictions are considering making them mandatory in all existing housing. I am informed that the Ontario government makes smoke detectors and fire detectors mandatory in all Ontario housing for families and senior citizens across the province. The housing minister for Ontario has reported that of 64 fires in Ontario Housing Corporation units smoke detectors gave the initial warning in 54 cases, or over 80 per cent of the situations. He estimates that they possibly saved lives in 24 fires. Hundreds of thousands of smoke detectors are now in use, and I support the initiatives which have been taken so far.

I believe the federal government should now associate itself with this means of lifesaving and property saving by withdrawing its 5 per cent federal sales tax. This is what was asked for, for example, by Mr. Norman Rockall, a public spirited resident of Scarborough, who is leading a drive to have detectors installed in all Metro homes and, indeed, across Canada. Removing the federal sales tax is something the Government of Canada can do to match the fact that new federally assisted housing units must be protected by these devices. I made this request to the Minister of Finance in a letter dated February 7. I have also asked the province of Ontario to consider removing its provincial sales tax of 7 per cent levied on the retail price, and valued at about \$2.50 or \$3 for an average unit. I hope my hon. colleagues will support these endeavours.

The second matter is the question of information concerning the safety of the popular ionization type detector. This ionization type, which is one of several, uses Americium 241, a highly active radioactive material which is part of the waste product from the nuclear cycle. Americium 241 is used in quantities so small as to constitute virtually no hazard, according to the Atomic Energy Control Board of Canada, which is the regulatory body. The hazard is no greater, for example, than that associated with a television set.

My research on the subject with the Atomic Energy Control Board somewhat re-assures me that in Canada, in contrast with the situation in the United States, all purchasers must be given warning of the presence of radioactive material and that they are also given some minimum instructions for disposal of used detectors. My concern, however, is about the inadequacy