

to publicize the contributions to Canadian public life of persons with disabilities.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I know that the hon. member for Mississauga South has a private member's bill to be debated. He has indicated that I might, with leave of the House, just for a moment at this time bring before the House the bill that I had previously brought here as a private member, Bill C-258, which was unanimously passed by the House of Commons on December 10 last, dealing with the Centennial Flame and the disabled.

This bill was amended in the Senate to add some references to the Senate. It is therefore now necessary for the House of Commons to re-enact it as amended. I have spoken with representatives from all parties and groups and, as there is consent, I would like to do so.

Motion agreed to, amendments read the second time and concurred in.

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CRIMINAL RECORDS ACT

MEASURE TO AMEND

The House resumed from Monday, December 3, 1990, consideration of the motion of Mr. Blenkarn that Bill C-314, an act to amend the Criminal Records Act and the Criminal Code in consequence thereof, be read a second time and referred to a legislative committee.

Mr. Benno Friesen (Parliamentary Secretary to Solicitor General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, I begin by commending the member for Mississauga South on the initiative he is taking in presenting this private member's bill having to do with the rights of those who have had their charges taken care of, to have their records disposed of.

First of all, this bill strikes a very responsive cord in the hearts and minds of anyone interested in fairness and justice in our legal system. I am attracted to it. It makes me reflect on the days quite a few years ago when I first sponsored a bill that dealt with parental kidnapping. I had never heard of the phenomenon—I suppose that is the best use of the work I could make—before a constituent of mine told me about her child having been abducted by her estranged husband. She had found that

there was no protection for her or her child in the Criminal Code as it stood at that time.

I began in 1976 to sponsor a bill dealing with parental kidnapping. It was a very short and simple bill which simply expressed that reality, but I did not receive passage of that bill at that time. As a matter of fact, it took six years for me to see that bill move from a private member's bill by an opposition member to be accepted by the government of the day in 1982 as part of the legislative package of the government.

By 1982 it had become a very complex bill, because I as an ordinary layman recognized the problem but did not realize its complexity or the complexity of the solution that would have to be presented to solve that problem. By the time the bill was passed, it was several pages long.

In looking at the proposal put forward by my friend and colleague from Mississauga South, I am reminded of that. He has presented a relatively simple bill to deal with what appears to be a very simple problem, and he would like to see it dealt with. I compliment him for that.

I am told by those who understand the intricacies of criminal law better than I do that the problem and the solution are far more complex than the bill which he has presented. Therefore, I want to begin by complimenting him and ask him to make certain that he carries this crusade forward to ensure that all the exigencies of this particular phenomenon are dealt with.

By identifying a specific provision of the law which adversely affects constituents who have been in contact with the member, and by proposing solutions as he has done, the member upholds the finest traditions of public service which all members of this House should seek to emulate.

It seems to me that all too often we address issues at the macro level and, I might add, at a kind of transient level. We address them once and then tend to forget them. In our busy schedules there remains scant time to respond in such a meaningful way to the concerns of individual Canadians.

This can be even more problematic for those citizens who do not have experience in dealing with the mechanisms of government, who feel powerless in the face of bureaucratic rules, and who do not have an organized or sophisticated proponent to speak loudly for their rights.