

*Private Members' Business*

Fredericks onto the streets. Christopher Stephenson was abducted at knifepoint from the Shoppers World mall in Brampton on June 17, 1988 by Joseph Fredericks, a known pedophile and psychopath.

Fredericks had spent his childhood in foster homes, his teens in an institution for the severely retarded, although he was not actually retarded, 24 years of his adulthood in a hospital for the criminally insane, and his middle age in Ontario prisons. This man who repeatedly raped, tortured and then murdered Christopher Stephenson on June 17, 1988 had been given early release from Warkworth Institution after the National Parole Board and Corrections Canada ignored an Ottawa judge's warning not to release him without psychiatric reassessment and extensive monitoring.

To make matters even worse, it was revealed during the inquest into Christopher's death that the prison psychologist believed there was a high probability that Fredericks would reoffend, but he crossed his fingers when he dropped Fredericks off in Brampton. A criminal justice system that simply crosses its fingers and hopes that a psychopath will not reoffend does not serve the interests of Canadians. In particular it does not serve the interests of young, innocent children like Christopher Stephenson.

We must make the necessary changes to ensure that such tragedies are not repeated.

Several years following Christopher's murder an inquest into his death was held by the ministry of the solicitor general in the province of Ontario. The inquest jury made 71 recommendations, the first of which was that legislation be enacted to "provide for the protection of the community by permitting the continued detention of sexually violent predators beyond the expiry of their sentence and to provide treatment during their confinement".

The jury also recommended that legislation be modelled on the Washington state protection act of 1990, a law that allows the attorney general to launch court proceedings against an individual even if that individual has been released from jail, to commit him to a special facility, possibly for life. While the Washington state act was considered to be somewhat extreme by Canadian standards, members may recall that in the dying days of its administration the Conservative government introduced legislation to deal with high risk offenders.

That particular bill proposed to allow the National Parole Board to detain any inmate believed likely to commit a sexual offence involving a child before the expiry of their original sentence. The bill in question was of course lost when the federal election was called.

The time has come to introduce new legislation to deal with this serious problem. My colleague's motion echoes the recommendation of the inquest jury that legislation is needed.

There have been many proposals for reform which have come not only from the Stephenson inquest, but from a working group on high risk offenders constituted by the previous Solicitor General. The time has come to act on those recommendations.

• (1410)

I believe that legislation to keep high risk offenders in prison much longer would go a long way to improving public safety. I am also of the opinion that any legislation brought forward by the government should include a provision which would allow sentencing courts to impose a post-detention term of supervision for high risk offenders.

A supervision provision would allow for the monitoring of an offender's behaviour and actions for an extended period of time following sentence expiry. In addition to placing a high risk offender under supervision for a period of 10 years residency for example, treatment and reporting conditions would also be imposed.

Any breach of those conditions would land the offender back in jail and remove any chance of future early release. That is the only way we will be able to monitor the serious sex offenders who we have no choice but to release after sentence expiry.

Perhaps if such provisions had existed in June 1988 Christopher Stephenson would be alive today. Perhaps if the parole officer responsible for Joseph Fredericks had known where Fredericks was living Christopher could have been found in time. But there were no residency restrictions placed on Fredericks and he had not bothered to report to his parole officer. This cannot be allowed to happen again.

At a recent criminal justice conference in Hamilton, victims rights organizations including CAVEAT, Canadians Against Violence Everywhere Advocating its Termination, stressed the need for high risk offender legislation.

Criminal justice reform advocates and even the new chairman of the National Parole Board have stated that supervision and residency restrictions are necessary if we are to protect innocent children from sexual predators and other high risk offenders.

As terrible as the murder of Christopher Stephenson was, we must learn from it as we must learn from all other cases in which high risk offenders have preyed on innocent victims. We cannot stand by and let such tragedies recur. We must act now by supporting this motion and supporting any forthcoming legislation that will keep sick people like Joseph Fredericks off our streets.

**Mr. Jim Abbott (Kootenay East):** Mr. Speaker, there are times when being a member of Parliament is very difficult. It is particularly difficult when having to deal with this type of issue especially when one does some research in order to make some