

thing that has to be worked out by people as the best rules to govern the conduct of people in society. That is more important in the case of criminal law than in any other form of law, and it is most important that that law keep constantly in touch with changes in society.

I think we have often come to think in recent years that changes in law following changes in society usually mean the loosening of law. That is often the case. We have seen changes in that direction and we have seen areas in which the criminal code has retreated, and undoubtedly we will see more of those. But as our life changes and becomes more complex we will also see many ways in which the law will become more restrictive. For instance, with the coming on the scene of the automobile we have had to develop a whole new class of laws that we have been strengthening in recent years, and here I mention laws to deal with intoxication while driving. Similarly with respect to the increasing prevalence of weapons, perhaps more important, with the increasing sophistication of weapons, it is necessary for us to adjust our laws.

Here we have a new measure in Bill C-83 which is largely restrictive in its application. Nevertheless it is highly justified on the basis of necessary adjustment to social change. I join those who have already congratulated the two ministers on having introduced this legislation. It is in general an excellent piece of legislation.

I really intended to speak largely about the matter of electronic eavesdropping, but I am glad to see the hon. member for Calgary North (Mr. Woolliams) has returned to his seat because I would like first to make a few comments about his address. I found his address so discursive and so disturbing that I decided I had to devote my initial remarks to some of the questions which he raised. I might have been tempted to refer to his speech as being marked by a scattergun approach if he had not himself presented us with a better metaphor this afternoon when he spoke about the tumbling mustard plant which is a native of the west, the one that spreads its seeds around. Certainly he spread a lot of seeds around this afternoon but I do not think any of them will germinate, because they are dead.

One thing that was especially lacking in his approach was his attempt to blame so much of crime—in fact one had the impression he blamed all crime today—on the federal government. It does not require a very sophisticated criminal law theory to adjust to the fact that there is shared responsibility in the law in Canada. The administration is largely under the control of the provinces even though much of the criminal law is made by the federal government. In fact if the hon. member were to care to look at his own province of Alberta I think he would find that there has been a large increase in crime in that province in recent years, probably larger than in many other provinces.

When governments are involved, we have to take provincial governments into account as well as the federal government. Actually as the hon. member for New Westminster indicated so well, the fact is that law, especially criminal law, is only one of the means of dealing with crime. Crime is a subject which cannot be wholly embraced by law and certainly not wholly in its causes.

Measures Against Crime

The main point made by the hon. member for Calgary North was that the bill should be severed. I was quite mystified by this for a few minutes, but then I realized that the official opposition really has not changed a bit. We on this side have been expecting great new things as a result of their leadership convention.

● (2110)

An hon. Member: Tell us about your leadership convention.

Mr. MacGuigan: I would be glad to give a speech on leadership at any time. You need it.

Mr. Epp: Go ahead, tell us all about it.

Mr. Muir: Tell us about Dr. Smith.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Turner): Order, please. The hon. member for Windsor-Walkerville (Mr. MacGuigan) has the floor.

Mr. MacGuigan: Psychiatrists are obviously needed, judging by the comments I am hearing from the other side.

Mr. Muir: That is why they have one at the head of the Liberal party.

Mr. MacGuigan: With all the great questions facing us, the reason why the hon. member for Calgary North (Mr. Woolliams) concentrated on this question of severing the bill into its various parts was because this is apparently the only matter on which the opposition can agree.

Mr. Guay (St. Boniface): Careful what you say, Mark. Joe is here.

Mr. Muir: Now we know why Smith beat the hell out of you.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. MacGuigan: I just felt I had to come back because there is so much to do in this House, as the opposition is proving.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. MacGuigan: But I found the speech of the hon. member for Calgary North disturbing for none of these reasons. I found it disturbing because he was suggesting that for reasons of conscience the bill should be split. There was an undercurrent to his whole speech that there was a natural right to bear arms. He never squarely said this—he never squarely said anything in his speech—but it was implied. There was this undercurrent, a feeling throughout the whole of it that we had to protect the sacred natural right to bear arms. If that is to be the line the opposition takes in the House on this bill, this is going to be a very—

Mr. Alexander: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, usually the hon. member gets right to the point of every bill, and I am a little shocked that he is straying in such an unacceptable way at this time. We are dealing with Bill C-83, and I hope he gets to the bill in the next minute or so.