

● (1710)

In some cases very lenient views are taken of crime, while in other cases the courts are much less lenient. Courts vary from place to place, as do the opinions of judges, not purposely but because of differing personal standards. The same is true from parent to parent in the homes where young people are raised. We have all seen minor offences committed. As I have said before, I have known policemen take a boy home to his parents rather than charge him with an offence. A good lecture and a talk to his parents was enough; there were no more problems. If they did go to court, a stern reprimand from the judge in the vast majority of cases was all that was necessary. These young people eventually became useful citizens.

But what about the great number of young persons who are taken to police headquarters, charged and convicted of a minor first offence? Many individuals apprehended for a minor offence go scot-free. When I speak of minor offences I am referring to young people who have stolen a bicycle, a radio or, perhaps, have smoked a marijuana cigarette.

In lowering the drinking age we may be indicting someone who has had his first beer. I have a letter to bear this out. This has actually happened. It happened to an 18-year old who, after watching a hockey game on TV and watching beer advertisements in the company of four other boys and a teacher, had his first beer. He had two beers and then drove the car home because the others thought he had had less beer. A policeman stopped them because a couple of nights before a stone had been thrown through the windshield of a police cruiser. They were suspected. So he was apprehended and charged for driving too close to the centre of the road. The police took a breathalyzer test and found him just over the mark. We allow alcohol advertising to be directed at young people, and we have lowered the drinking age. That boy was 18 years old. We put on the commercials. We glorify sport. Those boys wanted to see the final hockey game played in Montreal. We do not want to take the responsibility for it; we want to wash our hands of it. That boy was taken to court and now has an indictment on his record.

There is discrimination in different areas, and different views of crime are held. In one area most inhabitants may hold strongly religious views and have a high moral code. They may be strict disciplinarians and the young people in that area may rarely get into trouble. I am sorry to say that since 1945 permissiveness has developed across this land. I ask: "Are the young people responsible, or are the homes in which they were raised, the churches and schools they attended, responsible?" Parliament does nothing about this, even though it admits that something should have been done. It said it would be done in four months or six months and we would get it over with.

In 1969 nobody listened to the Ouimet commission that we paid for. I will go back to this matter because it is very serious. You might say, "I will get away with it", but you do not think of the other poor fellow who is caught. I have seen them caught and I have seen them ruined, and I have felt sorry for them. Not only did I see young boys ruined, but I have also seen girls in that state, and this makes me very sad. This bill

Criminal Records Act

has come up three times and I am sure that it is understood. What is the trouble? Is a member who brings in a private member's bill not entitled to have it passed?

What is the problem with this parliament? Is that the malaise; is that the sickness we have? I heard it said today in the House that only so many people can speak. Every one of us in the House has the right to speak. We are elected and we represent our constituents?

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Rynard: To hear them say that makes me flinch. I know the Solicitor General (Mr. Fox) is not here today. I talked to him yesterday and he said there is need for a complete revision of the Criminal Records Act. The minister believes that serious consideration should be given to automatic expunging of criminal records related to minor offences. Why has that not been done? I like the Solicitor General; he is a nice fellow. I wonder, however, why he is not here today. I wonder why he does not want to face up to this problem, because when I was talking to him yesterday there was no word that he would not be here today, or at least I did not hear him say so, or I misunderstood him. He said, however, that perhaps this could be more properly accomplished by means other than a pardon. Well, how long does it take? We have one solicitor general telling us it will be done in four months; we have another one telling us it will be done right away—and the present Solicitor General says that criminal records for minor offences should be automatically expunged. It is the old story; it drags on.

I have here a letter from a girl who inadvertently took \$6 and now cannot get a job. Those are the things that make you really feel sorry for these people. In that case both the father and the mother drank. Consider the problem if you were raised in a home like that. Is there not any sympathy; is there not any love and compassion for those poor young people raised in these circumstances? They are our product, our kids, our young people. They are the people who will be sitting in this parliament in a few years. Are we going to show them the milk of human kindness? When their turn comes, I hope they will not say, "No, you cannot speak; that is the law". This is the law we make here. Only so many of us can speak—the chosen few. Everything in me that is Christian reacts against that attitude. I hope everyone here will consult his or her conscience as to whether this bill should or should not pass. I do not expect it will. Again it is revulsion, a throwback to the private member's bill which has been brought up three times. Every time it has been treated excellently by my fellow members of parliament. They have spoken very highly of it. But every time the government has chosen to ignore it.

Over a period of four years one begins to wonder about private members' bills, regardless whether one is a Liberal, Conservative or a member of any other party, whether one has any ideas at all or whether it is just a chosen few whose bills are passed. I say to the House that I sincerely hope that if this bill is passed we can be assured in the next six months, as the minister said in his letter, that its provisions will be carried out.