

*Government Orders*

When speaking of extremism in respect of the United States, the report indicated:

A major focus of extremism is on homosexuality. Believers have every right to maintain that homosexuality is inconsistent with their theology, but when anti-homosexual campaigns move outside the church and in the public arena characterize gays as sick, disease ridden, perverted by choice, and unfit comrades for clean living soldier boys then this is clear extremism. Gay Americans have become the major new scapegoat in their country, perhaps to an extent unknown in other democratic nations, and just as surely as Julius Steicher's *Der Sturmer* was a direct contributor to Nazi anti-Semitism with all that it led to, so arguably the homophobic outpouring from religious extremists leads to gay bashing and murder.

When I hear comments from members of the House about relativism and about characterizing one group as being outside the bounds of protection afforded by civilized society and refer to natural law, I think of that quote and I shudder. My natural law is found in the Supreme Court of Canada in *Egan v. Nesbitt* which holds that discrimination is outlawed in the country.

When members on the other side of the House talk about extremism and the problem of violent incidents, I could cite dozens of violent incidents in urban ridings in the country. In my own riding of Rosedale, like the member for Vancouver Centre, I know of people walking down Church Street and having had cars pull up and people jump out who have beaten them up, crying that they were gay.

In August 1989 Alain Brosseau, a young man who was perceived to be gay, was thrown to his death from the Interprovincial Bridge between Ottawa and Hull, which we can see from this building. His attackers testified in court that they were just out to roll a queer. One of the attackers stated that he had put an imitation gun "to the gay's head and he freaked out—I started laughing". Another of the youths dangled him upside down from the bridge, said: "Oh, I like your shoes", and then let go.

In this same city two strangers approached a man returning to Ottawa from Hull and asked him where he had been. When he gave the name of a local gay bar they remarked: "Oh, you are a fag" and beat him so badly that he was in the hospital for two days.

I heard cries from across the House as the former speaker was saying: "Give me a break". Nobody gave those people a break. One of the reasons they did not get a break was the sense that they were fair game as put out in speeches such as we have heard here that allow people to be attacked for their comportment, their religion or their race because they fall outside a tolerated group by certain groups in our society.

This is no longer tolerable conduct in a civilized society. We must not allow it to continue. We must address it in the criminal law. We must frame a criminal law that has as its source a notion of what civilized behaviour is about, which tells our citizens that if they go down this road they will be going into the dark hole that led Nazi Germany into the wars of the past that have ruined Europe.

We live in a tolerant society. We live in a pluralistic society. Let us not be fooled by the suggestions put forward that the bill will somehow lead to unintended consequences like condoning pedophilia and other crimes.

The minister has agreed to an amendment which was legally not necessary but one which addressed the issue by saying that it would not make lawful any previously unlawful conduct. This was never a real suggestion. How could it conceivably be said when a judge is considering the appropriate sentence to hand down on a given case, the weight to be given to the surrounding circumstances to prevent further like crimes, that it is relevant? We must not forget that the bill deals with sentencing and how to prevent anti-social conduct. The judge takes these circumstances into account.

● (1710)

How could that conceivably ever lead to an increase in pedophilia, which is a criminal offence known to every judge? It is a total red herring. It has been raised by those who want to discredit the notion of a modern, compassionate, intelligent criminal law that seeks to root out or extirpate evils in society: hatred, racism, homophobia and other forms of intolerable civil behaviour.

We live in a land in which we have had the privilege of peaceful enjoyment as citizens of the country. We are fortunate. We can walk down every street generally free from fear. That is not to say, as members opposite have said, that if we walk around in the middle of the night we too might never be the subject of an attack. I do not deny that. It is a possibility.

However, I am asking members opposite and other members of the House to think of what the bill is doing for people who walk, every day of their lives, down the city streets and are targets of attacks that go to the nature of their humanity and the nature of their being. It is not because they happen to be a haphazard article of attack. The member for Wild Rose said he might be attacked because he was fat.

The member is quite right. I have been accused of looking too English and might one day be attacked for that. However that is not a risk that the member for Wild Rose or I take every day of our waking lives, knowing that we could be the specific targets of people's abuse just because of our human nature, our race or our religion.

This comprehensive sentencing bill was the result of years of study. Sociologists, criminologists and the most learned jurists of the country are trying to come to grips with how we can have a modern Criminal Code that will ensure that all Canadians will be able to live in this blessed land and be able to move into the 21st century in a pluralistic and tolerant society, one in which all of us can be proud to live with as much ease and security as possible in the modern, civilized society of today.