

*Government Orders*

that unless the thinking of the creators of the legislation is completely removed from reality and the people it will impact?

Let us look at the parole system, the latest victim of which is Melanie Carpenter. The prime suspect in her murder, Mr. Auger, was paroled, was released, by way of statutory requirement after serving only two-thirds of his sentence, even though the officials felt that it would be a danger to release the individual into society. We have to ask what kind of thinking has produced that kind of legislation. Judge Demetrick told me a bit about that kind of thinking when he suggested that it was twice removed from reality.

• (1115)

This bill is not an aberration from the reasoning that has guided Parliament over the last 20 or 25 years. It is simply a continuation of thinking that is far removed from the impact it will have on the people. I often think the justice minister and his officials do not know what they are doing.

It is an attempt by the government to create the impression it is getting tough on crime and criminals. Yet when the justice minister had an opportunity to vote either for a safer society or against first degree murderers when a private member's bill came up to eliminate section 745 from the Criminal Code, everyone knows he voted in favour of the first degree murderer and against a safer society, in favour of the first degree murderer and against the Melanie Carpenters of this country. We should study carefully the motivation behind this legislation.

We have heard the minister speak today of things such as trafficking in fiction. I have the talking points sent from the Prime Minister's office to members of the Liberal Party on Bill C-68. The first item reads: "The government has reached an agreement with the official opposition to allocate time for debate on Bill C-68, gun control, and Bill C-41, sentencing". Is that not nice? They got together and decided to terminate any lengthy debate that would give an opportunity to all members to express the concerns of their constituents on these two very contentious bills.

The second item says: "Any reasonable person would have to agree that there has been extensive consultation and debate on this legislation". Let us examine this whole business of consultation for a moment and see who is trafficking in fiction.

In response to questions in the House the justice minister stated that he had been in continuous consultation with the attorneys general of the provinces. That has been directly refuted by the testimony of the attorneys general who appeared before the standing committee. In particular, I refer to the Attorney General of Manitoba. When we asked her, she commented that there was extremely little consultation with the justice minister and officials on the gun control legislation.

We heard from the Attorney General of Alberta. The Attorney General of Saskatchewan led a delegation made up of the Liberal leader, Lynda Haverstock, as well as the Conservative leader. They also refuted the whole concept of consultation. The Attorney General of Alberta indicated exactly the same thing.

We heard from the justice ministers of the Northwest Territories and Yukon. They refuted the whole idea that they were involved in any significant way in consultation with the justice minister in the development and creation of this legislation.

People like the president of the Olympic handgun competitors claimed there was no consultation whatsoever. This statement is supported by the fact that when the justice minister brought in his proposals before Christmas of last year he had such little knowledge of handguns that he was banning those used in world cup competitions. When we asked him if he would consider exempting the .32 calibre handgun, which is one of the handguns used in world cup competition, the record tells how much consultation really went on between himself and those groups of people.

• (1120)

He stated he would certainly not consider exempting the .32 calibre. Why? The barrel length was under 105 millimetres and those short barrel firearms are inaccurate and are made only for killing. That is basically the reason to justify the banning of 58 per cent of the legally held and purchased handguns.

When we talk about trafficking in fiction, who is trafficking in fiction? I ask the justice minister who really is trafficking in fiction? To carry on with this whole idea that the justice minister has consulted broadly, widely and in depth with people, groups and organizations involved with firearms is a little ridiculous. These consultations did not take place with the justice ministers of the territories or at least with the attorneys general of the provinces.

Several groups of native peoples also appeared before the committee. The James Bay Cree were represented. Representatives from the Yukon Indians appeared before the committee. Ovide Mercredi and a delegation from the Assembly of First Nations appeared. A group represented by Mr. Borin appeared. They all deny that there was any in depth consultation.

I have a copy of a letter which was tabled with the committee from Mr. Ovide Mercredi to the justice minister dated February 17. I will just quote from this. It states:

Once again your government has acted in a manner that shows a complete disregard for the rights and interests of the people I represent. Your introduction of the gun control legislation without prior consultation with First Nations is a violation of your responsibility as Minister of Justice to uphold the fiduciary trust obligations of your government for all First Nations.

In imposing your plan for firearms registration and regulation, you are breaching our treaties with the crown. You promised a consultation process with First Nations in our meeting on November 14, 1994. Where is that consultation process?