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Speaker: The Honourable Andrew Scheer

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Safe Streets and Communities Act

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill C-10, *An Act to enact the Justice for Victims of Terrorism Act and to amend the State Immunity Act, the Criminal Code, the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act, the Corrections and Conditional Release Act, the Youth Criminal Justice Act, the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act and other Acts*, be read the second time and referred to a committee, and of the amendment.

Ms. Kerry-Lynne D. Findlay (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice, CPC):

Mr. Speaker, I would remind the member opposite that simple possession is not targeted in this legislation, although the reference continues to be to someone growing a few plants.

In the member's hypothetical student example, if that hypothetical student were proven to be trafficking illicit drugs to elementary school children or proven to be handing over his revenue from the sale of hard drugs, such as methamphetamine, to members of organized crime, would the member not agree that the person needs to be dealt with as a serious offender?

(1805)

Ms. Kerry-Lynne D. Findlay (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice, CPC):

Madam Speaker, is the member opposite aware that the proposed legislation would allow the courts, including drug treatment courts, to exempt an offender from the mandatory minimum sentence that would otherwise be imposed where the offence involved no other aggravating factors other than a previous conviction for a serious drug offence and the offender's successfully completes a treatment program? This seems contrary to what the member has suggested.

Ms. Kerry-Lynne D. Findlay (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice, CPC):

Madam Speaker, in 2008 there was a Department of Justice study which said that the cost of crime in Canada in that one year alone was near \$100 billion, most of which was borne by victims.

I would ask the Minister of Justice to share his views on the cost of crime in Canada and how this comprehensive legislation is going to deal with that.

Hon. Rob Nicholson:

Madam Speaker, I want to thank my parliamentary secretary for all her work and the support she gives us in this area.

The Department of Justice pointed out that the cost of crime in this country was about \$99 billion. What is particularly arresting is the fact that 83% of that is borne by victims in this country. They are the ones who ultimately pay the price.

I do not get too many questions about victims in the House of Commons. It is not just the financial cost; it is the emotional cost. I remember when we introduced the bill to get rid of the faint hope clause, a reporter asked me if it was going to stop people from committing first degree murder. I said that what it would do is reduce victimization in this country, because those individuals who worried about the criminal getting out on the faint hope clause would not have to worry about that anymore.