

And justice for none

June 14, 1999

Today an impaired charge causing death is punishable with a maximum sentence of fourteen years. Grit legislation tabled in May would see that increased to a life sentence. Reform, eager to look tough on crime, backs the bill. Of all groups, the Bloc stopped it from being fast-tracked through the Commons.

“We cannot be more severe for drunk drivers than serial killers,” said MP Michel Gauthier. Paul Bernardo has been given one life sentence for the rape and murder of two school girls – Clifford Olson likewise for killing God only knows how many. Under this bill an otherwise law abiding citizen who had a few beer with his mates after work could end up in the cell next to either of the above for an equal period of incarceration. This is absolutely insane!

The same bill raises the maximum sentence for causing injury while driving impaired to ten years. There's a man in prison for multiple murder who's up for parole after ten years! In another case a young man was sentenced to five and a half for cold blooded murder. He could be out in two on good behaviour.

The latter incident not surprisingly involves a native perpetrator on whom our judiciary has been instructed to go soft because of his disadvantaged background. Some have gotten away with murder; others have been sentenced to an extended camping trip to find themselves or get in touch with their roots or something.

For the record I'm not anti-native, but I'm all for equal treatment under the law. Currently a native could quite intentionally shank me and get little more than a slap on the wrist. If after the aforementioned bill passes I accidentally kill that same native after having a few cold ones, I'm hooped. Hello, Paul!

People have beaten others to death, used drunkenness to get the charges reduced and been paroled in two years! Under these proposed changes one could be sentenced to ten for simply injuring someone. Not to belittle the latter crime, but there's a raging disparity here. Now obviously I'm not defending drunk driving, but if one is drunk and murders, the weapon used, be it a lead pipe or a car, is not overly relevant to the deceased and should not be a factor in sentencing. Nor should a man's skin colour be used against him in a court of law. Ever. Full stop.

UPDATE: In the summer of '09 an acquaintance answered a 5:00 PM knock at the door only to get a knuckle sandwich right smack in the beak for his troubles. With the largest of three intruders then holding him at knife point, the others looted his home and left. When informed that the three men walking away from his home were native, the officer who took the call responded, and I quote, "Well, come in sometime and fill out a report."

So ten years after the Supreme Court decided to go soft on natives, assault and armed robbery by them doesn't even warrant dispatching a cruiser! If three white guys broke into a home and assaulted a native, do you think he'd be told to "come in and fill out a report sometime"? I've seen jay walking natives form a kind of moving obstacle course on the streets of major Canadian cities while a lone white guy gets ticketed for the exact same offence. That blindfold, on the Roman goddess Justitia, denoting impartiality... it's long gone.