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HOUSE OF COMMONS  
CANADA

**Maurice Vellacott, MP**  
**Saskatoon-Wanuskewin**

## **On the record: Vellacott reinforces that Liberal sentencing provisions violate aboriginal victims**

**For Immediate Release**

**May 11, 2006**

**Point of Order – House of Commons Debates – May 11, 2006, 3:05 pm**

**Maurice Vellacott (Saskatoon—Wanuskewin, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to respond to those documents that I persuaded the member opposite, the member for Labrador, to table in the House just the other day. He had a chance to respond, and I want to respond to him.

I am glad that I was able to lure him out, so to speak, to get those documents in the House and to get the context for it. I think that anybody fair-minded, on the record then would see, as those documents were tabled, that rather than making any disparaging and prejudicial comments we could see in fact the twistedness of those allegations that he made and how he perverted my fairly reasonable comment there.

Also, indirectly, the member for Desnethé—Missinippi—Churchill River had alleged those same things outside the House.

The document that was tabled, as you know, Mr. Speaker, my press release, which is up on my website, makes very plain that I was advocating for aboriginal people because it talked in terms of how the Liberals' sentencing provisions violate aboriginal victims and how what they proposed in their sentencing regime was stigmatizing aboriginal Canadians by creating the false impression that they are more likely to commit crimes because of their race.

I went on to point out the fact that aboriginal victims should have the same right to justice as non-aboriginal victims and that in respect to that particular bill, Bill C-416, by my colleague, the member for Portage—Lisgar, we were appealing for equality under the law, under the Criminal Code and also the Youth Criminal Justice Act.

In that press release, I made the point that a responsible government would find ways to deal with the disproportionate number of aboriginal offenders in the public system without seriously and negatively impacting upon their aboriginal victims and I cited, on December 21, 2001, where RCMP Constable Dennis Strongquill, an aboriginal, was murdered in cold blood in the line of duty by Robert

**(Continued – “On the record: Vellacott reinforces that Liberal sentencing provisions violate aboriginal victims”)**

Sand, who claimed he was aboriginal. The accused’s lawyer then requested that Robert Sand should receive a more lenient sentence because of that and justice was thereby denied to the six fatherless aboriginal children of an aboriginal man.

Those children, and his partner as well, were victimized twice by way of that, once in losing the father and the second time by way of the Liberal system, or regime, that discounts the sentence there and counts this aboriginal RCMP officer’s life as not worth as much. That really, to me, has shades of South Africa, shades of the deep south in the U.S., shades of slavery around the world where a person, because of the colour of their skin, was not counted as much, or the value of their life was not as valuable. And so, the life of this aboriginal man who was killed in cold blood was not deemed to be as valuable, by way of the sentencing regime of the Liberal Party.

In that particular press release, as well, I cited from Police Chief Blacksmith of the Cree Mistissini reserve who condemned that policy of the previous government, the Liberal regime, and I urged the Liberals to support the bill in question by my colleague, the member for Portage—Lisgar, Bill C-416, in 2003, to bring an end to that assault on aboriginal victims through the race-based sentencing policy for offenders.

The record will now show that the member for Labrador was wrong when he alleged that I made disparaging and prejudicial remarks about aboriginals in respect to race-based sentencing.

In fact, the record will show that I was advocating for aboriginal individuals who were abused, who were violated, who were assaulted and then victimized twice over by their lives not counting as much because of this Liberal government’s sentencing regime that was in place and still exists to this day.

That was my point, Mr. Speaker, and I think the record clearly states that that member is more inclined to a racial-based kind of a scenario that in fact infers racism, because the life of an aboriginal man, in that circumstance, did somehow not count as valuable because of the Liberal government’s sentencing regime.

**For further comment, call (613) 992-1966 or 297-2249**