

*Criminal Code*

this issue, is that he is afraid to take a stand. He wants to be able to say to people who are opposed to this Bill and other Bills that he is on their side, as well as being against them. He wants to be on both sides of the question on every question.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell):** Mr. Speaker, I welcome this opportunity to take part in the debate this afternoon on a very important Bill, and I am of course referring to Bill C-54.

First of all, Mr. Speaker, I would like to express my disagreement with the amendment proposed by the NDP. This amendment says, and I quote:

That the motion be amended by deleting all the words after the word "that" and substituting the following therefor:

"this House declines to give second reading to Bill C-54—

In other words, the New Democratic Party is offering us the alternative of not having the Bill exist at all. I suppose we are to assume that according to the NDP, Parliament should not pass legislation on pornography.

Mr. Speaker, I have to say I entirely disagree with a motion that one would not have us legislate at all in this area.

I have received several letters from my constituents urging me to support Bill C-54. I must say I also had some reservations about Bill C-54, and I want to say that I would not be able to support this Bill unless it is substantially amended. However, Mr. Speaker, there is a difference between wanting to amend an imperfect Bill and wanting to drop the Bill outright and thus presumably reject the proposal to legislate in this area.

Mr. Speaker, I want to read you a letter I received from one of my constituents, Mrs. Cécile Clément, of Embrun, Ontario, who writes: "As a parishioner of Embrun, I am committed to the fight against violence and child pornography which degrades women and children." Mrs. Clément asked me to support her campaign against pornography.

A priest, Father Paul-Yvon Ménard, of Embrun, also wrote to me on November 21, 1986, asking me to support a Bill that would either stop or control the pornography around us today.

I have another letter here from Mrs. Thérèse St-Amour of Embrun, also asking me to join the fight against pornography. Father Lucien Charbonneau sent a similar request on November 28, 1986. Mr. Speaker, I have many other letters from many communities in my riding, all asking me to adopt legislation on pornography.

I have before me another letter—

● (1350)

[*English*]

I have here another letter from a Mrs. Betty McDonald of Green Valley, Ontario. She writes:

I am a concerned citizen and grandmother who has four grandchildren growing up in the '80s.

I would urge you to encourage and support the necessary changes to the Criminal Code that will eradicate pornography in our society.

Very clearly there is a will and a desire on the part of the population that we legislate in this matter. Pretending that one can just move a motion to delete the Bill, or to have the Bill disappear from the Order Paper, is not what I consider to be a viable solution to this very important problem.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Speaker, the Minister tells us that his Bill is aimed at responding to public worry, to ever growing concern over the proliferation of violent and debasing pornography, and pornography in which children are involved. Hon. Members will recall that this is the Government's second attempt at enacting legislation in this field. Sure enough, the former Minister of Justice, the Hon. Member for St. John's, once tried to get a legislative measure through the House of Commons but it proved to be a major failure because his bill went too far and was unacceptable to a contemporary civilization. Victorian is the label which certain Canadians would put on Bill C-114, the first measure.

The Government has now introduced its new Bill, Bill C-54, and it is certainly not as Victorian, dated and unacceptable as Bill C-114, it is admittedly better but it still goes too far in certain fields and arbitrarily enforces the law. This is why my colleagues in the Liberal Party have no intention of unduly delaying the second reading of this Bill, although we will be voting against it in principle as a way to indicate that the Bill needs to be amended. Still, in my opinion, Mr. Speaker, if the Government is prepared to make the necessary amendments as soon as possible when the Bill gets to committee, I can assure you that I would be prepared to support this Bill on third reading, provided major amendments are made to it.

One of the aspects of the Bill which worry me, and I must tell you this, Mr. Speaker, is the fact that Bill C-54 makes it an offence applicable to pornographers, preventing any individual from importing, making, printing, publishing, selling or renting pornographic material. Sure though most of my constituents and I may be that distributing pornographic material has to be stopped, I think it would be important to make a real distinction with respect to sanctions meted out to those who make such material—a highly-paid profession, as some people have suggested—and, for example, a convenience store owner in my riding who rents videotapes and gets maybe 50 cents in commission on each such rental. The Bill does not seem to make any distinction between various categories of people who might break pornography laws. I think it must be said that these two individuals whom certain people might call pornographers ought to be treated differently under the law.

We know that Bill C-54 contains new provisions dealing specifically with pornography involving children.

Mr. Speaker, I am sure all Hon. Members are supportive of a Bill aimed at curbing child pornography.