

Criminal Code

did not mind changes in certain clauses, but the clause dealing with the particular matter now before us was untouchable.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. I hesitate to interrupt the right hon. gentleman again but his time has expired. Is there unanimous consent for him to continue?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Diefenbaker: I have always found the house reasonable. I pointed out that the hopes for our committee system under the new rules were false.

An hon. Member: You are away out in left field.

Mr. Diefenbaker: You cannot apply the United States system in Canada. What did the Prime Minister do? After we had gone through the debate on proposed Standing Order 16A what did he say? He said that we have a new set of rules and that the trap had been set. The opposition fell into the trap. I say the government trapped parliament. This committee system will not work.

I was particularly impressed with the remark of a Creditiste member the other day who said there is no longer debate in the house. Except for the participation of the Minister of Justice and a few other members generally speaking debate is down. There is no cross-fire of opinion. A bill comes in, is discussed on second reading and goes to a committee which carries out the will of the government. What preposterous nonsense it is to say that under this new system parliament will be made more effective. The new system has done nothing to meet the problems of Canada since December last. One can only say that the time has come to revise the revision of the rules.

Woodrow Wilson said that committees in the United States are all-powerful. Are our committees all-powerful? One of our committees brought in a recommendation dealing with the railway in Newfoundland and the government ignored it. When the matter was raised in the house the President of the Privy Council, said that the government had no power to implement that recommendation. As anticipated, our committees have become emasculated. Their ineffectiveness in discussing matters of importance has come about exactly as predicted.

● (12:30 p.m.)

By this time, sir, you will have concluded that I am opposed not only to the homosexual

but also the abortion clauses. I can understand the difference of opinion on these matters. There was a wide difference of opinion on this side of the house. We had a free vote. If everyone thinks alike, nobody thinks. I wonder how that rule would apply to the government the way they all lined up.

An hon. Member: I wonder how it will apply to you when the vote is taken.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Mr. Speaker, I am sorry this legislation is before us. We live in an age that is becoming more and more permissive. Some say there is no God, that each man should be able to live his own life as he will as long as he does so in private. I do not find any support for that philosophy in the scriptures. The Judaeo-Christian concept in the Old Testament is the foundation of our religion.

The government is saying to the young people of this country; You are in a new age, you are over 21. A lad asked me how the new law on homosexuality would work and I said, "You will have to consult the government." Instead of giving young Canada an expression of hope and idealism, the government brings in these two matters. What do they expect from young people? I am not here in an endeavour to preach because I could not do so if I tried, but surely what this country needs is a clarion call from the government in favour of the maintenance of family life with a little more emphasis on responsibilities rather than rights.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Instead, the government is condemning today's young people. They know far more than we ever knew. With the exception of a small hard core comprising not more than one in 20, they have ideals. They want to live a free life. We are saying to them; "We will give you permissive legislation, we will give you freedom to do these things."

The Minister of Justice in his metaphysical discussion yesterday tried to distinguish between doing a thing and being a person who would do that thing. Freedom is not the right to do wrong. Freedom is the right to be wrong. The government is saying it knows this is not proper. Scripture says it is not proper. Yet it is attempting to give a freedom which will do nothing to elevate Canada or Canadians.

I pleaded with the government before and I do so once more; do not have parliament pass