

*Criminal Code*

private between husband and wife or consenting adults. The purpose of this bill is to change sections 147 and 149 so that its provisions cannot apply to the acts which I have just mentioned.

Mr. Speaker, I object to this amendment for certain reasons that I shall set forth in a moment. The purpose of this amendment would be to remove from the Criminal Code the subject of homosexuality and its implications.

• (3:20 p.m.)

Mr. Speaker, if we take it out of the Criminal Code, in view of the fact that at the present time it does not come under the Civil Code either, under what jurisdiction will homosexuality come? This is what I should like to know. Will it not become a personal matter?

In view of the speeches made by the Prime Minister when he introduced the original bill, and that of the present Minister of Justice, it seems that now we want to make it a personal matter and I strongly object to it.

I consider homosexuality as a sexual deviation, a kind of mental deviation and sickness, and as such as an affection which should be treated.

Mr. Speaker, I am not surprised at all at this amendment sponsored by the Minister of Justice. In fact, the attitude of our governments, federal as well as provincial, is well known; they have attempted in every way, not so long ago, to degrade the alcoholic to make out of him a hopeless case, a vicious person, and until recently, they did absolutely nothing in order to fight such prejudices, which they fostered through their silence and inaction. It is not surprising that this same government should escape its responsibilities as regards this illness and should want to remove homosexuality from the Criminal Code, as they do not propose anything in order to rehabilitate those sick people.

Such are, Mr. Speaker, the comments I wished to make as briefly as possible, but which I was most anxious to make. To an oral question asked by an hon. member, Mr. Speaker, a minister answered that he was getting countless letters calling for the earliest possible adoption by parliament of this famous omnibus bill to amend the Criminal Code.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to tell him that we, of the Ralliement Cr ditiste, did not act in the same way as the majority of the Liberal members. We were not afraid to seek the

[Mr. Fortin.]

advice of our constituents and we organized meetings in our constituencies. We sent circular letters, collectively or otherwise; we had radio broadcasts. By every possible means, we have honestly consulted people, not by setting them against the government, but by securing them objective information, in order to get their opinion.

Mr. Speaker, following the information gathered and the consultations held, at least in the 14 ridings represented by the Ralliement cr ditiste, one must conclude that in all our ridings, the people are quite opposed to the bill under study, and not necessarily against this government. I want to be objective and to underline that it is the present bill that is being opposed, since by adopting it, the government assumes to itself the right, by determining when life begins, to allow mass murder instead of humanizing this act.

Every day, a good number of people write to tell us that they are against this bill and they plead with us, as members of parliament or human beings—supposing there are still human beings in this house, because when we hear the members and the ministers speak on this subject, I am inclined to doubt it—they plead with us to oppose it, not in order to preserve the Criminal Code, outdated as it is, but in order to modernize it, to humanize it, so as not to prejudice the interest of mankind, as this bill seeks to do.

I have a letter here from Mrs. Th r se Leduc, of Victoriaville, which reads as follows:

I am against abortion because our conscience says no.

She says: I thank you. I implore you to go even further and to fight against this bill on our behalf.

I have a letter from Mrs. Andr  H bert, also from Victoriaville. Indeed, I could spend all afternoon, all evening and again all day tomorrow reading letters. I simply wish to read this one, to show that the people in our ridings are perhaps not as stupid as some hon. members think they are because they are very well informed and they know where the present government wants to lead us with this bill.

Mrs. H bert, of the rue Acad mie, in Victoriaville, tells me in her letter that I received this morning, and that I will read here—it is rather short—in order to show clearly to hon. members that they should think about it twice before they vote for this bill under the thumb of the Prime Minister,