

*Criminal Code*

This small group which is keeping the debate going is expressing the conviction of the people of this nation. They are right and the government is wrong. I ask the minister, through you, Mr. Speaker, to tell the government to take their responsibility seriously. What is that responsibility? As a Canadian from western Canada, I think of our wheat sales which do not amount to anything. I do not know what the Minister of Agriculture really feels about that situation, but I feel sorry for him. There are no petroleum sales to speak of, or at least they are being cut back. The cost of living is rising constantly. All these things are eating into the heart of the nation. And what do we do? We spend our time debating.

**Some hon. Members:** Order.

**Mr. Woolliams:** Yes, order. I hope the nation will be brought to order and the cabinet members brought to their senses. Clause 18 is the cause of the delay in the passage of this bill. Why does the minister not agree to divide the bill? Why does he not agree to set that clause apart for debate in the future? Let us allow the rest of the bill, with its many good reforms, to go through. The only reason homosexuality and abortion were wrapped up in the whole package of other reforms was to permit those provisions to be passed along with the others and also to bring together the whole Liberal party. That is why we are now engaged in what I say is the most useless debate that ever took place in this nation. It is not useless in the sense that these people are not expressing their convictions, but because the minister knew such a debate was inevitable. He might be able to control his own people who have the same religious background and the same convictions, but he cannot control all the people all the time. This is the reason we have an opposition.

Finally, I should like to plead with the minister to take a realistic look at the situation. This group of people who have been debating the issue are serious. We are all part of our environment, whether it is a spiritual environment or a sociological environment. Basically, this group of people feel strongly on this issue. I am sure the minister has in his own midst many people who feel just as deeply about this subject as members on this side of the house do. As the legal spokesman for my party on this bill, may I ask the minister to consider the fact that if he had accepted the recommendation of the Conservative party and of the opposition as a whole to divide this bill, which he promised the

nation he would do, we would not be wasting the time of parliament. We might now be engaged in a meaningful debate on matters of importance to this nation.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear.

**Mr. Woolliams:** I say to you, Mr. Speaker—and I hope that tomorrow it is reported correctly—that surely the people who should be taking the blame for this debate in the House of Commons are the government. They should take the blame for wasting time and for trying to thrust something on a group of people who do not want it.

**Mr. Gundlock:** Dear John.

**Mr. Woolliams:** I do not know what the hon. member means by “Dear John” but I do know that what is happening is the result of the Prime Minister’s egotism expressed through the minister.

● (9:30 p.m.)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Fortin:** I thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also warmly and sincerely thank the hon. member for Calgary North (Mr. Woolliams) for his eloquent and courageous comments. He is one of the most brilliant members of this house who is not ashamed of his convictions and who can say what makes common sense and what issues should be fought against.

I would like to congratulate him and tell him that we appreciate his testimony.

We are glad to fight for those principles, not beside him or behind him, but with him, hand in hand, to show clearly to this government, during this debate which has been dragging on and on through its own fault, that this is a serious matter which is worth looking into and that, therefore, the amendment moved by the hon. member for Shefford (Mr. Rondeau) certainly deserves to be seriously considered by my colleagues and by every member.

The hon. member for Témiscamingue (Mr. Caouette), the devoted head of the Ralliement créditiste, has just set forth with eloquence some of the reasons why we want clause 18 of the omnibus bill to be deleted to permit a referendum and a fuller study, because we sincerely feel that clause 18 is not valid and is not in accordance with the wishes of the Canadian people. It does not meet a need of the Canadian population and, therefore, it is not fair to introduce it in the house, thus delaying uselessly the business of the house,