

Genocide

intent of the bill is clear, and I urge this house, before six o'clock is called, to allow the subject matter of this bill to be referred for study to the standing committee on external affairs.

Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, I notice that there are two or three other members rising, so I will compress my remarks into a very few minutes. I want to say that we share completely the motives of this legislation. We agree with those who have said that it is not good enough just to outlaw actual genocide, the actual killing of people; we must go further and do something about the hatred and defamation of character that lead to the actual crime of genocide. We agree that the taking of human life is a crime. We also say that the defamation of character, the destroying of a man's soul, is likewise a crime.

Therefore we are in sympathy with the motives of the bill introduced by the hon. member for Cartier (Mr. Klein). However, I am particularly glad that it was announced by the hon. member for York Centre (Mr. Walker) that we are not going to be asked to vote on the bill as it is now before us but, rather, that there will be a motion to refer the subject matter to a committee. I am particularly glad about that because, like the hon. member for York Centre, I cannot go along with the confirmation in this bill of capital punishment. It is not my purpose to indulge in a debate on that particular point, but I would like to take my stand on this question with three distinguished rabbis of the city of Toronto, just one of whom I will take time to quote, who had something on a very high level to say at a time when the whole world was concerned about a certain man, one Adolf Eichmann, who was found guilty of the crime of genocide.

Hon. members will recall the feelings there were at that time, and if ever a Jew was entitled to feel that capital punishment was in order, that entitlement was due to a Jew on that occasion. But listen to the words of Rabbi Feinberg. I have quotations also from Rabbi Stuart Rosenberg and Rabbi W. Gunther Plaut, but one quotation will do. Rabbi Feinberg said, in part:

Eichmann's neck in a noose will contribute nothing to the Jewish people or to the world except as a temporary release for outrage... It will not advance by one iota the continuous fight we must all wage against nazism and anti-Semitism.

The 6 million Jews were not destroyed by Eichmann but by an idea that infected many of the German people, the idea of contempt for human life. It can be defeated only by the opposite idea, the sanctity of human life.

[Mr. Walker.]

I quote this from a clipping which I saved from the *Toronto Globe and Mail* of Saturday, December 16, 1961. I give the house this quotation because I feel these words of Rabbi Feinberg, along with the words of Rabbi Rosenberg and Rabbi Plaut are classical statements. I take my stand with them, and I hope that in the committee on external affairs when this matter is discussed there can be general agreement that the principle of this bill should be supported; but we do not go along with the idea of capital punishment.

Hon. Gordon Churchill (Winnipeg South Centre): Mr. Speaker, I am very much interested in the subject which is before us. I am not sure that I approve of the rushed method that is put in front of us now, without the opportunity for debate. I think a bill of this character should have a good discussion in the house rather than being shifted to a committee immediately. Surely there must be some way, by arrangement, of having the bill, if it is generally considered by the house of major importance, discussed on another occasion before being shifted out of this chamber to a committee.

The government whip has attempted to put people who want to speak on this bill in a rather awkward position if they spend any time discussing it. There will not be a single member of the House of Commons who does not approve of the law established against genocide and the convention that was ratified in this House of Commons 12 years ago in the month of May, and not March as it says in the bill. There was general agreement with regard to ratification of that measure on that occasion, but in the subsequent years nothing has transpired in the way of additional legislation and I can give the reason for that in a minute or two.

Now we have put before us a bill respecting genocide, as it is called, but from the statement made by the sponsor of the bill, the hon. member for Cartier (Mr. Klein) and the supporter of the bill from the Liberal side, the major item in the bill has to do with, as has just been said, the crime of defamation or, as the sponsor of the bill called it, group libel. I do not find that this is at all a part of the convention on the prevention and punishment of the crime of genocide. This does not put me in the position of being opposed to any measure which may be advanced to protect society against group libel or the crime of defamation. If our laws are not satisfactory in that respect, they should be amended. This is an instance, surely, where a