

Criminal Code

in general, to use the authority of their religious leaders as far as abortion, infanticide or the murder of innocents are concerned, because this bill, Mr. Speaker, by legalizing abortions is legalizing the murder of human beings, according to our beliefs and our religious convictions.

The testimonies I am about to read into the record, Mr. Speaker, are not those of anonymous theologians such as those whom the hon. member for Trois-Rivières quoted; they are but the highest authorities of our Church.

First, here are the rules of conduct laid down by Pope Pius XI, in his encyclical letter on Christian Marriage of December 31, 1930:

But another very grave crime is to be noted—

—the encyclical letter refers to a very grave crime—

—which regards the taking of the life of the offspring hidden in the mother's womb. Some wish it to be allowed and left to the will of the father or the mother; others say it is unlawful unless there are weighty reasons which they call by the name of medical, social, or eugenic "indications"—
—As to the "medical and therapeutic indication"

● (8:30 p.m.)

—that is the purpose of the bill—

—to which, using their own words, we have made reference, Venerable Brethren, however much we may pity the mother whose health and even life is gravely imperiled in the performance of the duty allotted to her by nature, nevertheless what could ever be a sufficient reason for excusing in any way the direct murder of the innocent?

This is what the Church thinks: therapeutic abortion is the direct murder of an innocent.

The hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) talked about changing times, and ecumenism that would allow for new solutions.

Now, here is a text of Vatican II, entitled: "The Pastoral Constitution of the Church in the Today's World" in which the council states:

Everything opposed to life itself, as well as any kind of homicide, genocide, abortion, euthanasia, all those practices and others similar are truly infamous.

The Pope and the council Vatican II took a strong stand against abortion. Canadian bishops, who are the pastors of half the people in Canada, also declared against abortion, which is advocated by this bill.

The Canadian bishops, whose voice was smothered off-handedly by the present government, when the bill was introduced, saw

fit to reassert their position on December 5, 1968:

We reaffirm that it is not possible to make of abortion a purely personal question as if, in such a case, the life of another person were not involved at all.

And the cardinals, archbishops, and bishops of Canada said:

We ought to remind Catholics that they are bound to comply with the teachings the Church, regardless of a legislation intended for a pluralistic society.

When the Canadian episcopacy speaks thus, how can the Prime Minister claim to be a Roman Catholic and introduce a bill which is offensive for Roman Catholics and disapproved by his Church?

How can the Quebec Liberal members claim to voice the opinion of their Catholic electors, when they are in conflict with the most recent guidelines of the leaders of their Church? How can they prefer the guidelines of their party to those of the Canadian episcopacy, without betraying the confidence of their Catholic electors who, themselves, are going to follow the guidelines of the Roman Catholic church? This is a case of conscience for them, but the Ralliement Crétitiste will also want, as a matter of conscience to recall to all Quebecers how the Liberals of that province have betrayed them, how Quebec Liberals are behaving—

Mr. Cantin: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Béchard): Order. I regret to interrupt the hon. member, but the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice (Mr. Cantin) is rising on a point of order.

Mr. Cantin: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order because I think the hon. member grossly overdoes it and goes far beyond the scope of the proposed amendment. I think he should limit himself to the matter in hand, which is the repealing of clause 18. I do not see how the political behavior of Liberals or even the question of religion for that matter can be brought into the picture. Let us deal strictly with the subject matter of the debate.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Béchard): Order. I would therefore ask the hon. member, following that point of order, to stick to the amendment being examined.

Mr. Rondeau: Mr. Speaker, with all due respect, I must say that the Parliamentary