

Criminal Code

They are the ones, probably in collusion with the Liberals, who abolished the death penalty, and that in spite of the opposition of 90 per cent of the population. At that time they were crying over the fate of the worst Canadian criminals.

Now they are urging the government to legalize the murder of innocent beings, and immorality in all its forms. Moreover, according to the hon. member for Vancouver East (Mr. Winch), the minister does go far enough in his legislation. After speaking on everything that was not in the bill, he begs the Minister of Justice to have much harsher legislation passed for the protection of animals, which he claims to love with all his heart. What should one think about such reasoning, Mr. Speaker? I think that it is simply preposterous, and the committee must examine all his statements to help him compare contradictions.

I am sure that we have in this committee enough members who still have a conscience and who are still able to use it with all freedom, and I ask them to make a Christian gesture, a human gesture by simply removing those two sections from this bill. And, in order to help them, I shall quote a letter. I had as good as promised you not to quote any one, but I am almost compelled to quote this letter I received from a parish priest from Quebec. He makes his opinion known. It may be of help to the committee members! This is what this priest has written:

I want to add some explanations to my answer—

—about abortion and homosexuality.

If I had to vote on this bill, I would vote against it, as the Prime Minister is not willing to split it. Yet there are many good things in the bill—

I mentioned it at the start also.

—as the bad is deliberately mixed in with the good, while it would be so easy to separate the two, my conscience would compel me to vote against it.

Incidentally, by refusing to break up this bill, the Prime Minister is committing an outrage against the conscience of the members of his party; they are compelled to choose between their conscience and their loyalty to the party. I am afraid that, in the liberal camp especially, servility—

—if you will forgive the expression—

—before a Prime Minister who abuses his authority by not respecting the conscience of his members, partisanship, or loyalty to the party may win over conscience. If there were several liberal members with courage enough to say frankly to the Prime Minister: "Split the bill and give the

[Mr. Gauthier.]

members a free vote, or else we shall vote against this measure even if the government must fall; we prefer to follow the dictates of our conscience than to abide by the requirements of party solidarity"—I am sure that the Prime Minister would then give in. But I very much doubt that there are at present in Ottawa, in the liberal party, enough men with the necessary courage to do this.

By the way, I am personally convinced that there will be enough honest liberal members to amend some sections of this bill. I quote further:

—As to the bill on abortion, it is lousy.

A—It is supposedly an attempt to legalize what was being done illegally. Big deal! the government does not have to give in to immorality, but rather to make sure the rights of the citizens are respected; and the first of these rights is the right to live.

B—It was said that this bill had to be passed because we lived in a pluralistic society.

What a stupid argument! It is the duty of a government which realizes its functions to protect the weak against the abuse of the powerful. No pluralistic argument can authorize a government to side with the executioners.

Is there a weaker and more defenceless being than a tiny child in his mother's womb?

C—This bill is a backward step for civilization. In the past, a father had the right of life and death over his child. The advances of civilization led to the realization that God alone was the Master of our lives; this right is passed on to the State under certain definite circumstances.

Whether they admit it or not, when passing this legislation on abortion, the government legalizes murder.

This bill brings out their revolting inconsistency.

Last year, capital punishment was abolished by a legislation for a number of criminals; however this year with another piece of legislation we are condemning some innocent beings in their mothers' womb. As far as logic is concerned, we have seen better examples of it.

Mr. Speaker, that was just a letter from a parish priest and if ever you wish to collect them, we have received them by the thousand. In fact, we have asked for them and sent out questionnaires to our constituents, and I can assure you that today in Quebec, 95 per cent of the people share our opinion.

● (9:40 p.m.)

Mr. Loiselle: That is not true.

Mr. Gauthier: Somebody shouts that it is not true and moreover it is an hon. member from Montreal. I invite him to look into the reports I have and out of 2,000 letters—