

*Criminal Code*

We have a government that wishes to reserve for itself only those areas of jurisdiction which are politically profitable. Where there is a real need, such as preventing the destruction of university buildings, or for child welfare, it shies away and, like Pontius Pilate, washes its hands. Is it not better to do something about looking after unwanted children in a country suffering from a shortage of population instead of destroying them before they have a chance to be born? I say this is a callous and heartlessly anti-social provision. You cannot control the granting of this permission. You cannot say no when an abortion is requested, and you will not say no. The simple request will be enough. It may be cheaper than building institutions or children's villages to look after the unwanted, but it is certainly not a Christian or a positive social concept. It is a concept both negative and destructive, a shrugging off of responsibility.

Why not let these children come into the world and grow up as Canadians? Why not accept the responsibility of providing for them? Why not look after the mothers and remove the stigma attaching to unwed motherhood? Why should there be a stigma? This bill perpetuates that stigma by somehow suggesting that a child about to be born out of wedlock has no right to be born. This is an anti-social, heartless attitude.

I leave these matters to the conscience of the government and its supporters. As for my own conscience I am, thankfully, responsible only to myself and I shall vote against a barbarous betrayal of my beliefs.

**Mr. John M. Reid (Kenora-Rainy River):** Mr. Speaker, perhaps I could reply to the hon. member who has just spoken by telling him the reason for the homosexuality clause and perhaps even for the abortion clause, though I certainly would never presume to speak on behalf of the government. I believe the reason is simply that these laws are unenforceable. In other words, the legislation relating to homosexuals has not been enforced. The number of convictions is almost nil. Therefore, when a law is not enforceable it becomes a dead letter on the books and is better removed. I believe the government used a similar explanation to justify abortion, the subject with which I shall deal mainly this evening.

I find myself in this embarrassing position. I voted for the abolition of capital punishment when we had a free vote.

[Mr. Paproski.]

• (8:40 p.m.)

**Mr. Paproski:** Will the hon. member permit a question. How does he suggest the law in private homes will be enforced with respect to acts of homosexuality?

**Mr. Reid:** I am sorry I did not hear that.

**Mr. Paproski:** How does the hon. member suggest that the law with respect to homosexuality should be enforced? I am talking of acts in private homes.

**Mr. Reid:** I understand the proposal is that there should be no law on the matter. Acts between consenting adult males are permitted.

**Mr. Paproski:** What about acts between those who are not adults?

**Mr. Reid:** I am speaking to the general principle of the bill. I am sure the Minister of Justice (Mr. Turner) will be glad to answer that question.

**Mr. Paproski:** At the same time perhaps he will define consent.

**Mr. Reid:** As I was saying before being interrupted, I am in the embarrassing position of having voted for the abolition of capital punishment. The argument that justified my stand was that there was sufficient danger under our legal system of having an innocent man convicted of murder and sentenced to death. Those risks were sufficient to justify the complete abolition of capital punishment. Now, however, I am asked to vote for a piece of legislation which will permit what I consider murder in a different form, murder in the form of abortion. The government's position in introducing this measure is that the present abortion law is unenforceable. Evidence presented before the Standing Committee on Health and Welfare, which was chaired by Dr. Harley, now retired from politics, indicated that many abortions take place in hospitals under the guise of operations of various sorts, and on kitchen tables, with quacks operating.

Since the abortion section of the Criminal Code is not enforceable, the government feels it is justified in bringing forward this new legislation. In other words, you cannot have legislation that is not enforceable, because then the law becomes a laughingstock. At any rate, that seems to be the major plank on which the government is resting this particular clause of the legislation. No doubt, if I were a member of the cabinet, I should have little hesitation in agreeing that it is the duty of the government to regulate law and order,