

Criminal Code

● (9:10 p.m.)

Now, I should like to deal with some of the other matters contained in the bill. I can only echo what has already been said by other members of our party, that the bill should have been presented in divided form rather than in its present omnibus form. The bill proposes a number of good amendments which, like the breathalyzer test, should have received consideration long before now. However, it also deals with controversial issues of moral and social significance which concern the consciences of most hon. members as well as those of people across the nation.

In Canada we have always taken great pride in our freedom, but people across this country are now showing deep concern about the future of this God-given right, when matters of vital importance are being decided by one man. Especially is this true when this House of Commons is deprived of a free vote on an issue that reaches to the very soul of this nation. We realize that the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) rules the cabinet with a stern hand. In the matter of the bill before us he has become a virtual dictator. The outcome of this debate is, therefore, a forgone conclusion.

Nevertheless, Mr. Speaker, I wish to take this opportunity to voice my disapproval of grouping both good and bad legislation in one bill and forcing the whole issue down the throats of the people of this country. Every piece of legislation should stand or fall on its individual merits.

I do not propose at this time to go into the details of all the issues contained in the bill before us, but I would like to make a few observations about the advisability or otherwise of amending abortion and homosexuality laws. I have consulted the Oxford Universal Dictionary as to its definition of abortion, which is as follows: "the procuring of a premature delivery so as to destroy offspring." It seems to me no one would doubt that the definition to which I have referred applies to the case in hand. In other words, Mr. Speaker, this amendment seeks to broaden the law in order to destroy offspring. It appears to me that this is the thin edge of a wedge which would open the door to removing all provisions in respect of abortion from the Criminal Code.

To my mind, there is no doubt that life begins at conception. In the vocation in which I have spent 30 years of my life, I have performed hundreds of sperm checks. It is there

[Mr. Noble.]

one finds where life begins. As far as I am concerned, wanton abortion is murder. My conscience will not let me support murder. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, on this count I shall vote against the bill.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Noble: I cannot support an amendment which would condone homosexuality. My argument in this connection is that to condone it is to support it; to support it is to encourage it. For the life of me, I cannot understand how any family man can vote in favour of this amendment. In my opinion, we should be doing all we can to discourage anything which contributes to the breakdown of morality. The fact that it was the Prime Minister who devised and put forward these amendments concerning abortion and homosexuality does not, to my mind, constitute a strong argument in favour of their adoption. He is not a family man and he does not seem to understand that children do look to their parents for leadership and direction. Believe me, Mr. Speaker, most children will have mental and conscientious reservations with regard to parents who would support measures such as these.

The support of such retrograde proposals would lead to only one thing, the rapid deterioration of the moral fibre of this nation. Surely we, as members of parliament, must hold the line with respect to moral standards. We cannot justify the repudiation of our responsibilities to our young people, to older people, too, and to generations which will follow.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Gilbert Rondeau (Shefford): Mr. Speaker, I really hoped to have the floor after the hon. member for Vancouver East (Mr. Winch) who resumed his seat a few moments ago, because some of his statements made the blood of the members of the Ralliement créditiste boil and I was eager to give him tit for tat.

In any event, his wild remarks were annoying, to say the least. It is surprising to note the illogical attitude of certain members who will favour the abolishment of the death penalty in order to protect bandits, as well as the protection of animals, as the hon. member has just done, while supporting abortion, and consequently the destruction of thousands of innocent children.

In his speech the hon. member told us that in the course of his political career he had visited many mental institutions, many hospitals,