

Protection of Privacy

before." That does not change the position. We here, now, are deliberately, by open choice, limiting our freedoms.

For all these reasons, Mr. Speaker, I have not decided in my mind what to do when the final vote on this Bill comes. I hope to sit here and listen to more speeches, listen to the deliberations of my colleagues and then make up my mind. If I absent myself from the House, you can be sure that I will read every word that is said in tomorrow's *Hansard*. I just wanted to stand up because these things matter and so that people in future will know that one member of this House at least had considerable hesitation about this bill.

Mr. Reilly: Mr. Speaker, as it is close to six o'clock, I wonder if I might call it six o'clock.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Is it agreed that we call it six o'clock?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: It being six o'clock, I do now leave the chair until eight o'clock p.m.

At six o'clock the House took recess.

AFTER RECESS

The House resumed at 8 p.m.

Mr. Peter Reilly (Ottawa West): Mr. Speaker, I have already spoken in this debate, this is the last time I shall do so. I speak, not so much because my remarks will have any effect on the eventual outcome of this legislation, but to register a tiny squeak of protest from one who three years ago was honoured—and I deem it a distinct honour—to be called by the Prime Minister of this country a weak-kneed, bleeding heart.

Like the hon. member for Scarborough (Mr. Harney), I am not certain I can support this bill. I do not feel all that enthusiastic about the bill, because to my way of thinking it is a bad bill and I see no reason why I should support a bad bill. I think it is a bad bill because it makes legal and gives to the people of Canada the official sanction of the Parliament of Canada for people to do things to others which most Canadians, in my view, find disgusting, demeaning and degrading—and all in the name of law and order.

We have been told mainly two things about this bill by the Minister of Justice (Mr. Lang). First, that it really protects the privacy of people. Indeed, it is named the "protection of privacy act." It is fair to say that it provides stiff penalties for those who snoop and sneak electronically provided they do not have official permission to do it. That is all it does, and nothing more. It no more automatically protects the right to privacy of Canadians than guns automatically protect lives. It can be turned back on us with the utmost ferocity.

The bill says that in defence of morality we must do something that is immoral. It tells us that in defence of the right to our own privacy we must make possible the legalized, supervised and highly-organized intrusion into the privacy of others. Just because there are evil men in

[Mr. Harney.]

our numbers, must we automatically resort to evil in order to apprehend them? Must we submit to being taken yet another step down the road to the day when "1984" could be upon us, when there could be a Big Brother and our needs could be made totally subservient to those of the state? I think that is a lot of bunk.

The minister poured a little snake-oil around here this afternoon, telling the opposition what a fine job they had done, and praising the right hon. member for Prince Albert (Mr. Diefenbaker) because he was happy that he carried the day. But what about his demeanour earlier, before his victory? Let us look at that. After the committee had worked untiringly to produce a report and had submitted that report to this House, the minister began manful efforts to tear out its guts. He was determined to get exactly what he wanted.

It was only after a bitter attack on the bill, led by the right hon. member for Prince Albert, that the government backed down on its proposal for a 36-hour free fire zone during which police and law enforcement agencies—and that takes in an awful lot of people in this country—could electronically eavesdrop on anybody without the need to resort to the judiciary. The minister told us this afternoon that he gradually was becoming fond of the opposition's position. But only a week ago yesterday he was attacking it in the House, ridiculing it—

Mr. Lang: You have it wrong. I am more and more convinced of our position.

Mr. Reilly: No. On the 36-hour zone, the minister said this afternoon—

Mr. Lang: I am more and more convinced of our position.

Mr. Reilly: I see. In any case, he told us he was gradually coming around to this position. But only a week ago he accused the opposition of trying to tie the hands of the police, and he was making fun of the very same proposal which he now espouses. No one on this side of the House wants to tie the hands of the police, we least of all. However, I want some rigid restraints on their power. I have seen far too many cases in which that power has been abused. In any case, police forces are not autonomous groups with lives of their own. They are an extension of our society. They help us. They are paid to do what we tell them. When we authorize them to do something immoral, we are denigrating and demeaning our society.

The minister defended the bill by talking about helping the police. He told us we will be safe because, after all, its administration will be under the Attorneys General. As I said during the report stage of this bill, there is nothing inherently good or trustworthy about Ministers of Justice or Attorneys General. I certainly do not intend to repose my trust in one simply because he is one.

For the second time, I remind the minister and other members of the House that in Ontario just about ten years ago an Attorney General brought before the legislature a bill which, if it had passed, would have allowed the Ontario police commission to imprison people for an indefinite period of time without a hearing, without bail, without a lawyer, without the right to habeas corpus, if