

Criminal Code

in the first place. "Thou shalt not kill" is the basis of our murder law. "Thou shalt not steal" is the basis of our property law. To say that modern society in its enlightenment can throw all this overboard is a grave error. What would be our reference point if we did not rely on the judgment of the past?

• (4:40 p.m.)

I was not a member of the committee and I wish I had been, but if the committee has not produced any historical evidence that immorality corrupts the human spirit, which in turn corrupts the human mind and in turn destroys the human body itself, then I think the committee should sit again. From the short experience I have had I have been convinced that this is the chain of events; that when a man dies in his spirit it is not long before he dies in his body. If the state has the right to protect his body, it has an equal right to protect his spirit, to help maintain those standards of good behaviour and good morals, so far as we can agree on what those morals are, in order to lead him and succeeding generations into the future.

[Translation]

Mr. J. A. Mongrain (Trois-Rivières): Mr. Speaker, I shall be brief.

I have listened to several speeches and I have read several statements which have been made on the subject. In my opinion, some things need to be put straight because there has been an obvious misrepresentation of facts and, in some cases, there is evidence of self-righteousness. It appears that some people want to make it seem that those who intend as I do to support this bill, approve of immoral practices, which is not in keeping with the facts. Therefore, explanations are required.

For example, an hon. member made this statement earlier in the debate and I quote:

I have the approval of 100 per cent of the people, at least in my riding and in the rest of the province of Quebec.

Mr. Speaker, the one who said that is the hon. member for the constituency next to mine. I go through his constituency from time to time and I must say that he does not have the support of 100 per cent of those people. I would not dare give the percentage of those who do support him, but I say it is surely smaller.

It has often been said also that the object of this bill is to legalize homosexuality. That is not true. Homosexuality in itself is still unlawful. It is but one aspect of the question.

[Mr. Bigg.]

It was so well explained by others having more authority than I do in this matter that I would not like to stress that point further.

But Mr. Speaker, I should like to narrow the question down to its essentials and also put some order in the minds of those who claim to have all virtues and who delight in making all kinds of innuendoes at those who support the bill, in imputing them all kinds of bad motives and in casting doubts about their respect for morality.

I should like, with your permission, to quote an article that was given to me by my colleague from Madawaska. It deserves, I believe, to be quoted and to be recorded in *Hansard*, for it shows in a very eloquent way the attitude to be adopted by a legislator whenever he legislates upon matters dealing with moral questions. I am quoting here from *L'Eglise de Québec*, a publication formerly entitled *La Semaine Religieuse de Québec* and published by the Quebec diocese. The article was written by a group of theologians from Laval University. Therefore, it should meet with the requirements of conscience, at least in the case of those who, like me, are Catholic.

I quote:

The bill known as omnibus bill, has been introduced in the Canadian parliament. Discussions on certain clauses of the bill, especially those concerning homosexuality and abortion, have sometimes given rise to uncompromising stands that cannot be ascribed to Catholic ethics.

I repeat those words, Mr. Speaker:

—have sometimes given rise to uncompromising stands that cannot be ascribed to Catholic ethics.

And further on:

Therefore, it seems advisable to recall a few elementary facts about the appreciation of a civil law.

1) Civil law is directed towards the political commonweal.

We are not theologians. Those last words are mine, but I now go on with the quotation:

Of course, it must draw its inspiration from the basic imperatives of natural law; but it cannot adapt itself to it to the extent of governing everything that comes under it or of forbidding everything that is against it. In other words, the political commonweal does not demand that every moral fault be considered as an offence under the law.

Those are theologians speaking, Mr. Speaker, and they further state:

Thus, for instance, the State does not consider adultery as a crime, although it is still an injustice besides being a form of lust.

2) It is also necessary to stress that this so-called permissive law may be preferable to a restrictive